

#2 The Heart of Worship

7-15-26

Psalms 122 - The Joy of Gathering with God's People

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those watching online.
- B. **Slide1 Single Moms:** *She is Worthy* is a fellowship for single moms. Our heart is to encourage and support one another through faith, friendship, and community while growing closer to Christ. We meet on the 2nd & 4th Wed's of each month during Wed Night service *in the Agape Room*. Calvary Kids and youth groups are available for all ages. For more information, contact Lily.
- C. **Slide2 FHC:** Mark your calendars on August 16th. International Christian Adoptions (ICA) and California Family Life Center (CFLC) are hosting a **special information meeting** in the Agape Room during 3rd service. If you have ever wondered about adoption or foster care - or to learn more - this is the perfect place to start.
- D. **Slide3 @Risk** Join us next Sunday at 3pm for our "AT Risk" meeting. Former Ambassador John Cotton Richmond, along w/5 other former ambassadors will discuss *the future of US Human trafficking policies*. It's **informative** and **eye opening**. Come, listen, and join the discussion afterwards.
- E. ***Also:** If you want to invest in the next generation. 8 HS Camp Sponsorships are needed. \$220 per sponsorship. **Check or dropdown** (camp donations/sponsorships).
- F. **Slide4 Prayer:**

II. Intro: Series: The Heart of Worship

- A. Week 1 - Ps.84 - **Why We Worship:** Longing for God's Presence.
- B. Week 2 - Ps.122 - **Why We Gather:** The Joy of Gathering.
- C. Week 3 - **Slide5 Worship Night:** Join us next Wed, July 22 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary for an all-church worship night.
 - 1. (responding to God in praise, prayer, Scripture, communion).
Come prepared w/a **scripture** of Praise to read publicly. We will have a time of fellowship afterwards with *Rita's Italian Ice* available for purchase.

D. Week 4 – Ps.150 - **Why We don't stop worshipping when the music stops - it becomes the **lifestyle** of every believer: Let Everything Praise the Lord.**

1. Worship begins with a longing - grows in a gathering - and overflows into a lifestyle.

E. **Psalm 122** is one of the most needed psalms for the church today.

1. We live in an age where many Christians say, *"I can worship God on the golf course, at the beach, or hiking."* While that's true in one sense (i.e. we can worship anywhere), Psalm 122 reminds us **there is something uniquely valuable about gathering with God's people. Worship was never intended to be merely private.**

F. **THE HEART OF WORSHIP.**

G. Psalm 84 **and** Psalm 122 intentionally complement one another.

H. Psalm 84 is filled with **singular language**: *"my soul, my heart, my strength"*.

Psalm 122 quickly becomes **plural**: *let us go... our feet... the tribes... our brothers.*

1. It's as if the psalms themselves teach that **longing for God** naturally leads us into **the fellowship of God's people**.

I. **Slide6** Week 2 - Psalm 122 - **The Joy of Gathering With God's People**

J. Big Idea: Worship is not simply about *coming to a place*; it is about **gathering as God's people in God's presence**.

K. Key Verse: *I was glad when they said to me, Let us go to the house of the LORD!* (1)

L. **What makes a family reunion memorable?** - It usually **isn't** the food, It isn't the decorations, It **isn't** even the location, **It's the people**. [That's the spirit of Psalm 122]

1. David isn't simply excited about arriving in Jerusalem. He is excited because God's people are gathering to worship together.

M. **Today**, many believers ask, *"Why do I need church?"* Psalm 122 is one answer to that question.

III. Slide7a 1. WORSHIP INVITES US INTO JOY (1-2)

A. 122 A SONG OF ASCENTS. OF DAVID. 1 I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD!” 2 Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!

B. Slide7b Summarizing the Songs of Ascents:

1. They trace the worshiper’s journey from living in a hostile world (Ps.120). Traveling by faith (Ps.121–132). Rejoicing in the fellowship of God’s people (Ps.133). And ending with Continual praise of God (Ps.134).
 - a) Ps.120 in another country w/liars. Ps.121 getting close. Ps.122 Made it!

C. Slide7c One memorable outline is:

1. Leaving the world (Ps.120–121). Gathering with God’s people (122–128). Growing in faith (129–132). Glorifying God (133–134).
 - a) It’s a beautiful picture of the Christian life: we begin with **longing**. we journey by **faith**. we **worship together**. and we leave **blessing God** until we gather again.

D. Notice David didn’t say, “*I went to the house of the Lord*” - He said, “*I was glad... when they invited me to go.*” [nor “*I’m glad I finally found time.*”]

1. It was an invitation. “**Let us go...**” - Worship was never intended to be an **isolated** experience. It has always been a **community invitation**.
2. **Throughout Scripture God gathers a people**: Israel. The disciples. The early church. The Church today.
 - a) Someone invited him. There is something beautiful about believers inviting one another into worship.
 - b) Church attendance isn’t merely fulfilling an obligation. **It is responding to an invitation.**

E. Do I approach church with **anticipation** or obligation? When was the last time I **invited** someone to worship with me? Would people describe me as **glad** to gather?

IV. Slide8a **2. WORSHIP UNITES GOD’S PEOPLE (3-5)**

- A. 3 Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together, 4 to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD. 5 There thrones for judgment were set, the thrones of the house of David
- B. Jerusalem was *where the tribes came together*. “*to which the tribes go up...*”
1. Slide8b People came from different regions. Different occupations. Different backgrounds. [yet, One destination. One God. One purpose].
 2. The city physically **united** what geography had separated.
 - a) **The church** does the same today: Young/Old. Rich/Poor. *Different ethnicities. Different stories. One Savior.*
 - b) Paul would later write, “*There is one body...*” (Eph. 4)
- C. **Corporate worship** reminds us we belong to something much bigger than ourselves.
1. One reason Satan loves **isolation** is because *isolated Christians become vulnerable Christians*.
 - a) The NT knows nothing of lone-ranger Christianity.
 2. *We need one another. We strengthen one another. We encourage one another. We sing truths to one another. We bear one another's burdens.*
- D. Illustration: *Imagine a campfire*. One coal separated from the others quickly grows cold. Together they burn brightly. That's *God's design* for His people.
- E. Am I merely attending church or **belonging** to the church? **Who** encourages my faith? Whose faith am **I** strengthening?

V. Slide9a **3. WORSHIP PRODUCES PEACE (6-9)**

- A. 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! “May they be secure who love you! 7 Peace be within your walls and security within your towers!” 8 For my brothers and companions' sake I will say, “Peace be within you!” 9 For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good.
- B. David suddenly shifts. He begins praying. “*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.*”

1. *The shalom of Jerusalem* was crucial here for it to function as a workable site for **worship** and **government**. [diff: theocratic **vs.** a secular non-religious state] (yes God still has a future plan for his chosen people, the Israelites).
 2. Today maybe our prayers are not limited to military power, **but** for spiritual peace. Paul prayed Rm.10:1 *“dear brother and sisters, the longing of my heart and my prayer to God is for the people of Israel to be saved”*.
 3. It is good and right to **pray for peace** in the Middle East. **But** the Christians ultimate pray for peace is *Come Lord Jesus. Maranatha!*
- C. **Slide9b** The Hebrew word **shalom** means far more than the absence of conflict. It speaks of wholeness, flourishing, completeness, harmony with God and others.
1. David prays for **peace** because **gathered worship** should **overflow** into **the life of the city**.
- D. **Notice his motivation.** *“For my brothers and companions’ sake...”* **Then**, *“For the sake of the house of the LORD...”* **Love** for God’s people. **Love** for God’s house. **Love** for God’s city. **Worship** changes how we **love** others.
- E. Healthy churches don’t merely **consume worship**, they **contribute to peace**.
1. Peacemakers. Encouragers. Servants. Prayer warriors. Bridge builders.
- F. We don’t simply ask, *What can I get from church?* We begin asking, *How can I strengthen Christ’s church?*

VI. **Slide10a CHRIST CONNECTION** *the ultimate David is coming*

- A. **Jesus is our peace.** (Eph. 2) **He** has broken down every dividing wall. Our **unity** isn’t based upon *personalities*, **it’s** built upon **Christ**.
- B. **Jerusalem** was the city where God’s people gathered.
Jesus came to Jerusalem knowing it would lead Him to the cross.
1. **Slide10b** Through His death and resurrection, He created something greater than a physical city - *a spiritual family*.

2. **Today**, believers from every nation are being gathered into one body, **the church**, **and** 1 day we will gather around His throne in **the New Jerusalem**.
**Every Sunday gathering is a small foretaste of that eternal worship.*

C. Am I helping **build peace** within Christ's church? Do I **pray regularly** for my church and its leaders? How can I leave church each week **making someone else's burden lighter**?

D. **Conclusion**

E. Psalm 122 **begins** with joy, it **ends** with *seeking the good of others*.

1. **That's what worship does**. It lifts our eyes toward **God**, and opens our hearts toward **one another**.
2. **The happiest Christians are rarely** those who ask, *"What did I get today?"* They ask, *"How did I glorify Christ and encourage His people?"*

F. **We don't simply go to church**. We **gather** as God's family to **meet** with God, **encourage** one another, **and** become a **witness** to the world.

G. **Closing Challenge**

H. I encourage you to arrive next Wed/Sun with a different mindset. Instead of asking, *What am I going to get out of church today?* **ask: Who** can I encourage today? **Who** might need prayer today? **Who** can I welcome today? **How** can I help someone else experience *the joy of gathering*?

I. (From Romulo) Next Wed come prepared w/a **scripture of Praise** to read publicly. (no extra commentary - Let His Word be proclaimed).

J. Keywords: Joy, Gathering, Worship.