

Rev. Dr. Chris Montovino  
Psalm 100  
July 14, 2019

### Cascades Doxology

What an incredible evening we had last night. Thank you again to Patsy and Margaret Kneller and their crew for all the hard work that went into making it so special. We will remember it for along time!

When I sat down to reflect upon today's Psalm 100, I couldn't help but think that last night's celebration was really this morning's sermon. The banquet was Cascades' Doxology. So in light of that, I will keep this one short and sweet... hopefully get you out of here 30 minutes early for lunch. Just kidding. It's going to be a long one, so you better dig in folks.

When I think of Psalm 100. I think of as an invitation. An invitation to a party. Just as the Anniversary committee sent out save the date cards, then invitations, and then tickets. Some of us even made personal phone calls to ensure that people we've shared life with over the years were present. Each touch was a personal invitation to something very special.

Psalm 100 is that personal touch, an invitation to be caught up into something much greater than oneself. An invitation to the banquet of banquets. An invitation to worship and praise of the living God.

This Psalm is not only a psalm for giving thanks, but it is also a psalm of ascent. One that weary pilgrims sang during the high holy days as they traveled from afar, finally arrived in Jerusalem, literally ascended the temple mount, and entered into the temple courts in praise.

If you've ever had the privilege of walking into Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, you know what I mean. Your jaw drops and you are in awe of what you see, hear, smell, and touch. Your eyes are immediately lifted up to the beauty of the stand glass windows, vaulted ceilings, and artwork which draw you into the presence of something, someone greater than ourselves. The presence of God.

That's what Psalm 100 does for us. It woe us. Invites us. Engages us. Lifts us. Draws us into the presence of God.

Being that it was a song to be sung, I wanted us to listen as it was put to music by these artists.

Psalm 100. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjgdKWbD0xE>

Let us pray. Prayer of Illumination.

There are several things that I want to lift up about this psalm that I believe draws us into the presence of God. Psalm 100 is clearly evangelical and all

inclusive. It is unashamedly theo-political. It is down right controversial. It is purposefully Christo-centric. It is imperatively doxological.

Psalm 100 is clearly evangelical and all inclusive. What do I mean by that? I don't mean that it has a political agenda. What I mean is that it is good news addressed to everyone and everything. Believer and non believer. That which has breath and that which does not. Trees, flowers, rivers, rocks, animals, birds, sea creatures, and humans. All the earth is commanded to "Shout for joy to the Lord."

Psalm 100 is unashamedly theo-political. In Jerusalem, there were two houses side by side. There was the palace for the King. And there was the temple for the Lord of heaven and earth. The imagery of the Psalm clearly paints a picture of how one was to come into the presence of the earthly king. With shouting announcements. With thanksgiving of being one of his subjects. With praise that he was so good. The king could go to the Lord's house just like everyone else in order to be reminded that he himself was not the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. The king had a creator, sustainer, and ruler of all things, and he was not it.

Sometimes we can think, live, and rule as if we are above the law. Sometimes our governmental houses and houses of worship come in conflict with one another. It is the job our house of worship to reminds us that one day we will all be held accountable to the one who made us and who's we are. We can either fall down in worship the God who loves us or stand in judgment of the God who has the power to destroy us in an instant. Our choice.

On that note, we see that Psalm 100 is down right controversial. During the days of the early church, the Roman emperor was elevated to the status of deity. People would shout "Caesar is lord." Following Jesus' death and resurrection, early Christians refused to proclaim such an allegiance to Caesar knowing "Jesus alone was Lord." Sometimes that refusal cost them their lives.

Are we willing to stake our lives when our government seems to have its priorities out of line with God's?

Psalm 100 is purposefully Christo-centric. In it we hear echoes of Jesus the Good Shepherd, who knows his sheep and his sheep know him. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. We listen to his voice and follow him wherever he leads. Jesus alone makes us lie down in green pastures. Jesus alone leads us beside still waters. Jesus alone restores our soul.<sup>1</sup>

At Christmastime we proclaim "Emanuel" which means "God is with us." We believe that Jesus walks alongside us and promises to never leave us nor forsake us.<sup>2</sup> We believe that God is for us. and not against us.<sup>3</sup> In Christ all of God's

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 23:2-3

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 13:5

<sup>3</sup> Romans 8:31

promises are yes!<sup>4</sup> We hold that Jesus forgives us, restores us, renews us. We also proclaim that God is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

And for that reason, Psalm 100 is imperatively doxological. Big words for commanded to come before him with praise and shouts of joy, to worship the Lord with glad and sincere hearts, to give thanks for what he has done. To praise God's name. This doesn't mean that we are forced. But it does mean that when we are truly confronted with the grace and goodness of our God. We are compelled us to respond in a way that offers our hearts, our tithes, our lives to God in return.

That's what our offering time is and why we sing the doxology immediately afterwards. God doesn't want that song to be rote. But to mean it with all our hearts. We are praising God from whom all blessings flow. When we meet the God from whom those blessings flow, we want to praise him as our act of worship.

And so just as with the temple in Jesus' day, our experience entering our sanctuary should evoke a similar response. We are met with good news of Jesus Christ that is truly for all people. Not just some, but all. The lighted cross at night and during the day makes no mistake of that. It tells the community who we worship.

When we come in for worship we should expect that God is going to mess with our worldly politics. We may be confronted if we are leading or being led in a way that doesn't honor God. In other words, when we pay more homage to Caesar than we do Jesus Christ. When we come into worship, we should be crystal clear that our politics are subject to Jesus, not vice versa.

When we come into worship we acknowledge that Jesus is Lord of all. And that at his name every knee shall bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Not our pastor. Or Presbytery, Synod, or Denomination. Our governor. Our congressmen and women. Nor our president. But Jesus alone.

When we come into worship, we learn a lot about God. We are reminded that God is with us, is for us, is not against us, and is good.

Experiencing all these things sets our sights high and we are compelled to praise God.

So let us always enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.

In light of Cascades' 40th Anniversary, what do we give thanks to God for that we wouldn't other wise if Cascades never existed? Let us pass the microphone around and share those offerings to the Lord before one another.

Amen!

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<sup>4</sup> 2 Corinthians 1:20

Psalm 100

**A psalm. For giving grateful praise.**

**1**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

**2**

Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

**3**

Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his[a];  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**4**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**5**

For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.