

Part 3 Psalms
Church Expectations

TALKING POINTS WALKINGPOINTS

Leaders' Guide

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A publication of **the Disciple**, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- 1 What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- 2 Pastor Ryan noted from Psalm 122:1-2 that believers **should** experience genuine joy as we gather. The word "should" indicates "**ought-ness**"—**obligation**—things that **ought** to be a certain way. What do you think—is joy something that's within our control?
- 3 Is joy ever commanded in the Bible? And, if it is, how do we go about producing **genuine** joy?
- 4
 - Our world is **torn** by racial strife and descending into chaos! Pastor Ryan noted that the church is a unified, multi-ethnic group of people united by Jesus. This map shows the locations from which the first-century believers in the church of Jerusalem originated (read Acts 2:9-11).

Count up the locations. How many are there?
Read Acts 2:41-47 and 4:32-35. How well did they get along?

What are the chances that their unity was automatic, easy?
- 5 Notice the nouns and pronouns in Psalm 122:8-9.

*For the sake of my brothers and my friends, I will now say, "May peace be within you."
For the sake of the house of Yahweh our God, I will seek your good.*
- 6 Who was the psalmist considering—himself or others?
- 7 When you come to Sunday worship, are you here for your sake or for others' sakes?
- 8 Concretely, what would it look like for you to "seek the **peace** of your church" (v. 8)?
- 9 Concretely, what would it look like, for the sake of Yahweh, to "seek the **good** of your church" (v. 9)?



- 1 A standard, soft-ball question designed to get discussion going. Don't take too long on this, however... Pay attention, however, to any strong negative responses or major areas of confusion. Take note, and make plans to grab coffee and talk further.
- 2 Allow group members to freely share their opinions. Realize that the next question follows up on this.
- 3 Sure does! The psalms are **full** of commands to rejoice. Here are three from the New Testament:
 - Matthew 5:12 – “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven...”
 - Philippians 4:4 – “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:16 – “Rejoice always...”How to we obey these commands?
 - Pray—ask God to help you rejoice.
 - Notice the reasons Scripture gives for rejoicing, and then meditate on those.
 - Meditate on God's promises to you, and his faithfulness to you.
 - Think about the fact that you've been spared what you deserve: hell.
- 4 More than fifteen locations—and from all over the Roman Empire. Vastly different cultures. Read Acts 2:41-47 and 4:32-35 reveals that they loved each other deeply and sacrificially. No, it wasn't easy or automatic. Read Acts 6:1-6. But then notice v. 7! When we work hard at unity, giving preference to others, the church grows.
- 5 *For the sake of my brothers and my friends, I will now say, “May peace be within you.”*
 - “I” am concerned about the peace and welfare of “my brothers and friends”.
 - “I” wish peace on “you”.*For the sake of the house of Yahweh our God, I will seek your good.*
 - “I” seek the good of others (“you”).
 - I do this for the sake of someone else—Yahweh.
- 6 He was **totally** othes-centered: “brethren”, “friends”, and “Yahweh”.
- 7 Help your group members grapple honestly with this question. Good follow-up questions include:
 - **How** would a person even know who he's most concerned about?
 - What evidence is there that I truly am considering others **more** important than myself?
 - What is an issue I've yielded my preference on, for the sake of unity?
- 8 Be ready with a few answers of your own. You'll probably need to “prime the pump” on this one. Don't settle for vague platitudes. Ask for specific examples whenever general categories are given.
- 9 Ditto. Don't settle for vague platitudes. Ask for specific examples whenever general categories are given.

Four Ways Edification Happens in Corporate Worship (Psalm 122)

1. As we gather in God's house, we should experience genuine joy. (v. 1-2)
 - First- to third-person transition. Emphasis here on the gathering, not just the going.
 - "Joy, which was the small publicity of the pagan, is the gigantic secret of the Christian."
G.K. Chesterton
2. As we gather with God's people we should expect spiritual growth. (v. 3-5)
 - Unity - (v. 3)
 - Bound firmly together - made whole.
 - The same verb as is found in the instructions for making the tent of worship.
 - Jesus turning the tables - using God for personal gain.
 - Diversity - (v. 4a)
 - Israel was a family of tribes - they were tied together by something much greater than flesh and blood. They were tied together as tribes of the Lord.
 - The church is made up of many different peoples with many different backgrounds, but we are tied together by the same thing: Jesus!
 - Jerusalem was diverse and the new Jerusalem will be diverse. Our church must be diverse! This makes us strong as we show the world that we are bound together by the Gospel, not race, economic status, politics, or tradition.
 - God is glorified in our pursuit of diversity.
We must strive to make our Jerusalem look like the heavenly Jerusalem.
 - This makes the church the most unique mechanism in all of the world.
We are tied together by the Gospel we believe, not by any earthly commonality.
 - Thankfulness - (v. 4b)
 - Worship (who He is and what He has done)
 - Spirit and Truth - John 4:24 - The spirit working in us as we unite around the truth - this leads to eternal thankfulness to our God.
 - This command, to give thanks, runs right down the center of all Christian worship. A decree. A word telling us what we ought to do, and what we ought to do is praise. - Peterson
 - Righteousness - (v. 5)
 - Judgement - the decisive word by which God straightens things out and puts things right.
 - Our gathering around the word of God will push us in obedience to God.
We need each other to achieve obedience.
 - Jesus is the fulfillment of the throne of David
and His Word is the final authority in all our worship gatherings.
3. As God's people, we must pray for peace for one another. (v. 6-7)
 - "Ask" - transition into the real world.
 - Peace and prosperity are the proper fruits of the justice of God.
 - Peace - completeness with God. Prosperity - living in the completeness of God.
 - "Worship does not satisfy our hunger for God—it whets our appetite.
Our need for God is not taken care of by engaging in worship—it deepens!" - Peterson
 - As we gather corporately we look to scattering and we intercede for one another.
Asking God to grant peace and prosperity of His people.
4. As God's child, you must pursue the good of the church. (v. 8-9)
 - "Seek to excel in building up the church." (1 Corinthians 14:12b)
 - "Everything is to be done for building up." (1 Corinthians 14:26b)
 - "Because I love . . ." (v. 9a)
 - This is the epitome of gathering for worship.
We lay down our preference and seek the good of God's people because we love His church!

Conclusion: What are your expectations for corporate worship? Are you a Consumer or a Contributor?

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**Psalm 122 is a song that the Hebrews sang on their way to worship at Jerusalem.
This week's Scriptures focus on our worship.**

Monday—Revelation 7:9-12 is an example of perfect worship.

- Who is worshipping, and where are they from?
- What things make this worship so beautiful.
- How can you make these part of your worship?

Tuesday—In 1 Corinthians 11:17-22, Paul gives an example of the wrong way to worship.

- What wrong things does he specifically point out?
- How can we avoid these things in our worship?

Wednesday—Read John 4:20-24.

- What does Jesus say about the kind of worshipers God desires?
- What two important elements does He emphasize?
- What are the opposites of these elements?

Thursday—Read Psalm 95.

- Make a list of the ways it tells us to worship.
- How are these a part of your private worship? Of your public worship?

Friday—Read Psalm 133; Philippians 2:1-2; 1 Peter 2:4-5; and Matthew 5:21-26.

- How is unity in the church tied to our worship?
- What does Jesus instruct us to do when we see a break in that unity?

Saturday—How many times is the word “praise” used in Psalm 150?

- Make a list of that many things to praise God for today.
- What does Hebrews 13:15 teach us to do? Go ahead and do that now.



Pastor Ryan's closing challenge is: Are you a consumer or a contributor?

The church is a family, and in families *no one* gets his way *all* the time!

At the dinner table tonight, ask each person to name his favorite food.

Then ask:

- **What would happen if every night we ate only *your* favorite food?**
- **How would *you* feel? How would *the rest of us* feel?**
- **Why do you think we should want to be considerate to *everyone* in the family?**
- **What should we do with our disappointment when we don't get our way?**