

A Psalm of Thanksgiving

Psalm 100

November 19th, 2017

Intro –

Origin of Thanksgiving in America

The first winter in North America, in 1620, 44 out of the original 102 colonists died. At one point their food ration was down to 5 kernels of corn apiece.

The next summer brought a harvest and that fall they celebrated with Thanksgiving. There was much they could (and surely did) grieve about – every family must have been affected by the loss of life.

A few years later in 1623, then Governor William Bradford called the people to gather and “render Thanksgiving to the Almighty God for all His blessings.”

Are there myths and legends mixed in with historical facts regarding the origins of Thanksgiving in America? Sure. But the principles of gratitude toward the mighty God are very good and we see it throughout scripture.

Psalm 93-100 form a collection of Psalms that recognize God’s royal rule and land at His people giving Him thanks.

They are not naïve to the sufferings of life though. Likely written or at least compiled in this order while the Israelites were in exile in Babylon starting with the end of the book of Jeremiah. It was a dark time in Israel’s history and yet they sang of and affirmed their trust in the Lord as the reigning King, even as they served a lesser king in a foreign land.

Psalm 93:1-2 The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The LORD has clothed and girded Himself with strength; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved. ² Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.

The world may have felt shakey, yet the reality is that it was firmly established by the Lord who reigns, present tense.

Psalm 94:1-3 O LORD, God of vengeance, God of vengeance, shine forth! ² Rise up, O Judge of the earth, Render recompense to the proud. ³ How long shall the wicked, O LORD, How long shall the wicked exult?

Wickedness may appear to thrive for a season, but God is still a just King and will make things right.

Psalm 95:2-3 ² Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. ³ For the LORD is a great God And a great King above all gods,

The Lord is a great King, deserving of thanks

Psalm 96:10 ¹⁰ Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity."

He reigns and will judge

Psalm 97:1-2 The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; Let the many islands be glad. ² Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.

He reigns with righteousness and justice

Psalm 98:6-7 ⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the horn Shout joyfully before the King, the LORD. ⁷ Let the sea roar and all it contains, The world and those who dwell in it.

Psalm 99:1 The LORD reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned *above* the cherubim, let the earth shake!

These themes build and culminate in Psalm 100 with a call to worship and give thanks to the Lord.

4 stanzas alternating exaltation and education – command to praise alternated with reason to praise.

1. **Worship** the Lord with singing and service. (100:1-2)

a. Our worship should be God-centered.

i. It's about God and for God.

1. Shouting *to Him*

2. Serving *Him*

3. Coming before *Him*

ii. This is liberating. It liberates us from self-focused individuality and mere personal preference.

iii. If your only consideration in evaluating musical worship is “do I like this?” then you would do well to ask some new questions –

1. Does this honor the Lord?

2. Can I sing this to God?

3. Does this minister to my brothers and sisters in Christ singing as well?

iv. However, if a worship leader doesn't ask, “Can the congregation sing this? Will this minister to them? Am I hitting a range of style and preference?” then that's a mistake as well.

b. Our worship should be vocal, joyful, and enthusiastic.

i. To say worship should be God-centered is not to say we should be unaffected by it.

ii. Expressed different ways in different cultural contexts, but not dry, emotionless mechanics in mind.

iii. We can react against an extreme emotionalism where emotions are everything to such a degree that we eliminate emotions. That's an over-correction!

i. Emotions don't pull the train, but they aren't irrelevant.

b. What motivates my joyful worship? How can I cultivate a heart to praise the great King, especially when life is hard?

i. Knowledge. Knowledge about God. Truth about God.

ii. Otherwise, all that is being encouraged is just raw, empty, hollow emotionalism – don't worry, be happy!

2. The Lord is **God** and takes **care** of us. (100:3)

a. Know that YHWH Himself is God

i. Know here is to experience and be completely assured of the truth

ii. This language might seem strange but keep in mind the context would have been one in which there were competing views about who is god, or if there are mere tribal deities.

iii. Knowing as the basis for affection, seeing as the basis for savoring, thinking as the basis for feeling.

- iv. The truth is that there is One God, and it is the Lord.
 - v. **1 Kings 18:39** When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, He is God; the LORD, He is God."
 - vi. The Lord is God (not me)
 - vii. He made me (not me)
- b. Because we are ***His people*** and the sheep of ***His pasture***, we are not autonomous creatures capable of making things up as we go.
- i. And this is really good news!
 - ii. **1 Corinthians 6:19 - 7:1** ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
 - iii. Think of the wreckage that has come out of Hollywood abuse scandals and political scandals in recent weeks and months. Shows the depravity of the human heart to use power for personal gain. But it also highlights the beauty and benefit of doing things God's way.
 - iv. Matt Popovits - "It's almost as if sex is not just a meaningless commodity traded between the consenting but, in fact, is an act so deeply powerful that we should consider wrapping it in an institution of personal commitment and public accountability."
 - v. **Galatians 6:7-8** Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.
- c. He cares for me as a good shepherd
- i. MacDonald – The Lord is God, this means He is unapproachably high. But we also read that we are His; and this tells us that He is intimately near.
 - ii. Unapproachably high, intimately near.
 - iii. **Psalm 95:6-7** Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. ⁷ For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice,
 - iv. **John 10:14-15** "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, ¹⁵ even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.
 - v. Child wanting to have a child because she wanted someone to be in authority over. Not realizing that authority brings responsibility and sacrifice and being under (good) authority brings comfort, security, and protection.
- d. His sheep who follow Him call out to the whole earth to join them in this worship.
- i. Missions and worship
 - ii. Missions exist because worship doesn't. (Piper)

3. **Give thanks** to the Lord. (100:4)

Entering His gates and courts would have been a reference to worship at the temple.

We are to give thanks to Him. We might be grateful FOR things but we are grateful TO God.

The command for thankfulness continues in the NT

- a. Giving thanks is God's ***will*** for you.
 - i. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** Rejoice always; ¹⁷ pray without ceasing; ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
 - ii. We want to scour the earth to find God's will and yet in one aspect, the Lord is very clear. Give thanks.
- b. Give thanks for ***all things***.
 - i. **Ephesians 5:19-20** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;
 - ii. You might say, "sure, that's easy to say if things are going well. My life is really hard right now and I'm having a hard time finding something to give thanks for." If you could transport back in time to have that conversation with Paul, you would be talking to him while he is unjustly imprisoned in a 1st century jail. The prison epistles – Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians all contain exhortations to be thankful.
 - iii. Continual cynicism, persistent sarcasm, and unrelenting pessimism are not spiritual gifts.
 - iv. **Ephesians 5:4** and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.
 1. Filthiness is not appropriate, but thankfulness is.
 - v. A believer can always give thanks for his or her position in Christ.
 1. **Colossians 1:11b-12** . . . joyously ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.
 2. **Colossians 2:6-7** Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk in Him, ⁷ having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing with gratitude.
 - a. Overflowing gratitude is a part of spiritual growth.
 - b. If you ask, "am I growing?" you might think in terms of knowledge, putting off sin, increased boldness in evangelism, new serving opportunities. Do you think of it in terms of thankfulness?
- c. Give thanks for the ***fruit*** you see God producing in others.
 - i. **2 Thessalonians 1:3** We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is *only* fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows *ever* greater;
 - ii. Instead of looking for things to criticize in other believers, look for evidences of grace that show God is at work in their life.
 1. Where do you see progress? Where do you see the fruit of the Spirit evidenced?
 2. Thank God for that and point it out to the person.
- d. Intentional thankfulness battles ***anxiety*** and ***worry***.
 - i. **Philippians 4:6** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

1. Even as we are driven to prayer, we can be thankful. And the more specific we can be in our thankfulness, the better we can battle anxiety.
 - ii. **Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.
- e. What ***hinders*** thankfulness? (adapted from Bryan Hughes at Grace Bible in Bozeman)
- i. We know we should do it. Why don't we do it? What hinders us?
 - ii. Unbelief
 1. If you don't believe what the Bible says about the character of God displayed in Psalm 100, you won't give thanks.
 2. If you don't believe what the Bible says about the wise, good, omnipotent God working all things together for good, you won't give thanks.
 - iii. Stubbornness
 1. I don't want things the way they are. I want it different.
 - iv. Covetousness
 1. I don't want what I have. I want something else. A different husband. A different wife. Different kids, or at least my kids behaving in a different way. A different house, job, car.
 2. **Hebrews 13:5** *Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"*
 - v. Critical spirit
 - vi. Impatience
 1. If you think God has to do things on your time schedule, you won't be thankful.
 2. Daniel had to wait 70 years for his people to be released from captivity.
 3. We want everything instant in our society.
 - vii. Apathy
 1. Chasing the trivia of life, the irrelevant or much less important will squelch thankfulness.
4. The Lord is ***good, loyal,*** and ***reliable.*** (100:5)
- a. Verse 3 could be scary if not accompanied by v. 5. He has complete ownership of all the earth, including you. But here's why it is good news: He is good. And loyal. And reliable. 3 truths briefly stated in v. 5.
 - b. The Lord is always loyal (v. 5a)
 - i. *Hesed* – lovingkindness – persistent, unending, covenant love
 - ii. So glad that His commitment to us is greater than our commitment to Him.
 - c. The Lord is always reliable (v. 5b)
 - d. Give thanks. This week. Always.



The Royal Psalms: 93-100

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e. What hinders thankfulness?

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