

The Lord Is God And He Is Good

Psalm 100

Introduction 1) It is one of the great worship hymns in the psalms and a favorite throughout the church's history.

2) Shakespeare references it in *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Longfellow does so in *The Courtship of Miles Standish* calling it "that grand old Puritan anthem." Isaac Watts wrote a hymn based on this psalm.

3) It is the only psalm specifically identified as "a psalm of thanksgiving."

4) It neatly divides into 4 stanzas: vs. 1-2, 3, 4 and 5; and it is built around 7 imperatives or commands. They are make, serve and come in vs. 1-2, know in v. 3, enter in v. 4, and be thankful and bless in v. 5.

5) The psalm is comprehensive in its scope. It involves the total person and it invites all the earth to worship the God who is good, merciful and faithful (v.5). It is indeed a psalm of thankful praise.

6) Psalms 96-99 have boldly proclaimed the Lord's (*Yahweh*) kingship. Psalm 100 functions as an appropriate conclusion of praise to this quartet.

7) Sam Storms says of this hymn, "It has the fragrance of gratitude." John Piper says it has the structure of "education for exaltation" and that it "describes the way God means to be glorified in this world. He means to be known with the head (education); and to He means to be sung from the heart (exultation)...the singing is to be based on knowing."

8) Stanza 1: exultation. Stanza 2: education. Stanza 3: exultation. Stanza 4: Education.

I. We should praise the Lord. 100:1-2

1. The psalm begins with a call to worship. In fact as we just noted, there is a call to praise and then a reason for praise, a call to praise and a reason for praise.
2. These verses are similar to Psalm 95:1-2 in form and tone.
3. Further, we see once again a "missionary impulse" as an invitation is extended to all the earth, the nations, to shout for joy, worship with gladness and come into Jehovah's presence with joyful songs.
4. Peterson's paraphrase: "On your feet now – applaud God! Bring a gift of laughter, sing yourself into His presence."

1) Shout joyfully to the Lord. 100:1

- "This verse claims the world for God" (Kidner, 356). "All the earth" (*NIV*, *NASV*) is summoned to "shout joyfully" (*NASV*) before the great King who is *Yahweh* (*Jehovah*).
- This verse makes it clear that it is appropriate, right and good for God's people to praise God loudly and enthusiastically.
- Spurgeon said it beautifully, "Our happy God should be worshipped by a happy people..." (vol. 2b, 233). I would add, and this happy people is to invite "all the earth" to join in this grand celebration.
- **Illustration:** August 11, 2008, "Audio Bible Ministry" now offers 311 languages. 13 million more people will now have access to God's Word in their own

language. Faith Comes By Hearing, the foremost Audio Bible ministry, recently released Audio New Testament recordings in 15 more languages.

These new offerings, which represent more than 13.1 million people on three continents, bring the total number of Audio New Testaments available in 311 languages.

“God’s Word is going forth to the nations, reaching those with the least access – namely those too poor to afford a Bible and those who cannot, will not or choose not to read,” said Jerry Jackson, the ministry’s president and founder.

Estimates show that more than three billion people are unable to read.

“This milestone is a testimony to the eternal life of God’s Word and shows that the Bible continues to be the most sought after book in the world,” he said.

Faith Comes By Hearing’s goal is to record Audio Bibles in 2,000 languages by 2016, reaching 97 percent of the world’s population. Here is the first step, in praising the Lord.

2) Serve gladly unto the Lord. 100:2

- Two parallel verbs direct the vision of this verse: serve and come. The marvelous truth that service is an act of worship is made clear. Paul will pick up on this theme in Romans 12:1.
- Worship and work, praise and practice, prayer and activity, naturally and spiritually go together.
- Come (imp) before His presence with singing and praise is preceded by serving (imp) the Lord with gladness. The *NIV* translates the first word in v. 2 as “worship.” The gladness reflected in this worship reveals the joy and blessing of living in a right relationship with the God who is Creator and Redeemer, Shepherd and King, Lord and Father, the God who is good, merciful and faithful.

II. We should rest in the Lord. 100:3

- Three reasons are given in this verse for why we should worship our Lord and also rest in our Lord. The verse recalls the language of Psalm 95:7.

1) He is our sovereign Lord.

Know is an imperative. To know that Jehovah is God is to stand on a firm foundation in our understanding and comprehensive of just who the one true and living God is. It is to know who is God and who God isn’t. It is to know the Lord by His Word and thru His works. It is to know the God who has made Himself known in nature and scripture (Ps 19) but supremely in His Son Jesus. Hebrews 1:1-2 reminds us, “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.” This is the sovereign Lord we are to know and who inspires such worship, praise, adoration, trust and love.

2) He is our sovereign Creator.

- He made us look back to Genesis 1 and 2 and is an affirmation of accountability. We are not our own, He created us. We are not our own, He has redeemed us (1

Cor. 6:19-20).

- Here is the antidote for idolatry, selfishness and narcissism. Here is the way of true knowledge, not only of God, but ourselves.
- Boice, “the natural result of knowing God is to know ourselves, and the only way to really know ourselves is by knowing God” (vol. 2, p. 812).

3) **He is our sovereign King.**

- If the phrase, “It is he who made us” is a statement of accountability, this phrase “we are His people and the sheep of His pasture” is a statement of privilege. Don’t run past the personal pronouns! We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
- Looks back to Psalm 23.
- Looks forward to Luke 15:3-6 and John 10:1-18.
- Both are talking about Jesus! He is our Shepherd-King!

III. **We should thank the Lord.** 100:4

- 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, “in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
- Thankfulness puts a laser beam on the grace, goodness and generosity of God. Twice the idea is put before us for our careful reflection. Note also it is His gates and His courts that we enter. Not any gate will bring you into the presence of the Lord. He does not show Himself in just any courts. This God is a peculiar and particular God who establishes His own ground rules for knowing Him and enjoying Him.

1) **Come to Him with thanksgiving.**

- Thanksgiving is an evidence of gratitude and gratitude always honors and glorifies the giver.
- Enter is the same Hebrew word translated come in v. 2. Note it is the people of God corporately gathered who come together to thank their God. Private and public thanksgiving are necessary for the healthy and balanced spiritual life. There is no “Lone Ranger” theology in the Bible. We come together to help and encourage each other in the act of praise and thanksgiving.

2) **Bless Him with thanksgiving.**

- Because we are thankful for who our God is and what He has done and continues to do for us, “we bless (*NIV*; *HCSB*, “praise”) His name.”
- Sam Storms says, “thanksgiving always glorifies the “thanked!” Thanksgiving focuses the attention on the goodness and generosity of God from whom all things come.”
- To bless His name is to publicly and joyfully tell others what God has done. And, this is important, it defects the glory and praise to God and God alone where it rightly belongs. It gets our eyes off of us and onto Him.
- Rev. 21:27 reminds us that nothing “profane” (*HCSB*) or “impure” (*NIV*) will enter the gates of the heavenly New Jerusalem. John 14:6 reminds us there is only one way into these gates!

IV. We should enjoy the Lord. 100:5

- John Piper, “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”
- God wants us to be glad in Him.
God wants us to be joyful in Him.
God wants us to sing to Him.
God wants us to bless Him.
God wants us to love Him.
God wants us to find Him to be the most wonderful, enjoyable and satisfying person and reality in our lives. But again, to enjoy Him, we must know Him.

1) He is a good God.

The theme of God’s goodness is a reassuring theme in the psalms.

Psalm 106: 1, PRAISE the LORD! Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He* is good! For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 107:1, OH, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 136:1, OH, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever.

2) He is a loving God.

- This good God is also a loving and merciful God. His *hesed* (mercy, lovingkindness, covenant faithfulness, compassion, steadfast love) is everlasting (*NIV*, “endures forever”). Paul in 1 Cor. 13:8 tells us this love never fails and in 13:13 that it is even more wonderful than faith and hope. Why?
- Because 1 John 4:8, 16 teaches us “God is love.” Never does the Bible say that God is faith or God is hope. No, it is His nature to love and because He is the eternal, everlasting God, His love is eternal and everlasting too!

3) He is a faithful God.

As goes God’s mercy (*ESV*, “steadfast love”) so goes His truth (*ESV*, “faithfulness”). We enjoy this God because He is reliable, dependable and trustworthy. You can count on Him no matter what and no matter when. After all as the *NIV* puts it, “his faithfulness continues through all generations.” God is faithful to us because He has promised, given His word, to do so. And, that promise will never be broken.

Conclusion:

- 1) In his book, *The Life of the Church*, Samuel Miller, who served as dean of Harvard Divinity School, wrote, “Here we are in our day having achieved the freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience, only to discover that most people have no desire to worship God at all.”
- 2) Could it be that most people have forgotten the Lord is God and He is good?!