

La Jolla Christian Fellowship
November 26, 2023
Thanksgiving: More than a Holiday
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Psalm 100:1-5

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; 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.

- 1. Thanksgiving is a passport into God's presence.**
- 2. Thanksgiving sets the table for God's blessings.**

"Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world." - John Milton

- 1. Thanksgiving is a passport into God's presence. Vs. 1** Shout for joy to the LORD, **all the earth.**
 - a. Thanksgiving and praise are never sung as solo, but rather are part of a larger chorus.**
 - i. **Isaiah 55:12 (NIV):** "You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands."
 - ii. **Psalm 19:1-4 (NIV):** "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."
 - iii. **Luke 19:40** "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."¹
 - b. Thanksgiving is the threshold of God's courts: Vs. 4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give **thanks** to him and praise his name.

"We would worry less if we praised more. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction." - Harry Ironside

¹ What would the rocks cry out? Luke 19:38 tells us, "'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!' "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

2. Thanksgiving sets the table for God's blessings.

- a. **Vs. 5** For the LORD is good and his love endures forever his faithfulness continues through all generations.
 - i. **Vs. 5** implies **generational love** and **faithfulness**:
- b. **Faithfulness 'ēmûnâ עִמּוּנָא** : Firmness, Stability, Steadiness.
 - i. **What are the practical implications of God's faithfulness?**
 1. **Psychology today** in an article entitled, **what mentally strong people do say**: Gratitude improves physical health, psychological health, enhances empathy and reduces aggression. Grateful people sleep better, have greater self-esteem and mental strength.²

Discussion Questions:

1. **Psalm 100 Reflection**: How does Psalm 100 inspire you to approach God with thanksgiving in your daily life, and what specific actions can you take to do so?
2. **Entering God's Presence**: In what ways have you experienced a deeper connection with God when you approached Him with a heart of gratitude? Share your personal stories and insights.
3. **Gratitude and Transformation**: How have you witnessed or experienced the transformative power of thanksgiving in your own life or the lives of others? What changes occur when gratitude becomes a lifestyle?
4. **Creation's Praise**: Reflect on Psalm 19:1-4 and Psalm 148:1-5, which describe how creation praises God. How does observing nature and its beauty remind you of God's greatness and inspire thanksgiving in your heart?
5. **Gratitude Challenges**: What challenges do you face in maintaining a spirit of thanksgiving, especially in difficult circumstances? How can the practice of thanksgiving help you navigate challenging situations more effectively?

²<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dont-do/201504/7-scientificall-proven-benefits-of-gratitude>