

Sing and Worship and Don't Forget

Outline from: Come Now Is The Time To Worship. by Davon Huss @Sermon Central.Com

(Slide shows tour of Kirk Maughold on the Isle of Man)

Segue: here is a Christian outpost, a gathering place for believers for over 1,500 years. Can you imagine the events, the history that has occurred around this hill top? Everybody wants to be buried there.... but very few still worship there. Why? Because like most others in northern Europe, the people have forgotten how precious and joyful it is be a Christian, to worship our living God; you might say they have hardened their hearts.

Psalm 95 is a call for believers to remember and respond to God with joyous worship.

<u>COME!</u> LET US SING TO THE LORD	LET US MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE
LET US COME WITH THANKSGIVING	LET US WORSHIP & BOW
LET US KNEEL	DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.

¹ O come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Gathering for worship is not a new thing. Christians have gathered on hilltops, in caves and in buildings for 2000 years. Jewish people have gathered to worship for many centuries longer than that! The Psalmist is calling us once again to gather in true worship that is thankful, joyous and reverent.

If we are going to worship, we should do it in a way that pleases God. Certainly we can worship alone – and we should do so many times a day. But there is also an aspect of gathering in worship that can do so much more for our spirit, that can bring us joy, so the Psalmist invites us **to come!** To gather, not once but in 4 different God honoring ways.

For instance, **we are to COME JOYFULLY** (vs. 1)

The Jewish religion was a joyful religion. Christianity is a joyful religion.

Yes, there are times of sorrow. Yes, there are times for repentance. Yes, there are times to grieve. But overall, Christianity is a faith of joy.

- It is a joy to know the God of the universe personally.
- It is a joy to come boldly before God through the forgiving work of His Son.
- It is a joy that our sins are forgiven.
- It is a joy that we have eternal life.
- It is a joy that Jesus will never leave or forsake us.

So we are told to come with singing, to come making a joyful noise.

Worship is essentially an act of joyful gratitude! Our outward worship should be an expression of what is going on in our hearts! Notice that we are worshipping **the LORD** – the great “I AM.” We are worshipping the, “**rock of our salvation**”.

A rock cannot be moved. Our salvation as Christians is “rock solid”! When Jesus said, “On this rock I will build my church,” the rock that He was referring to was Himself. That is why one of our hymns sing, *On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand*. How does our worship show the joy in our hearts?

WE COME JOYFULLY, WE ALSO COME THANKFULLY

² Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

There are some people I only hear from when they want something.

Do you know anybody like that?

When does God hear from us?

And when God does hear from us, do we first come with a thankful heart for all that He’s already done?

How often do we begin our approach to God with a thankful heart? Our Bible encourages us, *“to be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”* (Philippians 4:6).

Why is thanksgiving so important? Because remembering what God has done for us through the years, helps us realize just how much He has done!

Remembering is also a part of our third way to worship. WE COME KNOWLEDGEABLY

³ For the LORD is a **great God**,
and a great King above all gods.

⁴ In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.

⁵ The sea is his, for he made it,
and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

The more we know about God and the better we know God, the more joyful and thankful we will be when we come into His presence.

There are so many ways that God is a great God, but one of the ways this Psalm describes is His omnipresence; God is everywhere present with us from the heights of the mountains, to the depths of the earth, even to the farthest seas. In another of my favorite Psalms, the singer rejoices that there is literally no place on this earth where we can hide from God’s presence; even in the darkest place, God will still be there with us (Ps 139:9).

Bidden of unbidden, God is still present, so we can worship God anywhere, but God takes special pleasure when we joyfully gather, when we come into His presence with thanksgiving.

⁶ O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

⁷ For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

The fourth way we should be coming to God in worship is REVERENTLY.

We don't use the word, "reverent" much more; it means *to show profound respect or awe for another*. The word, "worship" in Hebrew means *to prostrate oneself* - to **bow** or **kneel**. Around here we don't literally kneel when we pray or worship. Unlike our Catholic brothers and sisters, our churches aren't really designed for kneeling and I think we have lost something there. **But we should be kneeling in our hearts**, showing God our profound respect. So perhaps we should be kneeling to pray when we can at home.

And the final reason of course for us to gather joyfully, thankfully and reverently to worship God, is because **not only is He our Creator He is also our Shepherd**. God first created us and when we became lost, He sought us, through Christ found us, and now He cares for us as HIS PEOPLE, we are the sheep of His pasture. We certainly should never feel lonely, because in this Church we have many people who care for us; the greatest of whom is God our creator, our savior, our shepherd.

And so we are called to come together joyfully, thankfully, reverently and knowledgeably to worship God. But notice, that this invitation to come also includes a caution.

O that today you would listen to his voice!

⁸ Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

⁹ when your ancestors tested me,
and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.

If we hear God's voice calling us to worship Him, let's not harden our hearts. Something that is hardened is not pliable, not moldable; stubborn. Hearing the Word of God, obeying it and applying it to our lives, will lead us to being more repentant of the sins that God reveals to us. This will keep us pliable, moldable in God's hands.

We think of the non-religious as being "hard hearted," people who deny His existence, who scoff at His moral laws. But perhaps some of the most hard hearted people are those who grew up in Church, but no longer have time for God – they now take both God and their relationship with Him for granted. Like the Israelites who left Egypt. They expect God to care for them and will call if they need Him, or will let Him know if they think His care is lacking.

In the wilderness, when their food ran out, the Israelites complained; and God provided delicious food, quail and manna to eat. When they ran out of water, they again complained against God, quarreled with Moses and whined about going back to Egypt. God again miraculously provided water from the rock, but thereafter that place was called *Massah and Meribah*, because in their unbelief they tested God's patience and quarreled with Moses.

Ten times in their journey to the Promised Land these people tested God. Then upon reaching the borders of the Promised Land, still unwilling to trust God's protection, they refused to enter. Thus condemning their children to 40 years of wandering through the wilderness until all those adults who had refused to trust God had died.

Israel's bottom line problem was faithlessness. Refusal to ever trust God's proven ability to provide.

Should they have known God's power? Yes! For 2½ years, God had shown His abilities to them. But as each new trial came up, they refused to trust His provision in the past would also serve the present. Because of their hard-hearted unbelief, these people never entered the rest of the Promised Land.

The Psalmist is telling us not to be like these people! When it comes to worshipping God, don't be stubborn. Don't be hard hearted. Remember how God has provided for you in the past, so that you can trust Him with your future and joyfully, reverently, worship God today.

So now, let's resume the singing.