

# Why We are Here

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Preacher: Jon Ryttersgaard

[ 0 : 00 ] Psalm 96, verse 12 of this verse, even the trees are singing for joy.! If trees should sing for joy, shouldn't we?

! Psalm 96, verse 1, we'll read the entire psalm. Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing to the Lord all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise His name, proclaim His salvation day after day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise. He is to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before Him. Strength and glory are in His sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O family of nations. Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name.

[ 1 : 04 ] Bring an offering and come into His courts. Worship the Lord in the splendor of His holiness. Tremble before Him all the earth. Say among the nations, The Lord reigns.

The world is firmly established. It cannot be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity. Let the heavens rejoice. Let the earth be glad.

Let the sea resound and all that is in it. Let the fields be jubilant and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy.

They will sing before the Lord, for He comes. He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the people in His truth.

Well, brother, it is our pleasure to have you. Come and preach to us. Well, it is a pleasure to be here. I often remark when I'm visiting other churches that I feel an instant connection with you right away.

[ 2 : 06 ] And I don't say that superficially. But based on the scriptural truth that when we become Christians, God becomes our Father. And God has more than one child.

Which means we're all brothers and sisters of one another. So I'm always happy to be with the saints wherever they may be gathered. And I reckon you all brothers and sisters to me.

And it is a privilege and a pleasure to worship together. Are you baseball people down here? This past season was a good season to be a Cubs fan.

And I guess geographically it's probably a fair guess that there are a couple in this room. Or maybe, I don't know, White Sox or Detroit Tigers. In Toronto we have the Blue Jays.

And when I was about four or five years old, my dad took me to a Toronto Blue Jays game. And we were up in the cheap seats way, way, way up in the upper deck. And the Sky Dome holds about 55,000 people.

[ 3 : 05 ] And at least, well, even now the Jays don't sell out. So there was maybe 20,000 people in a stadium that holds 55,000. So way up in the cheap seats there was lots and lots of room.

And I was just four or five years old. So as a kid I was climbing around on the seats. You know, flipping the stadium seats up. Flipping the stadium seats down. Walking up the stairs. Walking down the stairs.

Up one empty row. And back across another empty row. And probably around the sixth or seventh inning I looked over at my dad. And I said, hey dad.

There's some guys playing baseball down there. I had missed the point entirely. I did not understand why we were there.

And Psalm 96. Psalm 96 is a don't miss the point song. Psalm 96 is a this is why we are here song.

[ 4 : 04 ] It provides the big picture of what life is all about. It helps make sure that we do not miss the point. It asks, it answers the questions that we all ask.

Regardless of your religion or your spirituality. Whether you consider yourself to be a Christian. Whether you don't consider yourself to be a Christian. Whether you subscribe to a different religion altogether.

Everybody asks the questions. Why do we exist? Why are we here? What is the purpose of our lives? Everybody asks those questions.

Those are not Christian questions. Those are human questions. Why do we exist? What is the purpose of our lives? Why are we here? Psalm 96 answers those questions.

It tells us why we're here. And I'll give you the answer up front. It's in verse 8. We exist to ascribe to the Lord the glory that is due His name.

[ 5 : 11 ] We exist to ascribe to the Lord the glory that is due His name. What does this mean? Well, basically, to ascribe is to acknowledge or to give due credit to something or someone for an attribute that He already possesses.

So, for example, you ascribe authorship of a book to its author. You ascribe strength to weightlifters. And you ascribe speed to sprinters.

Now, ascribing authorship doesn't make someone an author. They were an author before you ascribed authorship to them. And ascribing speed to a sprinter doesn't make somebody fast.

It just recognizes that they already are fast. So, you know, for example, J.R.R. Tolkien wrote Lord of the Rings, regardless of whether you ascribe authorship of Lord of the Rings to him.

You could ascribe authorship of Lord of the Rings to Tom Clancy, but you'd be mistaken. To ascribe authorship of Lord of the Rings to J.R.R. Tolkien doesn't make him the author of that book.

[ 6 : 20 ] It just recognizes that he is the author of that book. Or Usain Bolt won the gold medal in the men's 100-meter sprint at the last Olympics. Ascribing speed to Usain Bolt doesn't actually make Usain Bolt fast.

He is fast. Regardless of whether you acknowledge that he's fast. And regardless of whether you ascribe speed to him or not. Now, glory is weight or importance.

So, to ascribe glory to God is to acknowledge that God is weighty and important. To acknowledge that he already is weighty and important.

To ascribe glory to the Lord is actually not to make God glorious, but is to recognize that he already is glorious. To give credit where credit is due, we might say.

The 1689 Confession, chapter 2, paragraph 2, says that God is, and I quote, not deriving any glory from his creatures, but manifesting his glory in, by, unto, and upon them.

[ 7 : 31 ] In other words, God doesn't become more glorious when we see his glory. God doesn't become more glorious when we offer him trust, adoration, obedience, or worship.

God already is glorious. And we simply have the privilege and the responsibility of acknowledging God's glory. So, when the scripture says to ascribe to the Lord the glory that is due his name, it's saying that God is glorious.

And he is weighty and important. And we need to acknowledge that he is glorious. And live in such a way that reflects our acknowledgement of his glory.

So, we exist to ascribe to the Lord the glory that is due his name. We ought to recognize it, we ought to see it, and we ought to live in a way that reflects the fact that God is glorious.

That is the point. That is why we are here. That is why you exist. Whether you are a Christian, whether you are not yet a Christian, the purpose for which you ought to live is to ascribe to the Lord the glory that is due his name.

[ 8 : 47 ] That is what life is about. God created you to see and to experience and to acknowledge his glory. And to live in a way that glorifies him.

We exist to ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name. So, that's the basic idea of today's message. But we're going to examine this psalm in greater detail. And the structure of this psalm is very simple.

It only does two things. It presents truth about God. And then it urges us to respond in certain ways to the truth about God. So, I'm going to organize today's message under two headings.

Who God is and how we should respond to who God is. The goal is that we would see God more clearly. And the goal is that we would then respond to what we've seen of God by ascribing to him the glory that is due his name.

So, who God is and then how we should respond to who God is. So, let's begin with who God is. God is the Lord. In your translation, it probably says capital L-O-R-D.

[ 9 : 54 ] I'm going to be using the English Standard Version this morning. But the points are going to be the same regardless of what translation you have. God is the Lord. Capital L-O-R-D.

When you see that in Scripture, in our English Bibles, it's a transliteration of God's proper Hebrew name. Yahweh. We know specifically who God is.

In the pages of Scripture, He reveals Himself to us. He gives us His name. Yahweh. He is not a vague higher power.

Some nameless being up there. He is not simply God in a general sense. He's not the man upstairs. He's not some greater force.

He has a name. Yahweh. The Lord. Many people will say that they believe in God. But that is too vague. Do you believe in a specific God?

[ 10 : 55 ] Do you believe in a God who has revealed Himself to us in the pages of Scripture, in the Bible? He is the true God. I even almost hesitate to use the phrase, the true God, because that almost implies that there are more than one.

Or using a phrase like the God of the Bible, as if there are other gods outside of the Bible. There is only one God. His name is Yahweh. He is not Allah. He is not Krishna.

He is not Baal. He is not Molech. He is not Ashtoreth. He is not Dagon. He is not any of the other false gods worshipped by others. He is Yahweh.

Yahweh is His name. The biblical God is the only God. The biblical God is Yahweh. Yahweh is the Lord. The Lord is Yahweh. Look at this psalm.

It's just, it's very clear who we're speaking about. Who is glorious. Verse 1, the Lord. Verse 2, the Lord. Verse 4, the Lord. Verse 5, the Lord. Verse 5 again, the Lord.

[ 11 : 52 ] Verse 7, 8, 9, 10, 13. We are not talking about a higher power. We are talking about the only God. The one God who has revealed Himself to mankind in the Bible.

The Lord Yahweh. That is who we are talking about. What is Yahweh like? Who is He? In verse 4, David says that Yahweh is great.

Great is the Lord. And greatly to be praised. This is one of those instances where language seems insufficient. To say that God is great seems like somewhat of an understatement.

Indeed, God is great. He's not less than great. But He is so much more than great. What is the one who made the stars and the galaxies like?

I actually didn't have the presence of mind to look up last night. In Toronto, we have a lot of light pollution. I don't know how it is down here. You might have a better view of the night sky than we have.

[ 12 : 52 ] But probably many of us can at least think back to a time when we were in a rural area with very little light pollution. And we looked up and we just saw the stars spread out above us.

And it just took your breath away. And I was watching this video, a little four minute science video on YouTube this past week. Just putting our galaxy in perspective in the many, many galaxies that are out there.

And the billions of light years that comprise all of creation. We live in a galaxy called the Milky Way. And the Milky Way is one of many galaxies.

What is the one who created all this? Who spread out the stars and the galaxies with a word?

What is He like? What is the one who set the Milky Way up there for us to look at on a clear night like? What is the one who filled the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean and all the oceans of the world like?

[ 14 : 03 ] What is the one who created the Rocky Mountains and the Himalayas like? What is the one who created every sea creature, every bird, every reptile and every mammal like?

What is the one who created every molecule like? What is the one who holds the universe together by the word of His power like? What is the one who entered into this world to save us from our sins like?

In Luke 1.32, the angel Gabriel prophesies to Mary that her son will be great. And my nickname for that verse is the angelic understatement. Indeed, our God is not less than great.

But He is so much more than great. Great is not great enough language for our God. When I say that God is great, I feel like I'm in a symphony and there's a grand piano and there's a string section and a percussion section.

And here I am with a pair of spoons, tapping them on my knee or a little triangle just going ding, ding. And I just wish I had a better instrument to join in this symphony of praise to our God.

[ 15 : 18 ] But we're constrained to the language we have. And so we simply say that God is great. But oh, for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise. Next, look at verse 4.

We see that Yahweh is to be feared above all gods. Unlike the t-shirt that Madonna and a number of other celebrities made popular several years ago, Jesus is not your homeboy.

As Christians, Jesus is called in Scripture our brother and our friend. There is language of intimacy in Scripture as pertains to our relationship to Jesus Christ.

He is our Redeemer. He is our prophet. He is our priest. He is our king. He bled for us. He loves us. He laid down His life for us.

We are sheep and He is our shepherd. But at the same time as there is language of intimacy, there is also at the same time language of transcendence.

[ 16 : 24 ] He is our prophet and our priest. But He is also our king. And He will rule over us forever in an eternal kingdom. Listen, we cannot become overly close with Jesus.

But we cannot become overly casual with Jesus. We ought not to forget that He is the prophesied one of whom the psalmist writes in Psalm 2, serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way. For His wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him. For His Son, we ought not to ever forget the glory of Christ.

That we should be casual to come into His presence. But we ought to recognize that though He is our brother, though He is our friend, though He is our shepherd, though He laid down His life for us and tenderly cares for us day by day, He is our king.

And we, like everyone else, ought to bow our knee at the name before whom every knee shall one day bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord.

[ 17 : 40 ] Next, we see in verse 5 that Yahweh is the creator. There's a contrast in verse 5. In contrast to worthless idols, the Lord made the heavens.

In contrast to worthless idols, our triune God is the creator. Here's the contrast that the psalmist is implying. Idols are made from wood, but our God is the God who made the wood that the idols are made from.

Idols are made from stone, but our God is the God who made the stone that you go and make idols from. That's the contrast.

It's not this comparison like, you know, my dad can beat up your dad. Sort of like a category of equals. This is just a contrast between the one who created and the ones who are created.

The God who is the creator and the so-called gods that are not creators, but are created. This is the contrast in verse 5. In contrast to worthless idols who are made, our God is the maker.

[ 18 : 49 ] That's how far superior our God is. Colossians 1.16 By Him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

All things were created through Him and for Him. As our creator, He is superior to these false gods. And as our creator, He also has a legitimate claim.

A legitimate right to be our God. By virtue of His being our creator, we creatures owe Him our worship and our allegiance.

Unlike these other so-called gods who did not make us, we do not owe them our worship and allegiance, but we do owe worship and allegiance to the one who created us.

Now take a look at verse 6. God is splendid and majestic. Splendor and majesty are before Him. Strength and beauty, or your translation might say strength and glory, are in His sanctuary.

[ 19 : 53 ] God is splendid and majestic. There are kings who don't like to not be praised. For example, just a month or two ago, in the way he often does, President Trump responded on social media to a skit on Saturday Night Live which poked fun at him.

He tweeted on the social media platform, Saturday Night Live is the worst of NBC. Not funny, cast is terrible, always a complete hit job, really bad television.

Some kings, some presidents, some prime ministers, don't like to not be praised. They can't handle it when they're not praised.

But Jesus is so superior to earthly kings and presidents, so glorious is Christ Jesus, that He cannot ultimately not be praised.

In Luke 19.40, Jesus says that if His disciples were silent, even the rocks would cry out.

[ 21 : 05 ] He must be praised. In Philippians 2.9-11, which I alluded to just a moment ago, it says that God has exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every

tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Which means this, think about this. The absence of praise for Jesus Christ is a temporary thing in this world, in existence.

One day, He will be praised everywhere where He is not presently praised. One day, everyone is going to see the glory of Christ, and one day, every knee will bow.

Every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. He was glorious in eternity past. He shall be glorious in eternity future. And He is glorious now, regardless of whether people see it or not. But we cannot sustain. We, created beings, cannot ultimately sustain our blind rebellion against Him. We cannot suppress the truth forever.

[ 22 : 23 ] However, the glory of Christ shall shine through in the end. One day, every eye will see Him. Everyone will see the glory of Christ Jesus, and every knee will bow before Him.

Jesus is so superior to earthly kings that it's not merely the case that He doesn't like to not be praised. Jesus cannot not be praised.

Next, we see that strength and beauty, or strength and glory, are in Yahweh's sanctuary. In verse 6. The sanctuary of which David spoke here in Psalm 96, had a certain strength and beauty, or strength and glory about it.

It was the place of God's special covenantal presence among the Israelites under the Old Covenant. There was a tabernacle, which contained the Holy of Holies. And eventually the temple, which contained the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was placed.

And cherubim, angels of hammered gold, stretched their wings out over the lid of the Ark. And between the wings of the cherubim was the mercy seat, where sacrifices were offered once per year for the sins of the people.

[ 23 : 42 ] And the sacrifices offered under that covenant, the blood of bulls and goats, were not ultimately efficacious to take away sins, as we read in Hebrews. And yet God graciously accepted them on the people's behalf, with a view to the coming Christ, as a sort of temporal propitiation, propitiating God's temporal wrath against them until Christ could come and really deal with sin.

There was a certain strength and beauty, or strength and glory about that sanctuary. The one of which David would have had primarily in mind as he penned Psalm 96.

This place where God has made provision for blood to be shed, for atonement to be made. But Hebrews tells us that these things were just copies, pictures, shadows of the true things.

Listen to Hebrews 9, 24-26. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself.

Now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places, every year with blood not his own.

[ 25 : 05 ] For then he would have had to suffer repeatedly, since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all, at the end of the ages, to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself.

Verse 2 says, tell of his salvation from day to day. What salvation would David have been thinking about? What sanctuary would David have been thinking about? He would have been thinking about the exodus from Egypt, and the deliverance from the hand of the Philistines, time and time again.

And this sanctuary, where the blood of bulls and goats was shed on the mercy seat. And David was saying, tell of Yahweh's salvation in these regards. Tell of the mercy seat.

Tell of God's covenantal presence with us. Tell of how he led us out, with the parting of the Red Sea, on dry ground. Tell us of how he drowned Pharaoh and his army.

Tell the nations of all of these things. There is strength and beauty, in Yahweh's actions. Strength and beauty in this sanctuary, in the holy of holies that he has provided.

[ 26 : 11 ] But if these were the copies, and the pictures, and the shadows, and the Israelites were to tell of that salvation, and to recognize the strength and the glory, of that sanctuary, how much more, ought we to have the salvation that Christ has wrought for us, in the forefront of our minds?

How much more ought we to perceive, the strength and the glory of the sanctuary, where Christ has entered, not with blood, not his own, but with his very own blood, to plead our case, before the Father.

How much more ought we to consider, the strength and the glory of the sanctuary, which is the substance, of the shadow? Jesus came and lived, a life of perfect righteousness, in place of sinners, who were unrighteous.

Jesus, who didn't deserve it, died a sin bearing, wrath bearing, punishment bearing death, in the place of sinners, who did deserve it.

The gospel is that Jesus came, as a substitute, and did for sinners, what we could not do for ourselves. He satisfied the demands, of God's justice on our behalf, fulfilling the precepts of the law, doing what we should have done, by his righteous life, and addressing the penalty, for the breach of God's law, suffering in himself, what we deserved to suffer, for our sins, when he went to the cross.

[ 27 : 54 ] And thus, whoever trusts, in Jesus' substitutionary life, and death, will find that they, in union with him, will one day rise from the dead, just as he did, and will live, in the kingdom, over which Christ Jesus reigns, forever, and ever.

Strength, and beauty, strength, and glory, are in the sanctuary, where Jesus accomplished that. We also see, that Yahweh is sovereign.

Verse 10, the Lord reigns. The psalmist says elsewhere, our God is in the heavens, he does all that he pleases. Hebrews 1, 3 says, that he upholds the universe, by the word of his power.

We deal with this subject a lot, so I'm not going to belabor the point. We see here again, reiterate that Yahweh is sovereign, and Yahweh is a righteous judge. Look at verse 13.

With, he will judge the world in righteousness, and his peoples in faithfulness. So, again, we talk about that a lot, so I'm not going to belabor the point.

[ 29 : 05 ] Yahweh is sovereign, and Yahweh is a righteous judge. So God, our triune God, is glorious. As our creator, and as our redeemer, he is glorious.

We've seen his glory, in the unfolding storyline of scripture. And his son, Jesus Christ, has made his glory, most fully known. As Jesus himself said in John 14, 9, whoever has seen me, has seen the Father.

2 Corinthians 4 says, that we see the glory of God, in the face, of Jesus Christ. So how should we respond, to who God is?

That's the first point. Who God is. How should we respond now, to who God is? How should we respond, to his self-disclosure, his revelation of himself, to us, in the storyline of scripture?

What is the right response, from us? Well there are two categories, Godward, and manward. Or we could say, vertical, and horizontal. Godward, vertical, and manward, horizontal, towards other human beings.

[ 30 : 12 ] There are two categories, of response, to who God is. All of our Godward duties, in response to the greatness of God, could simply be summarized, as, worship.

Our Godward duty, in response, to how glorious he is, is simply to worship, as it tells us to do, in verse 9. Worship the Lord. This psalm, tells us to worship him, in singing.

It tells us to worship him, by praising him, by fearing him, by ascribing glory to him, by trembling before him, by being glad, by roaring, rejoicing, exalting, and singing for joy. Worship.

This is, the Godward duty, in response to his glory. We ought to worship. We Christians, we need to be a worshiping people, in response, to our glorious God.

We ought to sing praise to him. Look at verses 1 and 2. Oh, sing to the Lord, a new song. Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless his name.

[ 31 : 12 ] It is emphasized, so clearly, that we ought to sing. Why, why ought we to sing? Well, music is a way of expressing, the overflow of joy, in our hearts.

We sing, when our hearts are full of joy. We sing, even songs of grief, or songs of lament, when our hearts are full of sorrow, because music, is a way of expressing, not only the overflow of joy, but also the overflow of sorrow, of our hearts.

It expresses, the overflow of our hearts, in whatever state, our hearts are. And God, commands us to sing, in order that our hearts, might be most fully engaged, in his worship.

We could, read, the lyrics of good hymns. We could read, and recite creeds, and confessions, and catechisms. And we could read, the bare words of scripture.

But I think, one of the reasons, that God has commanded us, to sing, is because it helps us, engage our hearts. Not that our hearts, can't be engaged, in reading prose.

[ 32 : 23 ] But music engages, our hearts in a special way. Think about it. When I say, God is great. Or when you say, God is great, you feel something. But when you sing, and when I think, that God, his son, not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce, I scarce can take it in.

That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, he bled and died, to take away, my sin. Then sings my soul, my savior God, to thee.

How great thou art. How great thou art. Music helps us, engage our hearts. And so God commands us, to sing.

That it wouldn't just be, rote repetition. It wouldn't be, an abstract exercise, a bare intellectualism. But that our hearts, would be engaged, in his worship.

We also see, that we ought to fear him, verse four, and tremble before him, verse nine. We touched on this earlier, you cannot become, overly close, to God.

[ 33 : 33 ] But you can become, overly casual, in your relationship, to God. If you are, not a Christian, you should literally, fear God.

You should be terrified, of God, and seek to be reconciled, to him. As Jesus said, in Luke 12, five, fear him, who, after he has killed, has authority, to cast into hell.

Yes, I tell you, fear him. But, as Christians, reconciled to God, and no longer, under condemnation, because of Christ Jesus, we should instead, experience, heart pounding, exhilarating, joy.

As Psalm 2, which we read earlier, says, we should rejoice, with trembling. Yes, you can tremble, and be exceedingly joyful, at the same time. Let me give you, a few examples.

Maybe you've met, a celebrity, I don't know, whatever kind of a thing, a celebrity is to you. Maybe it's a baseball player, maybe it's a politician, maybe it's a musician, or an actor, but somebody that you really esteem. Maybe it's, maybe it's a pastor, maybe it's a conference speaker, but somebody that you really esteem.

[ 34 : 42 ] And, you have a chance to meet them, and you find that you're trembling, but you're also really happy. You're rejoicing with trembling. Or, for those of you who are married, perhaps, you stood there, men, at the front of the church, while your wife came down the aisle, and you were full of joy, and you were trembling, at the same time.

Or, or ladies, you were coming down the aisle, and you could see, the man that you're going to spend, the rest of your lives with, at the front of the church, and you're full of joy, but you're trembling, as you walk down the aisle.

You can rejoice, with trembling. I watched a documentary, sponsored by Red Bull, a couple of years ago, about extreme athletes, who would be taken up in helicopters, I think it was a mountain range, in the southern half of South America, somewhere.

And they would be taken up by helicopters, and dropped out of the helicopters, with snowboards attached to their feet, and they would snowboard, down these mountains. Now, these are not the kind of mountains, where you take a ski lift up, to the top, and you read the rating, okay, this is a double black diamond, I can handle that, and you go.

This is mountains, where there is no course. This is mountains, where probably nobody, had ever previously snowboarded, ever. Mountains where there's, an avalanche risk.

[ 36 : 03 ] Mountains where there are, mile deep chasms, just going straight down, and cliffs, and these helicopters, would take, these guys up, and just drop them, at the top of these mountains, and the guys would snowboard down.

Now, now here's, an illustration. Those guys, if they were, going up in the helicopters, were probably rejoicing, with trembling.

Because, they were ready, to do that. They were ready, to meet that mountain. They were, rightly related, as it were, to that mountain, because these guys, are professional athletes.

Now, if I, was going up, in the helicopter, onto those mountains, and I would guess, everyone in this room, you, would probably, have no rejoicing, commingled, with your trembling.

You would just, literally, be terrified. terrified. And the reason is, because you're not ready, to meet the mountain. The mountain is, just as dangerous, for you, and for me, as it is for them.

[ 37 : 12 ] The mountain is the same. The mountain doesn't, objectively change. But if you're not ready, to meet the mountain, you are just, only terrified. But if you are ready, to meet the mountain, then you have, reverence, and respect, and esteem, for the mountain, and joy, because it is, exhilarating, to be so close, and so engaged, with such a grand thing, as that mountain.

So it is, with fearing God. If you are not ready, to meet God, you ought not, to have any joy, commingled, with your terror, at the prospect, of meeting God.

For his wrath, remains upon you, as John 3, 17 says. But, if you are, ready to meet God, having been, reconciled to him, through Jesus Christ, then you can rejoice, with trembling, at the thought, that we would be, invited, and commanded, to come into the presence, of our almighty God, and to call him, Father.

To call Christ Jesus, our brother. To think that, his spirit, lives, in us. This should be cause, for rejoicing, with trembling.

The fear of God. We should fear God, to give you another analogy, like a lion cub, playing with his father. The daddy lion, is the king of the jungle, and could crush, the cub's rib cage, with one swat, of his paw.

[ 38 : 52 ] But he won't, because he's his daddy. The daddy lion, is just as strong, just as mighty, and just as glorious. But it's the cub's, relationship, to the father, that changes it all.

And so, it should be, to unbelievers, terrifying, to think about, meeting God, apart from Jesus Christ. But it should be, an exhilarating delight, for those of us, who are reconciled to him, by his son, to be invited, into this relationship, of intimacy, with our great God, Yahweh, who reveals himself, to us, in the scriptures.

In worshiping God, we ought to ascribe, glory to him. And we touched on this, at the beginning, so again, I won't belabor the point, but this is the most, important phrase, in the whole psalm, verse eight.

Ascribe to the Lord, the glory due, his name. This phrase, is representative, of the whole. Children, if there's any kids in here, listen, alright?

If your parents, ask you at lunch, what did the preacher, preach about? You can tell them, he said that we should, ascribe to the Lord, the glory due, his name.

[ 40 : 08 ] That's the big idea, of this whole passage. That's representative, of the whole psalm. This psalm, shows us, how great, and glorious God is, how important he is, and says that we should, respond, by acknowledging his glory, and living in a way, that reflects his glory.

We ought to bring an offering, and draw near, verse eight. Deuteronomy 16, 16, teaches a transferable principle, that applies, even outside the old covenant. They shall not appear, before the Lord, empty handed.

God is not to be, approached, empty handed, by us sinners. Now, we are not to go, into God's presence, without something, to please, and honor him, to atone for our sin, and to propitiate, which means, to turn away, his anger, toward our sin.

We must bring an offering, and come into his presence. When you're born, in this world, you don't just get, to the age of three, or four, or five, and decide, I'm going to waltz, into God's presence. It doesn't work that way. But we have a problem, because Isaiah 64, 6, tells us that, in our natural state, outside of Christ Jesus, all our righteous deeds, are like a polluted garment.

[ 41 : 27 ] So nothing we can bring him, in and of ourselves, is sufficient to bring. So what will we do? In Isaiah 53, 310, amidst the great, and well-known prophecy, about the Messiah, the Christ, who had not, at that time, come yet, we read this.

When his soul, makes an offering, for guilt, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days, the will of the Lord, shall prosper in his hand, out of the anguish, of his soul, he shall see, and be satisfied, by his knowledge, shall the righteous one, my servant, make many, to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear, their iniquities.

The most fundamental, offering, that we need to bring, as human beings, when we come into, God's courts, to worship him, is the merit, of our savior, Jesus Christ. It is because, of his life, and death, and resurrection, that our sin, is atoned for, and we can come, into his presence.

It is because, of his righteousness, imputed to us, that we are acceptable, in God's sight. And it is because, of Christ's, covenantal representation, of us, and our union, with him, that we become, definitively, and progressively, holy, in order to worship God, as verse 9 says, in the splendor, of his holiness.

Now, what that means, is that, my good works, in and of themselves, or think about, somebody who is not, a Christian, because I am, I am clothed, in Christ Jesus, I am accepted, by God, for Christ's sake.

[ 43 : 08 ] But let's think about, someone who is not, a Christian. Their good works, are not, good enough, to come into, God's presence, and bear the strictness, of his judgment.

So when it says, when it says, bring an offering, in verse 8, and come into his courts, unbelievers, who are not trusting, in Jesus righteousness, should not think, oh okay, that is great, this teaches, the principle, that I can try, to be good, and bring the offering, of my goodness, into God's courts. No, our, as Isaiah 64, 6 says, our righteousness, is as filthy rags. And so, what we need to do, is recognize that, the only offering, we can bring, which can truly, withstand the rigor, of God's

judgment, is Christ's righteousness, imputed to us, which means, given to us, as a gift, and we can only go in, with a propitiatory, an atoning offering, of Jesus' death, on the cross.

Nothing else, is sufficient, to turn away, God's wrath, from our sins. Now, you might say, well there are, places in the Bible, that talk about, other offerings, that we bring, bring him a sacrifice, of praise, or Romans 12, present your bodies, as an acceptable, sacrifice.

Well, those things, are only acceptable, in Christ Jesus. You can't, bypass Christ Jesus, and think that, God is pleased, with your hymn singing.

[ 44 : 37 ] You can't, bypass Christ Jesus, and think that, God accepts your body, as a living sacrifice, outside of Christ Jesus. Our hymn singing, doesn't withstand, the rigor, of God's judgment.

He knows, how many times, we've been going, through the words, while we're thinking, about our Sunday lunch. He knows, how many times, we've showed up, to church, not with pure hearts, ready to worship him, but merely, because it's the thing, to do, or it's what we've always, he knows, how imperfect, our hymn singing is, our sacrifice of praise.

He knows, how imperfect, our lives are, and how we dishonor him, in our bodies, in various ways, day by day. And so, presenting our bodies, as a living sacrifice, is not sufficient, in and of itself, as an offering, to bring to him.

It is because, we are in Christ Jesus, that he is pleased, with our imperfect, and sincere obedience. Again, to give you an analogy, my little son, Wade, he's 10 months, I have two, one is three years old, and one's 10 months.

My littler guy, Wade, he started standing up, and he can, he can hold things, and move along. And I was telling, the Heenies last night, he puts his hands, he can walk along a wall, even around corners.

[ 45 : 53 ] And he, he goes like this, and just moves himself, along the wall, and around the corner. Now, I'm pleased with that. I think that's awesome. I think that's great. But I'm not pleased with it, because he's just, so good at walking.

Not because, in and of itself, he's just, the perfect example, of walking. walking. Because I think Wade is better at walking, than all of you. I don't think that, his walking, withstands, the rigor, the rigorous scrutiny, that we might apply, to grownups.

It's because, he's my son. And I'm proud of him, as he grows. As he does his best. As he tries. As he develops. I'm proud of him, and I'm pleased with him, because he's my son.

Not because his walking, is in and of itself, so good. It's like that, with our obedience. God is pleased, with our, when we present our bodies, as a living sacrifice, as Romans 12 says.

Or when we offer him, a sacrifice of praise. Not because, in and of itself, our living sacrifice, is so amazing. Or because our sacrifice, of praise, is just so pure, and so sincere.

[ 47 : 04 ] But because, we're his children. We're acceptable to him, in Christ Jesus. Clothed in the righteousness, of Christ, represented by him, standing in him, in covenant relationship, to him, through Christ Jesus.

He looks, when we worship sincerely, as best as we can, and as we try to obey him, he's pleased, with those offerings. So that's what that means. Most fundamentally, in verse 8, most fundamentally, when we bring an offering, and draw into his courts, come into his courts, most fundamentally, we must bring, the merit of Christ Jesus.

As our offering. And then, all of those secondary, secondary offerings, can come. Not to supplement, what Christ has done, but in Christ Jesus, through Christ Jesus.

And, with respect to, our, God word, response of worship, the last point, that I want to make, on that note is, in verses 11 and 12, be glad, rejoice, roar, exalt, sing for joy.

Verses 11 and 12, tell us that, even inanimate creation, should respond to God, in a certain way, and as Jason pointed out earlier, if even the trees, should sing for joy, how much more, should we ought to?

[ 48 : 22 ] That's the, force of verses 11 and 12. The psalmist, is using personification, which is attributing personhood, to non-human entities. He's using personification, to make the point clear, that God is that, glorious.

That even inanimate creation, owes God worship. From the bottom, of the Marianas Trench, which is the deepest part, of the Pacific Ocean, to the top, of Mount Everest, which is the highest, peak on earth.

From the molten lava, white hot core, of this earth, to the farthest, reaches of galaxies, billions of light years away. All of creation, every single molecule, owes God, worship.

And if this is true, then how much more, do we, who can understand, and apprehend the truth, about who God is, how much more, do we, oh God, our worship?

We, alongside, inanimate creation, should be glad. We should roar. When was the last time, you roared, in worship to God?

[ 49 : 26 ] We should, exalt. we should sing, for joy. We should worship. That's the right response, to how glorious, God is.

We should worship. Now, let's consider, the right manward, or the right horizontal, response, to the glory, of God. To sum it up, our manward response, must be to evangelize, and disciple, because God's glory, demands it.

The right response, to God's glory, is to worship him, and to call others, to worship him. And, to help others, who already are, worshiping him, worship him, more truly, and properly.

Because he deserves, the best worship, from all, people. If God is truly, as glorious, as we've detailed, then his glory, should be, what we're really, all about.

And we Christians, must be, an evangelizing, and discipling, people. In addition, to being, a worshiping people, as we just discussed. What motivates you, for evangelism?

[ 50 : 32 ] Or, let me ask you, a more honest question, for many of us, why aren't you, motivated, for evangelism? Let me summarize, the logic of this psalm, on this subject.

God is so glorious, that every molecule, of creation, owes him worship. The heavens, ought to be glad, and the earth, ought to rejoice, in the glory of God. How much more, ought every human being, made in the image of God.

Therefore, because God is glorious, and everyone, owes him worship, everyone, ought to see, and acknowledge him, as glorious, and bow before him, in worship. So therefore, we, who already see, God's glory, ought to tell others, how glorious he is.

That's the logic, of this psalm. But not only, is it implied, but it's also, explicitly stated. Look at verse 2. Tell of his salvation. Announce his salvation.

Verse 2 again, declare his glory, his nature. Verse 3 again, declare his works, his actions. Verse 10, announce his reign, announce his judgment.

[ 51 : 39 ] Verse 13. Declare and announce, these things to whom? David was writing to Jews, telling them to tell Gentiles, about Yahweh.

Declare and announce, these things to the nations. In its context, David was writing to Jews, commanding them, to tell Gentiles, about Yahweh. To announce, Yahweh's salvation.

To declare, Yahweh's glory. To declare, Yahweh's works. To announce, Yahweh's reign, and Yahweh's judgment. Which means, and listen here, Israelites, were to tell the Canaanites, that Baal, was no God at all.

And that instead, they should worship Yahweh. Israelites, were to tell, Ammonites, that Molech, was no God at all.

And instead, they should worship Yahweh. Israelites, were to tell Philistines, that Dagon, was no God at all. And that instead, they were to turn, and worship Yahweh.

[ 52 : 48 ] So what is the transferable principle? We, who are God's people, are to go to those, outside, who are not yet God's people.

And we ought to, with love, with grace, with compassion, with mercy, with kindness, and holy boldness, courage, and truth.

We ought to tell, the nations, that our God, and only our God, is worthy of worship. We are to proclaim, that one day, every knee will bow, before Jesus.

We are to tell, of Jesus' salvation, that whosoever, believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. We are to let everyone know, that it is appointed, for man to die once.

Once for man to die, and after that, the judgment. But that whoever, comes to Jesus, he will never cast out. We, just as the Israelites, who first received this song, are to go, outside of the covenant, community, outside of the community, of God's people, to confront, unbelievers, about their idolatry.

[ 54 : 08 ] We are to confront, idols of the heart. For example, we are to tell, unbelievers, that the American dream, is not to be worshipped. That life is not all about, a white picket fence, and two kids, and you know, your son making it to state.

That's not what, life is about. We are to confront, unbelievers with idolatries, of the heart, like that. Or, like the idolatry, of just bare hedonism. That the purpose of life, is not, sexual gratification, or the next high, or whatever the case may be. Life is not about, making your body feel good, but about the glory of God. Whatever the idols, of the heart may be, wherever we see them, however they manifest, we are to confront, unbelievers, winsomely, lovingly, but forthrightly, and tell them, look, you are living, for the wrong things. You are worshipping, the wrong gods. Life is about, the glory of God. And you need to turn, from pursuing those things, and pursue Him. [ 55 : 15 ] He is glorious. He, and He alone, is worthy of your worship. And we are to go, to the overt, idolaters among us. The false religions, even here in this nation.

The Muslims, the Hindus, etc. And just as we, just as the Israelites, denounced Baal worship, and the worship of Molech, and the worship of Ashtoreth, and the worship of Dagon. So, we ought to denounce, the worship of Allah, and the worship of Krishna, and whoever, and whatever, and call unbelievers instead, to repentance of faith, toward Christ Jesus, to declare that, our God, and our God alone, is worthy, of worship. So in a sense, this psalm, could be considered, the great commission, of the Old Testament. You have here, an explicit command, to go, to those who are not, God's people, and invite them, to become God's people, by reorienting, their lives, away from the worship, of other gods, toward the worship, of the true God, to bring an offering, into his sanctuary, and to come, and worship him. To take advantage, of the provision, that Yahweh has made, for atonement, and begin worshipping, him. This psalm, is God giving, instruction to his people, to see his glory, to rejoice in his glory, and to tell others, about his glory, until the whole world, is singing the praises, of our Lord Jesus Christ. [ 56 : 50 ] And then having become Christians, we are to learn, and we are to help, one another learn, to worship God, more exclusively, and devotedly. Perhaps, you're here, and you would call yourself, a Christian, and yet you're convicted, about the idolatry, you see in your own heart.

It may be, that you have misunderstood, Christianity, and you're not a Christian, at all. And I'll leave that, to your pastors, to work through with you. But perhaps, you are legitimately, a Christian, and yet as we've been, looking at this psalm, you're under conviction, of sin, for idolatry, that has crept into your heart.

We're all idolaters, to some extent, in some way, in various ways, in various degrees, and at various times. As Christians, we don't just, all of a sudden, flick a switch, and worship God, purely and devotedly, as we ought to.

And so, having become Christians, we are to learn, and we are to help, one another learn, how to worship God, more exclusively, and more devotedly. Which involves, identifying in one another, idols of the heart, as well.

And as we get to know each other, in the context of church community, and share our lives, with one another, we can help one another see, you know, brother, or sister, you know, as you're sharing with me, you know, the way you're thinking, about this decision, you know, I wonder if, maybe your priorities, are a little bit out of line, with the way that the scripture, would talk about, this issue, or that issue.

[ 58 : 18 ] Maybe you need to think about, instead, what would be the most glorifying, decision for you to make, most glorifying to God, decision for you to make, instead of, you know, what would feed this idolatry, or that idolatry.

You understand what I'm saying? There's a, probably a million different, specific examples I could give, so I'm just gonna stay general, but you understand what I'm saying, that we would learn, to let go, of the idols of our hearts, and worship God, more devotedly, more purely, and more, more sincerely, and more truly, and we're to help, one another, do that.

So, wherever we stand, whether you are, consciously an unbeliever, you know that you've never yet, trusted in Christ, or whether you're confused, because, you're, you see idolatry in your heart, and you're under conviction of sin, and you're not sure, where you're at, or whether you know, that you're a Christian, and yet you're still seeing, that yeah, there's some idolatry, that I'm still struggling with.

Whatever situation, you find yourself in, the, the, correct response, having heard this, is the same for all of us, and it is repent. Roughly 500 years ago, when Martin Luther, nailed his 95 theses, to the door of Wittenberg, to spark the reformation, the first of the 95 theses, went like this, when our

Lord and Master, Jesus Christ said repent, he willed the entire, life of believers, to be one of repentance.

Repentance is not something, that we did, a long time ago, at a summer camp, but repentance, repentance is something, that we do all the time, as Christians, as we learn to love God, and God alone, more purely, more sincerely, and more devotedly, as we go on, in our Christian life.

[ 60 : 00 ] So wherever you're at today, I just want to encourage you, repent. And repentance, is not a drudgery, repentance is not, this heavy thing, that you have to do grudgingly.

Repentance, is coming home, from the pigsty. A senior dad, run to the end of the driveway, to meet you, happy that you're home. So repent.

Today, all of us, let's start living, together, for the glory of God, above all else. Trusting in his son, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness, of our idolatries.

Let's not be, like I was, at the Toronto Blue Jays game, so long ago, missing the point. But, having seen the point, of our lives today, let's repent, and let's ascribe, to the Lord, the glory, that is due, his name.

Let's pray together. Oh God, would you, help us to repent. Lord, would you help us, to recalibrate, to reprioritize, to reorient our lives.

[ 61 : 12 ] Lord, we all sin, in many ways. Lord, we are, we are, by no means, perfect men and women. Lord, we are, sinners, Lord, all of us, even those of us, who have been, regenerated, and made new.

Lord, we, find in ourselves, indwelling corruption, which we, resent, and, which we long, to be free from. Lord, would you help us, to grow. Would you help us, to be more, and more holy.

Lord, for those who are, not yet trusting in Jesus, even here today, Lord, would you, by your Holy Spirit, not let them, perish, oh God, but would you, by your Holy Spirit, bring them under conviction, of the sin, and, of sin, and bring them, to see the light, of the knowledge, of your glory, in the face of your son.

Lord, don't let them go, Holy Spirit, do the work, that we, are powerless to do, and change their hearts, we pray. So Lord, we commit all of us, all of our lives, all of our situations, to you, and whatever situations, we find ourselves in, this morning, whatever the state, of our hearts, Lord, we ask that you, by your spirit, would minister to us, for your glory, and for our good, and it's in Jesus name, that we pray, Amen.

Amen. Amen.