

Summer in Psalms
“Partners in God’s Creative Process”

[Psalm 100](#)

Today is another day and probably the end of the series “The Summer in Psalms” which pastor Oak-Yean introduced weeks ago. We are looking at Psalm 100 this morning. This is a very short Psalm. It is shorter than the Lord’s Prayer that we say, or recite every Sunday morning. It states:

Make a joyful noise to the Lord all you land. Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord He is God. It is he that made us. We are His, We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His court with praise. For the Lord is good, is steadfast love endures forever and His faithfulness to all generation (Psalm 100)

In simple terms, this is a Psalm of thanksgiving and the psalmist is calling for the whole earth not just a few or selected few to the worship of God. The Psalmists view or what we may call the traditional view of the Psalm is probably that of a call to worship or ritual in the temple. However, the postmodern principles do apply to any service directed or rendered in the service of God. From today’s Christian understandings, any service rendered or directed to the service of God is a service rendered to man and verse versa. This Psalm in many ways indicates that we are created by God and given the responsibility to take care of the earth. These responsibilities indicate that we are to be responsible partners in God’s creative process. The call to worship God is not just to the biblical listeners but also probably to all the people on earth irrespective of irreligious affiliations.

“We are His” (verse 3) in the text indicates that we are God’s creation on earth for a purpose. And that purpose on earth is to be active rather than passive participants in God’s creation. God’s creative purpose indicates that God can meet His people anywhere, and at any time in the process of creating and recreating the world on one hand. On the other hand our participation should indicate that we are willing to meet God anywhere and anytime to enter his gate with thanksgiving and his court with praise. This act could take place at hospitals, Classroom, garden, church yards, etc.

The patter of the Psalm goes thus: A call to worship and why we worship.

Verses 1 and 2: Make a joyful noise to the Lord...serve the Lord with gladness...come before His presence with singing is a call to worship.

Verse 3: Know that the Lord He is God. It is he who made us...we are His people and the sheep of His pasture is a reason for worshipping,

Verse 4: Enter His gate with thanksgiving and His court with praise; give thanks to the Lord and bless his name is a call to worship.

Verse 5: For the Lord is good and his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generation is a reason for worship,

The Psalm definitely has some elements of worship: Shout joyfully and serve the Lord with Gladness. Come before His presence with singing. Enter His gate with thanksgiving. Enter His court with praise. Be thankful to Him and praise his name.

But then why should we worship God? We should worship God because He is God. He is Lord. He is our creator. Because he is our owner and shepherd. We should further worship and praise God because he is good, His mercy is everlasting, His truth last forever, from generations to generations.

However, the conjunction in verse three gives some postmodern theologians a concern: Verse three states: “and know that the Lord He is God”. This is an indication that God is unapproachably high, transcendent, and immutable, a God who seats high and is far from creation but who at the same time judges the creatures. In the same verse we read...” we are His... We are His people and the Sheep of His pasture...” This indicates an intimate relationship. It indicates that God is intimately near His creation. At this point the Psalmist breathes gladness and singing instead of dread and fear. It is this intimate relationality that makes us part of the creative process of God to take care of the earth and help with our environment.

We are created to sing and shout with joy and make our environment a better place to live in. We are created to help support God’s kingdom here and now. By entering God’s court with praise and thanksgiving we are participating in the process of creating and recreating. By entering God’s court with praise and thanksgiving, we are indicating our active rather than passive participation in addressing matters of death and life on earth.

As active participants in God’s court we show concern by transforming lives, providing insightful visions of realities that enable people to find meaning, inspiration and challenges. We just do not sit down and expect providence like some spiritual leaders claim.

Rick Warren and Tim LaHaye are two spiritual leaders who gave two different views about how God deals with His creation. Rick is the author of the bestselling purpose driven life. He asserts without apologies that everything from good health to personal trauma –comes from the hand of God. God he states has planned every details of our lives without our input. Rick believes that all and most important events of our lives even the most painful ones are fathered (God) filtered and intended for our growth. He believes and states that God not only allows us to experience pain, but places challenges and painful experiences in our lives as opportunities for spiritual growth and test of fidelity...God smiles on us when we obey him and follow through without deviation the scripts that He has written in advance. Even though God is the ultimate source of the tragedies we face, failure to find our purpose in life leads to meaninglessness in life and divine punishment in the life after...¹

Tim, a man who believes in the last things, states in his left behind series: “God will rescue the faithful prior to a time of planetary cataclysm. Unless one recites the sinner’s prayer, admitting your worthlessness and powerlessness, one would be left behind when Jesus comes...”²

Is this really true? Is God going to destroy the earth and His creation just like that even though the Psalmist states that God’s faithfulness is from generation to generation? Will I be punished for not reciting the sinners’ prayers?

¹ Bruce Epperly , *Process Theology: A Guide For The Perplexed* (New York: NY, Bloomsbury, 2011) 5-6.

² Ibid,6

While images of God who plans everything on our lives may be comforting and soothing to some people, others come to hate a God who determines everything bad and catastrophic. A God who brings danger, mudslides, flood, tsunamis, earthquakes, a God who plants cancer on people even though they are not chain smokers or alcoholics and a God... who punishes those who respond inadequately to God's test of their faith.

God's relationality brings us closer to God's love and grace. God's relationality is in each one of us. Because "We are His, we are His people," we come to worship and help in God's process of making the world, our communities, our church, our homes a better place to for ourselves and our generations yet unborn.

I was so impressed by Amy Peterson last week when she said: "Our group now has Kallie to help us, but many of us that were originally to this group have continued because we care about not our own children, but we care about all the youth here at Campbell and we realized it takes a village to raise a child... Because many of us have been on this council for a long time we are encouraging anyone who may be interesting in joining ...we need new enthusiasm..."³ This is what God wants of us: Enthusiasm and participation.

In contrast to Rick Warren's statement that God has planned the most details of our lives in advance without our inputs, the psalmist views in verse three of our text and Amy Peterson's challenge to us last week indicate that God's vision for His creation as we enter His gates and court with praise and thanksgiving is to integrate God's vision of possibilities...possibilities set up in God's initial aim (Grace) and the influence of our environment and our own evolving creativity, moment by moment.

God never created us to be passive individuals... to just sit and watch. God created us to be active participants in the world's problems. God created us to take initiatives in working for justice, peace, equality kindness: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, taking care of the homeless, speak for the immigrants who finds themselves in strange waters working for survival. God never planned all these for them in advance. The environment or system made them so and it is our duty as we enter in to God's court and gate with praise and thanksgiving to think about all these issues...to make our world, churches, and communities safer for our children and generations yet to come.

The table spread this morning is an example of God's love and a sign of our active participation in God's lovely process for this planet. As you step forward, or come to participate in this lovely thanksgiving, this morning, remember the statement: "We are His..." meaning, God is intimately related to you and you are intimately related to God. God loves you, cares for you, guides you and irrespective of the world's disaster and trauma, God still knows that you are His and you need to know that you belong to God and that God has given you all the potential to help the world be a better place.

So no matter who you are...irrespective of your name, color, sexual orientation, language or even the way you speak, you are welcome to this table to come and participate, to enter His gate with thanksgiving and enter His court with praise.... Amen

³ Amy Peterson, Witnessing to ministry at Campbell United Methodist Church, 8/27/17