

LESSON 30

PRAISE AND THANK THE LORD!

Psalm 100

A psalm for giving thanks.

¹Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

²Serve the Lord with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

³Know that the Lord, he is God!

It is he who made us, and we are his;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving,

and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him; bless his name!

⁵For the Lord is good;

his steadfast love endures forever,

and his faithfulness to all generations.

WELCOME: *Fixing Our Focus*

Spend a couple of minutes to list down on a piece of paper (or on your smartphone) all the things that you are thankful to the Lord today. Share this list with the group. As a group, reflect on whether it was easy to come up with the list and discuss why or why not?

WORSHIP: *Adoring Our God*

Suggested songs:

Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down by Dave Doherty

You are Good by Israel Houghton

WORD: *Understanding the Word*

Lesson Aim: Members will joyfully praise and give thanks to God for he alone is God and he has redeemed them to be his people.

Introduction

When was the last time you were bursting with joy because of gratitude? Where did you think that joy came from?

People say that joy is not happiness. Happiness is a fleeting emotion while joy is a deeply seated attitude that isn't affected by our circumstances. Psalm 100 is a short yet encouraging passage for God's people to give thanks to the Lord with joy and gladness. The psalmist is enthusiastic and wants everyone to take part in thanksgiving and praise. He calls all God's people to give thanks to him for the privilege of being part of his people.

Leader: Lead in reading Psalm 100 aloud together. Then read the paragraph on the "Key Verse."

Key Verse: The psalmist calls all God's people to praise and thank him; to "know that the Lord, he is God" – there is no other!

Underline all the actions the psalmist calls upon the people to do. Then encircle all his descriptions of God.

Psalm 100. Theme: _____

1. The psalmist calls upon "all the earth" to praise and worship God with joy and gladness (*v. 1*). How would you reconcile this invitation with a world that has not been reconciled with God? Will all the earth actually praise and worship God with joy and gladness?
2. What do you think the psalmist meant by making a joyful noise, serving the Lord, and coming into his presence with singing (*vv. 1-2*)?
3. What do you think is the importance of the psalmist's declaration that "the Lord, he is God?" What difference would it make if a) there was no god or b) there were many gods (*v. 3*)?

4. What relationship does God have with his worshipers? Why do you think the psalmist mentions that God made them and they are his people (v. 3)?

5. How does the psalmist portray one who enters the temple to worship God? What does this say about how one should worship God (v. 4)?

6. How does the psalmist describe God in verse 5? What does this say about who God is?

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 1-5.

WALK: *Applying the Word*

Questions for Adults

1. What is your attitude or state of mind when you go to church to worship him with fellow believers? What can you do to be more intentional in giving thanks and praise to God in your everyday life?
2. What are the things (or who are the people) that vie for God's place in your life? What practical ways can you encourage one another in your group to make God a priority and be in daily communion with him?
3. What does it mean for you to be part of God's people? How are you expressing this reality in the way you live?
4. Individually and as a group, pray back this psalm to God. You could start by saying something like:

Father, you are God! You made us and we are yours...

5. Pray for the body of believers all over the world.

Questions for the Youth

1. Studies show that people who are thankful on a daily basis achieve their goals and live long. With God loving us and showering us with blessings every day, how can we be more thankful for who He is and what he's done? How thankful are you for who God is?
2. There's always that one person in class that lights up the room. They somehow lift everyone's spirits even without being engaged. That's how the psalmist was, sharing the joy of being part of God's people. Does your joy in the Lord light up the people around you? How can you intentionally share your joy to others?

Questions for Children

1. The psalmist declared that God made us and he takes care of us. How true is this in your life? How has God shown his love and care for you?
2. How do you feel knowing that God's love and faithfulness lasts forever? What does this make you feel towards God?
3. Truly, God is worthy of our praise. What are some of the ways that you can praise God?

BLESS THE LORD!

Psalm 103

Of David.

- ¹Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!
- ²Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,
³who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
⁴who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
⁵who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- ⁶The LORD works righteousness
and justice for all who are oppressed.
- ⁷He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
- ⁸The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- ⁹He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger forever.
- ¹⁰He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
- ¹²as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.
- ¹³As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.
- ¹⁴For he knows our frame;
he remembers that we are dust.
- ¹⁵As for man, his days are like grass;
he flourishes like a flower of the field;
- ¹⁶for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,

and its place knows it no more.

¹⁷But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting

on those who fear him,

and his righteousness to children's children,

¹⁸to those who keep his covenant

and remember to do his commandments.

¹⁹The LORD has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.

²⁰Bless the LORD, O you his angels,

you mighty ones who do his word,

obeying the voice of his word!

²¹Bless the LORD, all his hosts,

his ministers, who do his will!

²²Bless the LORD, all his works,

in all places of his dominion.

Bless the LORD, O my soul!

WELCOME: *Fixing Our Focus*

Read through the entire psalm and pick out verses which are meaningful to you. Share these verses to the group and explain to them why you chose them.

WORSHIP: *Adoring Our God*

Suggested songs:

10,000 Reasons by Matt Redman

WORD: *Understanding the Word*

Lesson Aim: Members will commit their whole being to praising the Lord and keeping his commands because of his steadfast love and righteousness.

Introduction

Having a good memory is a gem! Sadly, the advance in technology and the multiplication of various distractions hinder the development of good memory. These days, we need alarms from our gadgets to remind us of our appointments and things to do to make sure that we won't miss any

of it. There have also been an increase in distractions that keep us from focusing our minds to what truly matters and what is at hand.

Psalm 103 is a reminder to individuals and to the community of God to keep their life in tune with God by placing their focus solely on him. The psalmist's personal reflection of God's blessings in his life led him to remember who God is and what he has done for Israel and to all those who fear him. This caused the psalmist to well up in praise and worship and he invited all creation to join him in worshipping God.

Leader: Lead in reading Psalm 103 aloud together. Then read the paragraph on the "Key Verse."

Key Verse: The psalm starts and ends with "Bless the Lord, O my soul," an exhortation by the psalmist to praise God with his whole being. The rest of the psalm gives the reasons why God is to be praised.

Psalm 103:1-5. Theme: _____

1. The psalmist spoke to himself saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." What does it mean to bless the Lord? Does God need man's blessing?

2. The psalmist was exhorting his "soul" to bless God. What he meant was for "all that is within me" to bless God. What does it mean for a person to bless God with their entire being?

The Hebrew word for "bless" is derived from the word "knee," possibly implying the bending of the knee.

3. Underline all the "benefits" listed by the psalmist that God endowed upon his life. What does this list show about God's character and blessings?

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 1-5.

Psalm 103:6-12. Theme: _____

Encircle the people whom God blessed in these verses.

4. In verses 6-8, the psalmist recalled how God had blessed Israel in the past. He described them as people “who are oppressed.” Why do you think he described them that way?

5. Compare verse 8 with Exodus 34:6. What do these verses say about God’s character?

6. Verses 9-12 shows God’s great love and forgiveness to those who fear him. Read Exodus 32 to see the context of Exodus 34, where verse 8 repeats how God described himself. How has God shown his great love and forgiveness to the Israelites?

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 6-12.

Psalm 103:13-19. Theme: _____

Encircle the descriptions of the people who are objects of God’s steadfast love and compassion. Then underline descriptions of man. Finally put a box on descriptions of God’s steadfast love and righteousness.

7. Who are the people to whom God shows compassion and steadfast love? What are the descriptions of these people? How would you describe a father’s compassion (*vv. 13, 17, 18*)?

8. How did the psalmist describe man? How did he contrast man with the love and righteousness that God lavishes upon him? What was highlighted in this contrast (*vv. 14-17*)?

9. God's throne is in heaven, but his kingdom rules over all creation. But not all people shall experience his love and righteousness. According to the psalmist who are the ones who will get to experience it?

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 13-19.

Psalm 103:20-22. Theme: _____

Underline all those who the psalmist called upon to bless the Lord.

10. Describe the people whom the psalmist called upon to bless the Lord. Why do you think the psalmist gave the call to all these people?

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 20-22.

WALK: *Applying the Word*

Questions for Adults

1. God shows his favor to us. Among those he has shown you, which is the most significant?
2. God shows his love to those who are oppressed. Think of someone you know who is currently oppressed. How can you reach out to this person so that they may experience God's love?
3. What are some ways that GCF, as a community of believers, has expressed her praise and worship of God? How can our worship of God have an impact on the Ortigas community?

4. How can you encourage others to worship and praise God? What might reaching out to those who don't have a relationship with God look like?
5. Individually and as a group, pray back this psalm to God. You could start by saying something like:

Father, thank you for forgiving my sins, for giving me good health, for saving me from sin and death, for lavishing me with your steadfast love and mercy, for blessing me with all that is good...

6. Pray for GCF (Prayer requests supplied by the Leader).

Questions for the Youth

1. Parents are supposed to love their children—to model for them how to live in accordance to God's Words, to affirm them in their obedience, and to discipline them for disobedience. They protect their children from harm and shower them with love. Parents also understand that sometimes their child's ability to make decisions is still developing so they don't discipline their child right away when they make mistakes. But even if our parents may not be exactly like that, we can be sure God is. How does it feel to know that God does not treat us according to our mistakes?
2. In what ways has God made himself known to you? In what ways can you engage deeper with the Lord?
3. Maybe someone in your group needs to hear that they are understood, or that they are protected, or that they need forgiveness. How can you pray for and minister to this person?

Questions for Children

1. In verses 1-5, the psalmist blessed God because of the many blessings God has showered upon him. What are some of the blessings that God has showered upon you recently?
2. Verses 6-14 talks about God's mercy and forgiveness. What are some things which you need to confess to God?
3. What are some ways in which you can "bless the Lord?" Make it a practice to give thanks and praise to God every day.