

June 25, 2017

Psalm 100

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord. Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy. Acknowledge that the Lord is God! Give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good. His steadfast love endures forever.*

As we begin our worship service today, I want to share with you a story by Tony Campolo – pastor, author, Professor. In one of his books, he shares several life stories that have happened to him, stories that have helped shape his faith journey. And the one I want to share with you now focuses on worship, about what we expect when we come, how passionately we should be about giving praise and thanks to God.

**MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE – REALLY**

**Tony Campolo**

For 24 years in a row, I was a headline speaker at Creation Festival, a great gathering of young people, kids of all ages, who come together in central Pennsylvania to hear contemporary Christian bands and listen to speakers with messages especially designed to reach young people. Every year, Creation draws anywhere from 30 – 50,000 young people, along with their adult sponsors and chaperones.

This Christian festival ends on Saturday night, and one particular year I was the preacher who closed out the program. The next morning, I was scheduled to preach at a nearby Lutheran church. Word got around at Creation as to where I would be preaching, and many of the young people on their way home stopped to participate in the worship. So, instead of the usual 200 or 300 folks in the congregation, that Lutheran Church was packed with about 1,200 people. They filled the downstairs and the balcony, and there were young people standing along both sides of the church.

The Lutheran pastor had no idea how these young people happened to be there, as he remarked to me, “We really advertised your coming widely throughout the area.” As he stood there, little did he know that the young people filling his church were very much of a charismatic bent. Many of them were from Assembly of God churches.

The service began with the pastor, clothed in his robe, standing at the pulpit, in a very formal setting. With lighted candles and all the accessories that go with “high church” worship, he initiated the service by saying in a droning voice, “This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Let us come into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise.”

At that moment, a young man in the balcony raised his arms and shouted at the top of his lungs, “*All rii-i-i-ight!*”

All over the place, young people began to clap and cheer. “Praise God!” “Praise God!”

I watched as the amazed pastor struggled to comprehend the reaction his words had elicited. He was stunned. The last thing in the world he expected when he called upon the congregation to make a joyful noise unto the Lord, was that anybody would do so.”