

The Summer of Psalms

By Doug Hamilton

3) Service for God

In the series on the Psalms we have thus covered two themes of Christianity, Praise to God and Protection from God. The songs that we have sung for our worship service have all come from the Psalms and paralleled the themes. In the third lesson of the series, we will discuss our Service for God in our Christian perspective.

- Psalm 100:2 Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing.
 - We are to gladly serve the LORD by coming before Him with joyful singing. That was the aim of the songs that we have sung in the worship service this morning. We have an obligation for service to God and the Psalms capture this
 - Psalm 102:22 When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.
 - Psalm 72:11 And let all kings bow down before him, All nations serve him.
 - Psalm 110:3 Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You *as* the dew. / Song 722 “Let the Beauty of Jesus Be Seen”

The Lord clearly knows if we are serving Him.

- 1 Chronicles 28:9 “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

Two Accesses of Serving God: Using the Psalms along with other verses from the Bible, let us examine service to God.

A) Serving God directly

Here are some of the many ways that we can serve God directly.

1) Proclaiming His Message

- Psalm 96:2 Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day.
- 1 Timothy 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service,
- Acts 9:15-16 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; ¹⁶ for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

2) Obeying His Commandments

- Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*; His praise endures forever.
- Deuteronomy 13:4 “You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.
- Joshua 22:5 “Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and hold fast to Him and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

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3) Living His Pure Life

- Psalm 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping *it* according to Your word. / Song 432 “How Shall the Young Secure Their Hearts?”
- 1 Timothy 1:5 But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

4) Worship

- Psalm 42:1-2 As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God? / song “As a Deer”
- Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship.

B) Serving God indirectly

Jesus introduces us to an interesting concept concerning service to God. *Matthew 25:35-40* ‘For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; ³⁶ naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ ³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? ³⁸ ‘And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? ³⁹ ‘When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ ⁴⁰ “The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’ When we reach out to others in the church, we are indirectly reaching out to God.

Paul summarily writes a list to the Christians in *Romans 12:10-13* *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; ¹¹ not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, ¹³ contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. ¹⁷ Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.*

In the opening of verse ten, Paul was connecting the service to one another with service to God. In the remainder of the passage he identifies ten goals of service to others in the church that indirectly serve God. The Psalms as well as the rest of the Bible capture these ten types of these “one another” service factors.

1) Rejoicing in Hope

- Psalm 118:24 This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
- Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

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- 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.
- We must be willing to share the joy of our hope in Christ to sustain us until that glorious day. When we rejoice together, we are in service to God.

2) Persevering in Trials

- Psalm 57:7 My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises!
- Philippians 2:17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.
- Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;
- When another in the church is going through a trial, we must come to their aid and share their struggle in the cause of the gospel (Phil 4:3). That is yet another way to serve God indirectly. When we endure together, we are in service to God.

3) Devotion to Prayer

- Psalm 32:6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him.
- Luke 2:36-37 "...Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher"..."never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers."
- James 5:16 "...confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.
- The family that prays together stays together. Never is this truer than in the family called the church. If you want to serve God, pray for and with your fellow Christian.

4) Contribution to the Need of the Saints

- Psalm 146:9 The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, But He thwarts the way of the wicked.
- Psalm 68:5 A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, Is God in His holy habitation.
- Romans 15:25-27 "...but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. ²⁷ Yes, they were pleased *to do so*, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things.
- When we are reaching out to one another in a contributing way, we are indirectly serving God.

5) Practicing Hospitality

- Psalm 119:63 I am a companion of all those who fear You, And of those who keep Your precepts.
- 1 Peter 4:9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint.
- Hebrews 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

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- When we are inviting others into our homes and our lives, we are serving God in an indirect powerful way that changes the outcomes of many.
- 6) Emotional Connection
- Psalm 32:11 Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.
 - James 5:13 Is anyone among you suffering? *Then* he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.
 - Luke 15:6 “And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’
 - When we are sharing our joy, our sorrows and our pain with each other, it shows that we care and the result is service to God.
- 7) One-Mindedness
- Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity!
 - Romans 15:5-6 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.
 - When we are seeking to agree on the issues of God, we are actually in service to God.
- 8) Interactive Humility
- Psalm 10:17 O LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will strengthen their heart, You will incline Your ear
 - Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.
 - When we are humble in heart toward one another the result is service to the Living God.
- 9) Non-vengeful Reactions
- Psalm 94:1 O LORD, God of vengeance, God of vengeance, shine forth!
 - Romans 12:18-19 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. ¹⁹ Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath *of God*, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord.
 - The Christian that is not willing to trust God in matters of revenge will never be the servant of God that he is called to be. We must leave that to God.
- 10) Peace-driven Attitude
- Psalm 122:7-9 “May peace be within your walls, And prosperity within your palaces.” ⁸ For the sake of my brothers and my friends, I will now say, “May peace be within you.” ⁹ For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good.

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- Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.
- James 3:18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
- When we are a people that seek to serve God by demonstrating a peaceful attitude toward our fellow Christian, then we will become the true people of God.

Like much of the Bible, the Psalms represents true service to God, both directly and indirectly through the service to others. Many of the songs that we sing from the songs deal with that very topic.

Closing Story

“During the Civil War,” writes author Tim Riter, “President Lincoln attended Wednesday evening services at a church close to the White House. Accompanied by Secret Service agents, Lincoln would sit in the pastor’s study during the message; then they would walk back together. One evening, after the service, an agent asked Lincoln, ‘What did you think of tonight’s sermon?’

Lincoln replied, ‘It was brilliantly conceived, biblical, relevant, and well presented.’

“‘So, it was a great sermon?’

“‘No, it failed. It failed because Dr. Gurley did not ask us to do something great.’”

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The Charge to the congregation: Take this reminder from the Psalms and do great things for God and those made in the likeness and image of Him.

Service 3: Service for God

71- As the Deer

432 – How Shall the Young Secure their Hearts

Prayer

722 – Let the Beauty of Jesus be Seen

354 – I Gave my Life for Thee

Lord's Supper

676 – Living for Jesus

Sermon

828 – Instruments of Your Peace