

3. Revival Fire in the Church

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Subtitle: Enter God's Gates with Thanksgiving

Habakkuk 3:2 (NIV) *Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known ...*

- There've been many outpourings of the Spirit over the history of the church
- Past revivals are good, but present day revivals are better
- It's time for a fresh outpouring of the Spirit in our day

Acts 3:19–20 (WUESTNT) *Therefore repent at once, instantly changing your attitude, and perform a right-about-face in order that your sins may be obliterated, in order that there may come epoch-making periods of spiritual revival and refreshment from the presence of the Lord ...*

Main points of last week's message:

- a. Coming boldly to God at the Throne of Grace to receive help
- b. Coming into God's Presence to bring Worship
- c. Songs of Ascent - Old Testament Journey into the Presence of God
- d. Moses "climbs" up the mountain into the Presence of God
- e. Now, in the New Testament, the Presence of God comes to us

1. In the O.T. we see an established Pattern for coming into God's Presence

Psalm 100:1-4 (NKJV) *Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! ² Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing. ³ Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. ⁴ Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.*

- The O.T. Songs of Ascents are listed from Psalm 120 to Psalm 134
- Psalm 100 describes in a few short verses the whole journey from the "lands" of Israel up into "God's presence" at the temple in Jerusalem
- This short Psalm outlines the prescribed & established method of how God's people were supposed to approach God

- The Israelites were exhorted to:
 - i. Make a joyful shout to the Lord
 - ii. Come before His presence with singing
 - iii. Enter His gates with thanksgiving
 - iv. Come into His courts with praise
- The Psalms also mention musical instruments, some of which were by design very noisy, such as percussion instruments (cymbals), trumpets (rams horns), etc.
- The pattern for praise, thanksgiving & worship laid down in the Old Testament describes an exuberant & noisy expression before God
- God likes joyful noise when we give Him praise, thanksgiving & worship
- Evidently there was no option for being a quiet worshipper

2. N.T. Worship should follow the Pattern laid out in the O.T.

Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV) *Therefore by Him let us **continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.***

- The writer of the book of Hebrews uses O.T. language & examples to stir N.T. believers to give praise & thanksgiving and worship to God

Psalm 47:1 (NKJV)

*Oh, **clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!***

- Israel's praise, thanksgiving & worship was to be a demonstrative expression before God, including clapping hands, shouting & uplifted hands
- Praise & worship is one of the highest expressions of our faith
- The Israelites walked toward the presence of God, singing as they went, & eventually arrived at the temple at Jerusalem in the presence of God
- Today, the church comes together to praise & worship God, & God's manifest presence comes to us
- **The degree or intensity of the manifest presence of God that we experience today is largely determined by the depth or intensity of our praise & worship**
- If we took time to worship God wholeheartedly for several hours, the presence of God would become so heavy among us that many would not be able to stand on our feet

- That's what happened at the dedication of Solomon's Temple
- As they worshipped, the priests could not stand (fell out on the floor)
- They could not continue worshipping because they were overcome by God's presence

Psalm 100:4 (NKJV)

*"Enter into His gates with **thanksgiving**, and into His courts with **praise**. Be thankful to Him, and **bless His name**."*

- These "gates" & "courts" were the gates & courts of the Tabernacle of Moses, & later in the Temple of Solomon

3. The established Method of coming into God's Presence is:

- i. **Thanksgiving**
We enter God's "gates" & thank Him for everything He has done for us
 - ii. **Praise**
We come into His "courts" praising Him for His mighty acts & His greatness
 - iii. **Worship**
We worship Him for who He is
- It is no coincidence that church services around the world begin with thanksgiving, praise & worship
 - We are supposed to feel refreshed in God's presence after our time of praising & worshipping God
 - After that, we hear God's voice through the reading & teaching of God's Word

Psalm 95:1–2 (NKJV) *Oh **come**, let us **sing to the Lord**! Let us **shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation**. 2 Let us **come before His presence with thanksgiving**; Let us **shout joyfully to Him with psalms**.*

- Take note of the instructions:
 - Come
 - Sing to the Lord
 - Shout joyfully
 - Come before His presence with thanksgiving
 - Shout joyfully to Him with psalms

4. The Levites were leading Praise and Worship

Nehemiah 12:8 (NKJV) *Moreover the Levites were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah who led the thanksgiving psalms, he and his brethren.*

- Vs. 8 lists the names of 6 Levite singers who were worship leaders, who led the “songs of thanksgiving”

Nehemiah 11:17 (NCV) *There was Mattaniah son of Mica. (Mica was the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph.) **Mattaniah was the director who led the people in thanksgiving and prayer.** There was Bakbukiah, who was second in charge over his fellow Levites. And there was Abda son of Shammua. (Shammua was the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.)*

- Evidently, Mattaniah was the chief worship leader
- The tribe of Levites were priests, singers, musicians and gatekeepers
- Worship leaders, singers & musicians open the “gates” to God’s presence
- Our exuberant praise & worship opens the “gates” to God’s presence

5. Bringing our Tithes & Offerings with Worship & Thanksgiving

Deuteronomy 26:10-11 (GNT) *So now I bring to the Lord the first part of the harvest that He has given me.’ “Then set the basket down in the Lord’s presence and worship there. 11 Be grateful for the good things that the Lord your God has given you and your family; and let the Levites and the foreigners who live among you join in the celebration.*

- Our tithes & offerings are part of our worship of God
- Tithes & offerings should always be presented to God with worship & thanksgiving
- We should bring our tithe before the Lord
- But the practice of tithing is not completed until we have worshipped God