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September 17, 2000

Fall Tune-up Psalm 100

The transition from summer to the busyness of fall this year has been one of the more difficult ones for me. I'm not sure whether its been trying to recover from our trip to Ukraine, feeling overwhelmed by all the things that need to be done to prepare for ministry in the fall. A nagging cold fighting for my energy. More than an average share of disappointing circumstances and people. But it's just been one of those tough times to try and get back on track. Has it been particularly tough for any of you this fall? I think God knew I needed a tune up for the fall. It was encouraging and convicting all wrapped up together. He needed to remind me of some things, to redirect my perspective, to transform my affections, to restore the joy that had strangely vaporized. To begin pumping in the motivation I need by seeing things in a better perspective, a more godly perspective. I needed a tune up for a busy fall.

God directed my attention to the Psalms. When you are down, when you are discouraged. When you are feeling attacked and overwhelmed, I encourage you to take a warm, leisurely bath in the Psalms. You will discover one who can relate to what you are going through. You will discover a Psalmist who is real and can encourage you. The Psalms are a great place to go when you are in need of a tune-up. Turn with me in your Bibles to Psalm 100.

You will find the collection of Psalms in the middle of your Bibles. Drop it open and chances are your Bible will open to Psalms. At least half of these songs are written by David, King of Israel about 3000 years ago. Some are those written by temple choir directors, Asaph, Korah and others. Several were written by King David's son, Solomon, several by prophets and even Moses has a tune or two in this collection of worship. The author of Psalm 100 is not mentioned, it may have been written many years ago, but this very familiar Psalm is call for those of us who are in need of a spiritual tune up this fall. It is call that invites into the presence of God and an intimate relationship with Him. It challenges us

to tune up our attitude in service and arouses our heart for worship. Psalm 100 is a call to the burned out, the lazy, those wandering in a spiritual desert, to those heavy with difficult circumstance, to those who feel their worship has been flat and their service to God a tiresome chore bound by duty. Read with me Psalm 100. (READ)

Probably the last person you want to spend time with when you are feeling discouraged or spiritually down is an upbeat optimistic go getter. When I'm feeling down..sometimes I want to feel down. Maybe I don't feel too much like praising God, or praying to Him or putting on a happy face serving him. So I don't necessarily need some fake Eddy Haskal optimism coming alongside me and say, "Hey chum. why so glum. The sun is out. Don't you know this is a real zippity do dah day. Wake up, wipe off that frown and get with the program." No, we don't need any more fake optimism. On the surface, Psalm 100 may sound like a high school football cheerleader, but digging deeper we find some real substance and meat behind the enthusiasm. There are valid reasons, purpose behind the enthusiastic words. Those purposes remembered will help us to realign our attitudes and actions so they come in step with God's word. So.....Are you ready for a spring tune-up?

Look with me at verse 1 of Psalm 100. It starts off with an exuberant bang. *Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth.* Have you felt like your worship of God has been a little flat lately. You read that first line and say. man, I wish I could have that kind of worship and enthusiasm for God. But..I barely made it here this morning. I have had a terrible week. Why just this morning my husband and I had a terrible argument, I yelled at the kids and kicked the dog. I don't feel like doing anything joyfully, let alone worship God. Anyway...worship is boring. It's too traditional, too contemporary, too many repeating phrases, too many words I've never heard of. Too old. Too new. The people next to me can't sing on key. The sound system is too loud, its too soft...and that pastor just keeps droning on and on. I'm too tired, I need a rest. I can't worship...all I can think about is that person I'm having a conflict with. I can't worship like that Psalm 100 guy, all I can think about is what is cooking for lunch, sitting down watching the football game, or the Olympics. I can't worship all I can think about is that business deal I hope will come through this next week, or that project I want to finish. I

can't worship I'm too overwhelmed by the busyness of the fall schedule, Oh, How will I ever get all those things done. Ever had a hard time focusing on worship on Sunday morning. You are probably having a read hard time now that I gave your mind plenty of things to be distracted with.

The Psalmist is unashamed to tell us. Even command us to be enthusiastic in our worship of God. Shout joyfully to the Lord...all the earth. Our enthusiasm for the Lord reveals who it is we are truly worshipping. You may say; Wait a minute. I've never worn a very enthusiastic personality. I rarely get excited about anything, and then I don't show it. OK. I agree. Many of us don't jump up and down, shriek and scream when something good happens. Although I've watched some of you describe catching a great big fish or bagging that five point bull. Or your sports team come from behind victory and there is enthusiasm in your voice. It can't help but leak out. "I passed my driver's test" "I scored the winning goal." "I landed that big contract" "I got the job" "She said yes", "The dress fits again". It was Mark's birthday this week and when a big package came in the mail he was literally shaking with excitement. Sure we all have different personalities and will respond with varying degrees of outward expression, but we all do get excited about the things we really love.

Take an enthusiasm check. When was the last time you were enthusiastic? What was it all about? A pay raise? A completed project? Your child doing well? Making a great choice? I took a short mental inventory and plenty of times when I was enthusiastic. But most of the times it was because of something that worked out well for me, or my team, my family, made my life better or easier. That's not bad...but why then were there so few times I remember myself getting joyfully enthusiastic about God and what He has done for me. It's probably because I'm not putting worth where it's do. That worth-ship. worship. Placing my enthusiastic respond where it belongs. The guy who wrote this Psalm got it right. "Shout to the Lord. Shout joyfully all the earth."

This was a Psalm sung by the worshippers as they walked up the hill to worship in Jerusalem at the holy temple. There is no stipulations on the quality of those called to shout...just do it joyfully. No bigger downer than a lukewarm shout. "yaaaah go team....." Our enthusiasm

will reveal the heart within and who it is we are truly worshipping. If you are placing worth, value or something or someone other than God and His son Jesus Christ you will have a difficult time shouting joyfully to the Lord. You may even look around and wonder what everyone else is so excited about. Don't worry about not sounding great. Shout to the Lord. He loves to hear the praise of his people. In fact, one verse in the Bible tells us he inhabits the praise of his people. That is where God likes to hang out. When he hears the genuine and enthusiastic praise of His people. Don't go snuffing out other people praise.

Jean Flemming in Discipleship Journal wrote about what change her whole attitude toward worship one Sunday morning. It happen on the same pew she was sitting just a few seats down. The pastor had announced that a boy named Jim Crockett had just given his heart to the Lord that week. Another young boy about his age jumped up on his seat, thrust his fist into the air and yelled at the top of his lungs. "Yeah Crockett!" What an enthusiastic shout to the Lord. Totally unself-conscious with joy and exuberance. His mother quickly grabbed him and made him sit back down and be quiet. And that's too bad too. The whole congregation should have been standing on their pews, stabbing their fists in the air and yelling "yeah Crockett. Way to Go God..Yes! Great play.

I remember the sight of 65,000 men at promise Keepers in Seattle. Standing on our feet clapping and cheering as thousands of men crowded the floor to dedicate their lives to Christ and receive Him as Savior. It was a huge cheer for God and how He loves to transform the lives of the men.

Some may be saying, "I don't worship because I simply don't feel like it. I don't want to fake an emotion that is not there. Maybe this is a time where you need shout to God in silence. But we must remember that worship is not about us; It not about how bad or good we happen to be feeling that day, that week. It's not even about how difficult our circumstance or situation we find ourselves in. It's not about how well we can sing. Worship is not based or even drawn from us. Worship is about God. We are not able to worship because we had a relatively sin free week. Although that sure helps. We cannot worship because we are good people and were kind to our family yesterday. We can worship not

because of who we are or what we have done. We can worship because our creator, God Almighty is worthy of our worship. Amen?

It's not just for some of the blessed ones. The Psalmist calls us to shout joyfully to the Lord..who? just those who feel good? no. all the earth. Just those who made it here this morning without a crushed disappointment? no. All the earth. Who is to shout joyfully to the Lord? Everyone except those who have blown it in sin this week? No all the earth. Everyone except those who are tired because they were out too late last night? No. All the earth. Everyone who has breath and life is called on to praise the Lord. Shout joyfully to the Lord...all the earth. No matter whether you feel like it or not. Why? Because it's not about us, it's about God. He is God and not we ourselves. He is the one who is worthy and not we ourselves. He is the one who leads and not we ourselves. So practically lets apply this first line this morning with enthusiastic worship to God Almighty who is smiling from heaven down at us excited that his people would want to give a shout of praise to Him. Yes. even those of us whose are typically quite sedate...I will be our spiritual cheer leader.

Shout after me. The Lord is good!!! (again)
The Lord is Truth!!!
The Lord is Life!!!!
He is the Way!!!! Praise the Lord!!! He is King!!!
Wow! Doesn't that encourage your heart to give a shout for God. When we let out the love for God tend to lock up in our hearts it encourages us to worship Him in the way we need to. Is your worship ready for a tune-up this fall? Can we worship God enthusiastically even when we don't feel like it trusting that He will fill in the emotion behind our will?

Look at the second line of that first verse. Serve the Lord with gladness. There is a certain attitude that the psalmist is calling us to serve. What is it? With _____ That is a tough one when we are overwhelmed, busy and burned out. The ladies have been working together for over a year now to make the Women's' retreat a special time for the women of our district. Hours and hours of service have gone into it. With the myriad of details and deadlines fast arriving, frazzled nerves, sometimes it can be pretty tough to serve with gladness. It may be getting all the details together for AWANA or youth group or Life groups

and you are not experiencing this gladness of your heart. You may even be tempted to look around and wonder with a tinge of anger; Why am I the only one who is working so hard? I'm so steamed at people who agree to do something then back out at the last moment? Why don't those other people pull their weight? No one even seems to notice the hours I've spent on this project? Ever feel like that? Then ever wonder why it is you are lacking the gladness in your service? This brings us to tune-up question number 2; How's your attitude in your service? For our attitude will reveal who it is we are really serving. Why are we not enjoying our service? Why is the attitude of gladness missing from our thoughts, words and actions? It may be because you are placed in an area outside of your giftedness...it may be because you over-committed. But you are probably not experiencing the joy and gladness you could be, because you aren't serving the Lord, you are serving yourself. Oh, I don't mean you aren't doing church things, even Godly things but if we are getting bent out of shape when we aren't noticed or we get angry when things don't seem to go our way, or start our sentences with, "I'm the only one around here who..." We are serving ourselves, not God. Our attitude of ingratitude reveals that we really doing this for us. Pretty convicting.

This also means when we look around and don't see the results we think should be happening. When people don't show up on Sunday morning, when people aren't giving in the way they ought to, when people are not excited about serving God. when there doesn't seem to be an anticipation to drink in God's word. And you are frustrated. It may be a holy anger. But more then likely I'm frustrated because my pride and ego have been stepped on...revealing I'm serving not for God but for me. Too convicting. The Psalmist calls us to serve the Lord, not ourselves. And do it with gladness which will be a sign as to whom we really are serving. We can tell that we've lost our sense of God when the gladness leaves our heart. Our attitude reveals who it is we are really serving.

For your fall spiritual tune up; Ask yourself am I serving with gladness? Am I worshipping the Lord with enthusiasm? If you find yourself unsure on either of these questions then maybe we need to get a bigger picture of who God is. Look at the next line in verse 2. The Psalmist commands us first to shout, then to serve and thirdly to Come. Come before Him with joyful singing. And later on that invitation is

repeated to enter. Enter into His presence. His courts with thanksgiving and praise. It is our affirmation, our thank-yous and praises to God. It is our affirmation that invites us into intimacy with God. Are you coming before Him? Are you spending time in His presence? Maybe you are feeling stressed out and busy because you have failed to take the time to spend alone with your Savior and just listen to him. I was very convicted by this. Usually the first Tuesday of every month I get away and drive up into the hills. I take my bible, I take a hymnal, pad of paper and just spend time praying, listening to God, singing songs of faith. Away from the phones, away from the office and away from the distractions of a busy life...just to come to Him. To enter into his court. To be still and know that He is God. To be quiet and just listen. It seems the tyranny of the urgent and busy too often crowds and clutters up our spiritual ears I have a hard time hearing what God wants to say to me. I go up unto the mountains. To offer up thanksgiving, to sing praise as loud as I want without anyone but God to hear me.

I went up there this week and came down encouraged. I came home at lunch and told Erin; I went up into the mountains. To which she replied, Did your help commeth whence? Yes. My help comes from the Lord who made the heavens and the earth. Sometimes we just need to get away, to come a part from the busy life, before we come a part. Jesus modeled this rest and reflection for us in the face of thousands of people and demands for ministry and healings. So we too need to get away and come to Him. For coming to Him will enrich our intimacy with God, fill us spiritually. Coming into the presence of God, just being with Him. Spending time in prayer, rest, reflection is the foundation for serving with gladness and enthusiastic worship. For one must be filled up before one can spill out. Being with God must come before doing with God. For its in spending time with God that we begin look at life from an eternal perspective as we align our priorities, affections and desires with Gods. When we allow our time with god to be pressed out by the tyranny of the urgent, the busy, the rushed we are robbing ourselves of the joy and gladness that comes with walking in the Spirit.

So what do we need to do? What will increase our enthusiasm for worshipping God? What will gladden our hearts in service for Him? What will encourage us to affirm our praise and thanksgiving to God when we

come into His presence? Look with me at the core of this Psalm. Verse 3. Not only are we to Shout, serve and come. We are called to know. We know that our Lord is God. It's not about us. We are not God even though sometimes by our pride filled actions we look like it. When we come to God we are to affirm god's proper place and our proper place. We are not God. When we spend less and less time with God we begin to wrongly convince ourselves that our welfare ultimately depends on us and not God. We tend to take things into our own hands that aren't ours to handle. We tend to fluff up our own egos when things go well and ruffle our feathers when things are difficult. When what we need to do is stop and affirm who God is and who we are.

For some of us this morning the tune-up question we may need to ask ourselves is; Where am I playing God? Where have I decided that it's more up to me than God? Where have I left God out of the decision making because I wanted it sooo bad? Is there a place in your life where you need to invite Christ back in to be your king, to get Him back on the throne. Maybe you got so busy you didn't even realize you had squeezed him off the chair. That's what happened to me. Maybe it's time to invite him back in the place where He belongs. Know that the Lord Himself is God. He is God and we are not. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise. Thanksgiving and praise are the passwords to intimacy with God. Joyful service flows from our intimacy with God. Doing flows from being in His presence. Joyful service urges us to enthusiastic worship because we have seen God at work and cannot help ourselves. We must shout out. God is great. God is King. God is truth. God's lovingkindness is everlasting and his faithfulness to all generations. He is the Way. He is the Truth. He is the Life. Stand as we worship the Lord together. May our enthusiastic praise be contagious. May our worship be all about God and not about us. May we serve...the Lord, not serve bound by duty, drudgery, jealousy or fear...May we serve with gladness because we have come into His presence and have been filled up and encouraged by Him so we have something to shout in praise to Him. Amen.