

## **IT IS NICE TO SEE A LITTLE EXCITEMENT**

I usually film our online worship service on Friday mornings at our house. Our dog Daisy gets really excited when it comes time to film worship. As soon as I hit record on the camera and sit down in my chair to begin speaking, Daisy runs to get her basketball. For the first few moments of recording, I can count on Daisy to place the ball at my feet and begin to play around with it. By the time I begin my prayer of praise and confession Daisy has moved to the living room to roll over onto her back and wiggle back and forth. Sometimes while doing this, she will let out a bark in her excitement. It is not long before she comes back in to where I am filming and starts eating her food. By the time I get to the sermon she settles down and sometimes lays at my feet while I preach. If I should get up at any time during filming, Daisy will start these routines all over again.

This past Friday my wife Nadine was home when I was about to start filming. She decided to take Daisy for a walk so that she would not be a distraction. As soon as they headed out the door for the walk, I hit the record button. Apparently, Daisy did not want to miss out on the excitement she experiences while I record the worship service. She plopped herself down on the front step and would not budge for Nadine at all. Her tail wagged immediately when Nadine conceded and let her back into the house so she would not miss worship. While it can be challenging at times to film an online worship service with a dog scurrying around me, it is refreshing to see her excitement.

Wouldn't it be nice to see this kind of excitement from people again when it comes to experiencing worship. Prior to COVID, congregations in many denominations were beginning to see a decline in attendance at worship services. One of the things COVID did was to motivate many churches like ours to offer online services when restrictions prevented us from worshipping in person.

Many congregations have not seen everyone return to in-person worship after the restrictions were lifted. Many pastors I have talked to have commented that only fifty percent of their congregation have returned. There are many reasons to explain why we have seen these declines in in-person worship. It

would be wonderful to see this trend reverse. I can't help but wonder if one of the ways to reverse this trend will be for people to gain the same excitement for worship as is expressed by Daisy.

When we are excited about something, we do not want to miss out on it. Daisy showed this by not wanting to go for a walk with Nadine while I was filming the service. For her, the excitement she experiences while I film worship exceeded the joy she gets from going for walks. Maybe at one point in our life we had this same excitement when it came to going to church for worship. It is wonderful if this same excitement continues to remain in us. Often, we lose this excitement at some point and as a result find ourselves attending worship reluctantly, or out of a sense of duty or guilt. When this becomes our attitude toward worship it is no wonder we talk ourselves out of going, or fail to experience the true joy of the experience when we do attend.

A passage from scripture that may help us discover again an excitement for worship can be found in Psalm 100. This psalm is an invitation to enter with excitement and joy into the Lord's presence. The starting point in helping us rediscover this excitement to worship is found in verse 3:

**Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are His.  
We are His people, the sheep of His pasture.**

The beginning point to once again finding an excitement for worship is **remembering God is our Creator and that He gives us all that we have.** With this understanding we will stop focusing only on ourselves and once again see how exciting it is to have God's guidance and care over our lives. The psalmist then tells us by acknowledging God as our Creator and our need for Him we will have this more positive approach going into worship:

**Enter His gates with thanksgiving; go into His courts with praise.  
Give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the Lord is good.  
His unfailing love continues forever, and His faithfulness continues to  
each generation. (Psalm 100:4-5)**

What a joy it must be for God to see us come into worship with this kind of excitement. When we carry this excitement into the worship experience the

psalmist reminds us, we will take out with us the assurances of how good God is, and how His faithful love is with us now and always.

Perhaps some of us have lost the excitement we once had for worship. If this is the case, I pray that Daisy's enthusiasm, as well as the psalmist's here, will provide the inspiration needed to reclaim it.

Keep safe and God bless

Pastor Dean

## **Make a Joyful Noise unto the Lord!**

Hymn with lyrics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GvyA1JBN4w>