

Serve the Lord with Gladness!

Come into His Courts with Thanksgiving!

By Sheila Lutz

In the quiet times with God, we can seek His face and know what gives us joy. When we rejoice, what a sound there can be! For those attending LWML's 75th Anniversary at the national convention in Albuquerque, that thanksgiving celebration was anything but quiet. What praising there was with cow bells, whistles, singing, clapping — all kinds of joyful noises!

OPENING: Rejoice! Give thanks! Pray Psalm 100 together.

Verse 1: How do you come before God with a joyful noise? _____

Verse 2: In the weeks before, during, and after convention, I was blessed to enter His courts wherever I went: in prayer for dear ones dealing with cancer and injury; at convention in prayer, Bible study, and celebration; touring the beauty of the Southwest's deserts, mountains, and canyons from hot air balloon, cable car, auto, and bus; with my mother, in a body riddled with osteoporosis and with memory much depleted, but still celebrating her 95th year of life.

List several reasons you praise God: _____

One translation says *Serve the Lord with Gladness!* while another says *Worship the Lord with gladness!* In what ways is worship different than service? _____

Is all your service joyful? _____ How can it be more so? _____

If you have ever had the opportunity to face the congregation during worship, what did you see? _____

What can increase your joy in worship? _____

How can your service be your worship? See **Romans 12:1**. _____

Verse 3: What is my responsibility in knowing that the LORD is God? _____

Knowing the LORD is God is our reason for:

Nehemiah 8:10b _____ and _____

Psalm 139:13-16 _____ and _____

Proverbs 9:10 _____ and _____

Proverbs 15:33 _____ and _____

Jeremiah 29:11-14 _____ and _____

Romans 1:16-17 _____ and _____

Romans 8:14-17 _____ and _____

Ephesians 2:8-9 _____ which is a _____

Ephesians 2:19 _____ and _____

1 John 4:16-20 _____ and _____

Verses 4-5: Certainly we enter our worship in our congregations with praise. What attitude characterizes God's people who come before Him in any place? **Ephesians 5:1-2** _____

Psalm 107:1-2 _____

The ESV translation of Psalm 100 subtitles it "A song for giving thanks." Should thankfulness only be a public event? _____

Does private thankfulness limit joy? _____

Read **Psalm 103:1-2**. God is the giver of all blessings. How can I/we bless God's Name? _____

I recently heard about the green pastures of desert lands. The lesson had even greater meaning when I saw desert pasture for myself. When watered, there's a green hue over the browns and grays, with tufts of grass sprouting up here and there. The speaker said this is God's green pasture — not belly-deep, grassy fields where sheep can get sick by overeating. His green hue and refreshing tufts provide just enough for each day and give us sustenance for the difficult times. What a blessing!

How do I praise during the challenges of life? _____

As a Lutheran Woman in Mission, how can I put my faith into action with these verses? _____

CLOSING: Psalm 100 is called *jubilate* in Latin [O, be joyful]. It is also called a *doxology* (liturgical praise*).

Joyfully praise the Lord by singing or praying the "Doxology" (LSB #461; LW #805; TLH #644) or "Serve the Lord with Gladness" (www.lwml.org/the-league-pledge-and-songs).

*Definitions are taken from the Merriam-Webster online dictionary. Bible references are ESV.

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