

Youth Teaching Resources

November 22, 2020



The Right Stuff

Matthew 23:1-12—“The Right Stance”

Matthew 25:1-13—“The Right Preparation”

Matthew 25:14-30—“The Right Investment”

Psalm 100— “Good God!”

Christmas Letters

1 Corinthians 1:1-9—“Every Good Gift”

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Find links and videos related to this lesson.

“Good God!”

Psalm 100

YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE

Post across your social media platform all the things that you are thankful for. You may even want to take a different area of your life and post just about that area for each day.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip “Thanksgiving” from *The Blind Side*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability, and then facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) What does Michael’s expression reveal when he sees the Thanksgiving spread?
- 2) Why does Michael sit at the table?
- 3) What do the Tuohy’s stop eating in front of the t.v. and sit at the table?
- 4) When have you been surprised to be thankful for something? How did you react?
- 5) How does your faith prepare you to be thankful?

Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading Psalm 100. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony’s commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) How does the psalmist want you to express your praise? How do you most easily express your praise to God?
- 2) Which of the expressions of praise are you most comfortable with? Explain.
- 3) Which of the expressions of praise are you least comfortable with? Explain.
- 4) Why are we to worship God? How have we witnessed these acts from God?
- 5) The psalmist states that God is not only God, but also good. How does that allow us to worship God? Could you worship a “bad” god?

Information *continued*

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the “Digging Deeper” portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) What is the difference between knowing about God and knowing God?
- 2) How do you pronounce the name for God “YHWH”?
- 3) How does this psalm speak of thanks and thanksgiving?

You may also want your group to discuss “The Hardest Question” if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as “The Hardest Question”: It is “We are his” not “Not we ourselves”?

Transformation

Conclude your time together by introducing the social media challenge for the week:

Post across your social media platform all the things that you are thankful for. You may even want to take a different area of your life and post just about that area for each day.

Allow the students time to share the things for which they are thankful. You may even want to distribute sticky notes and have each student write them down and place them somewhere in the room.

Close with a popcorn prayer where you open the prayer and then allow the students to voice their own prayers of thanksgiving.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartledge

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

Calypso 100—Here’s my take on a modern paraphrase of Psalm 100, to be sung to a Caribbean beat similar to that of “The Belly Button Song.”

Verse 1 (vv. 1-2)

*Praise the Lord in his holy temple,
make a joyful noise and sing.
We will worship our God with gladness
praise the Lord for everything.*

Verse 2 (v. 3)

*Know ye that the Lord is God, now
God has made us and is our king
We’re like the sheep within God’s pasture
what a blessed joy to sing!*

Verse 3 (v. 4)

*Come on in with great thanksgiving
come into God’s courts with praise.
Life your hallelujahs up now,
bless God’s precious holy name.*

Verse 4 (v. 5)

*For you know the Lord is good now
Showing love that will not end.
God is faithful and eternal,
Always here to be our friend.*

Knowing God—There is a difference between knowing about someone and knowing them. The psalmist tells us that we can go beyond the simple knowledge that Yahweh is God—we can know God in a personal and intimate way, even as a shepherd and his sheep know each other.

How do we come to know a person? Through spending time together, even if we’re far apart and our communication is online. Should learning to know God be any different? Can we expect to *know* God without spending time in prayer, meditation, or through the simple wonder of appreciating the glorious world we have been given?

To know God, we must talk to God, and listen to God. We may speak in joy or in tears, with easy words of thanks or hard words of sorrow and complaint. Whatever we have to say, God is willing to hear. Are we equally willing to listen, attuning our spiritual ear to whatever manner God chooses to speak to us?

The LORD is God—We can’t be sure how YHWH, the Hebrew Bible’s special name for God, should be pronounced. This is in part because ancient Hebrew was written without vowels, and before vowel notations were added, the Hebrew people came to believe that God’s name was too sacred to pronounce. So, when the scribes later added vowel points to the text, they put the vowels for “Adonai” (a generic word meaning “Lord”) with the consonants that we would render YHWH. In German, the same consonants would be rendered as JHVH. Early scholars translating the Bible into German didn’t recognize that the Hebrew used the consonants for Yahweh and the vowels for Adonai. They read them together, giving rise to the name “Jehovah,” a King James standby born as a Germanized version of two interlaced Hebrew names for God.

Digging Deeper *continued*

Thanks and thanksgiving—Verse four contains both the noun (thanksgiving) and verb (give thanks) forms of the basic Hebrew root for expressing gratitude. The noun form could refer either to a thanksgiving sacrifice or offering, or to the vocal praise that constitutes thanksgiving (Marvin Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, Word Biblical Commentary [Waco: Word Books, 1990], 538).

Things to be thankful for—There are many ways in which to see and to celebrate God's goodness. When she was a little girl, Barbara Ann Kipfer began to make a list of all the little things that made her happy. She started with an ordinary spiral bound notebook, and soon she had filled it up. She got more and bigger notebooks, and as she grew older, she continued adding to her collection of all the little things that gladden the eye and bring wonder to the heart. She included things like ancient alphabets, lighthouses, onions on a hot dog, honeysuckles, and big tubs of ice cream.

After twenty years of this, Kipfer persuaded Peter Workman to publish her list in a book called *14,000 Things To Be Happy About* (New York: Workman Publishing, 1990).

When I read from Barbara Ann's list, I discover that some of the things that make her happy don't do a thing for me. We are different people. But reading her list inspires me to be more aware and more appreciative of some of those little things that bring joy to my own life and remind me of the goodness of God.

I think of the smell of freshly-mown grass, writing with a new pencil, baked beans with real bacon, a new novel by a favorite author, or the voice of a friend on the phone.

Consider making your own list. What are some of those things, large or small, that make you happy and give you cause for thanking God?

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartledge

The Hardest Question is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

Is it “We are his,” or “Not we ourselves”?

How should we properly translate the second line of Ps. 100:3? The question has long provided an interpretive conundrum. Should it be something like “It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves” (the familiar option followed by KJV and NAS95), or “It is he that has made us, and we are his/we belong to him” (NRSV, NET, HCSB, NIV)?

The problem is not so much one of translation as of choosing which textual option to translate. The received Hebrew text at the heart of scholarly editions was handed down through hundreds of years by special scribes known as the Masoretes, who took careful note of inconsistencies or apparent problems with the text.

The Masoretes would not change the text that had been passed on, but at places where they believed the text may have been incorrectly preserved, they added marginal notes containing what they perceived to be a better reading. Scholars refer to the main text as *ketiv* (what is written), and the alternate, preferred text as *qere* (to be read).

In Ps. 100:3, the *ketiv* and the *qere* reading are two different words that are spelled differently but both pronounced identically, which explains the potential confusion. Both words (or word combinations) are pronounced as “low,” which provides an English analogue: we pronounce the words “lo” and “low” the same, but they mean different things.

The *ketiv* reading uses the negative particle *lō*, leading to the translation “not we ourselves,” even though there’s no word for “ourselves” in the text.

Scribes and scholars have tended to judge this as an inferior reading, in part because there’s no indication that anyone was claiming that the Israelites had created themselves, so it appears to answer a question nobody was asking.

The *qere* reading (*lō*) is a combination of the preposition *l-*, meaning “for” or “belonging to” and the third person pronoun *ō*, meaning “him.” The combination generally gives the sense of “belonging to him” or “his.” This leads to translations like “we are his,” which fit the context better.

Ancient texts were all copied by hand, and substituting *lō* for *lō* would be an easy mistake to make.

Some scholars favor a third translation option, noting that the *ketiv* reading *lō* was also occasionally used as an interjection meaning “indeed” or “surely,” resulting in “surely we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.”

Whichever translation we choose, the end result is the same: God is creator, and we are God’s creation; we relate to God as sheep in God’s pasture who follow and depend on the shepherd.