

The Logic of Joy

Psalm 100 (ESV)

- ¹ Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!
² Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing!
- ³ Know that the Lord, he is God!
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
- ⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him; bless his name!
- ⁵ For the Lord is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

Background

Psalm 100 is a psalm of thanksgiving, but it is also the climax of a larger sections of the Psalms.

Psalm 93-99 are often known as the **Kingship Psalms** because they repeatedly celebrate one central truth:

“The LORD reigns” (cf. Ps 93:1; 95:3; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1)

God’s people are repeatedly called to recognize God as King, Creator, Judge, Holy, and reigning over all nations.

Therefore Psalm 100 functions as a fitting response to Yahweh’s reign. It answers the question: “How should God’s people respond?”

DISCUSS

1. Actions: How Should God’s people respond. (v1,2,4)

Notice that Psalm 100 is filled with commands. In verses 1,2, and 4 the psalmist gives **six imperatives**:

1. Make a joyful noise to the LORD (v.1)
2. Serve the LORD with gladness (v.2)
3. Come into his presence with singing (v.2)
4. Enter his gates with thanksgiving (v.4)

5. Give thanks to him (v.4)
6. Bless his name (v.4)

These actions are the appropriate response to the God their King. These can be grouped into three responses.

First, we are to praise our King openly, vocally, and publicly. Next, we are to draw near to Him. For Israel, it meant entering the temple courts where God dwelt among His people. For Christians, we draw near to God through Jesus Christ, gathering around Word and the Table. Third, we are to Serve the Lord. Service includes both our formal public worship when we gather, and our daily obedience to the King in every area of life.

Which of these responses (praise, drawing near, serving) do you naturally associate with Sunday? What would it look like to live that out on a normal weekday?

2. Emotions: How God's people should feel (v1,2,4)

These commands are not meant to be mechanical. We are to serve the Lord *with gladness*, come before Him *with singing*, and make a *joyful* noise. These all assume something about the heart.

God is forming a people who not only do things for Him, but who delight in Him. Because what we delight in, we naturally give weight and honour to. Even in everyday life, what we enjoy – our favorite food, films or books – becomes what we talk about and praise.

In the same way, God calls His people to delight in Him, so that He receives the glory He deserves. And this is fitting, because He is not only the source of every good thing we enjoy as Creator, but also our Savior who has rescued us from sin.

What is the difference between doing things for God out of duty, and doing them with delight? Can you think of a real example of both?

3. Knowing: The engine room to our emotions and actions (v3,5)

These actions and emotions are grounded in what we know about God. Psalm 100:3 begins with the command “Know that the LORD, He is God.” Worship is therefore not built on mood of preferences, but on truth known. We cannot manufacture the right emotions on demands. Joy is ultimately a work of God in us as we respond to who He is. But God ordinarily stirs and shapes these affections in us through what we know about Him.

First, **He is God** (v3). He is our Creator: “It is He who made us” so we do not belong to ourselves but to Him. He is also our Shepherd: “we are his people and the sheep of His pasture”, meaning He rules, guides, and cares for each of us personally. As our great shepherd, he lays is life down for His sheep, in the person of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Second, **He is good** (v5). His “steadfast love endures forever”. So, his love is a committed covenant love that does not fail nor waver. Nothing can separate us from His love. His faithfulness means that He keeps every promise across every generation.

So, worship is not sustained by trying harder to feel the right things, but by seeing more clearly who God is. As we know Him rightly, He shapes both our obedience and our affections towards him.

What is one concrete way you can grow in knowing God more deeply this week (e.g. Scripture, prayer, remembering truth in a specific situation)?

Pray For:

1. Actions for God

Pray that knowing God would lead to concrete obedience in daily life, not just Sunday worship.

2. Affections for God

Pray that God would expose and re-order our loves, so that what we value most is shaped by who He is, not by what competes for our attention.

3. Knowing God

Pray that God would give us hunger for God in Scripture so that our view of Him is shaped by truth, not assumption.