

“GLAD TO BE IN THE SERVICE ONE MORE TIME”

PSALM 122:1

A Sermon BY
Rev. Dr. Marcus D. Cosby

SEPTEMBER
22

8AM



Date: September 22, 2024

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Marcus D. Cosby

Sermon Title: “Glad to Be in the Service One More Time”

Scripture: Psalm 122:1 (KJV)

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

SERMON SUMMARY

In celebration of the 16th pastoral anniversary of Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley, Rev. Dr. Marcus D. Cosby begins his sermon by recalling the familiar words of the popular gospel song, “Glad to Be in the Service.” He expresses his fondness for this song, highlighting how, despite the many challenges that can keep us away from God, we should feel a sense of excitement for being sustained by God and being able to gather in the sanctuary one more time.

Rev. Dr. Cosby anchors the sermon using Psalm 122 as his focal text. He illustrates how it beautifully captures the spirit of God’s people coming together to worship and celebrate God’s goodness in their lives. As a song of ascent, Psalm 122 was sung by the people of God as they made their way to Jerusalem to worship. Rev. Dr. Cosby emphasizes how their praises were offered even during their journey, reminding us that we shouldn’t wait until we arrive at church to worship; our praise should begin long before we enter the sanctuary.

Amid the violence and political turmoil we see in the news, as well as the challenging environments we face at work and in life, Rev. Dr. Cosby encourages us remember three important things when we gather in the house of the Lord:

1. We have a responsibility to prioritize the Lord's praise.

- Rev. Dr. Cosby emphasizes that worship is meant to be a communal experience, not an isolated one. When we gather together in the house of the Lord, it should be a time of gratitude and connection.

2. We have to publicize the Lord's preference.

- The house of the Lord reminds us that our focus should not only be on joy but also on justice. When we come to worship, our mindset should shift so that we leave empowered to make a difference in the world.

3. We have to learn how to pray for the Lord's people.

- Prayer is woven throughout our worship services to remind us of our duty to continually pray for one another. As scripture tells us in [James 5:16](#), "the fervent prayers of the righteous avail much." We should pray for the peace and prosperity of those who we worship alongside.

As Rev. Dr. Cosby moves toward the conclusion of his sermon, he reminds us that we are beneficiaries of others' fervent prayers. It is because of the prayers of our grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends that we continue to be blessed. He encourages us to pray for *šālôm*, a Hebrew term meaning peace, welfare, prosperity, and complete rest. Rev. Dr. Cosby reminds us that as we pray for the *šālôm* of our siblings in Christ, let us also be encouraged that prayer still works and we are living examples of this truth.

KEY POINTS

- Everytime we gather together in the house of the Lord as siblings in Christ, we should do so with gladness.
- Psalm 122 is a song of ascent, meaning it was a Psalm sung by God's people as they made their way to worship together in the house of the Lord.
- When we get to God's house, we are drawn to move from isolated into a communal praise and worship experience.
- Everytime we enter the sanctuary, our thanksgiving to God should be on full display because God's grace is what has sustained us.

- When we get to God's house, there isn't only an emphasis on joy, but there is also an emphasis on justice.
- We don't come to worship service just to have a good time, but we come to be empowered to make a difference in the world.
- As siblings in Christ, we have to pray for the peace and prosperity of the people with whom we worship.
- We all have been blessed as a result of someone else's prayers for us.
- Keep praying, keep believing, keep working, and keep serving because the power of prayer still works.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU QUESTIONS

1. Rev. Dr. Cosby reminds us that we should come into the house of the Lord with gladness and excitement, regardless of the vicissitudes of life. Can you share one thing that you are excited, glad or grateful for this week?
2. Psalm 122 speaks of praising God on the journey to worship, not just when we arrive. How do you prepare your heart for worship throughout the week, especially during difficult times?

INTO THE BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Rev. Dr. Cosby talks about the importance of praying for the peace and prosperity of others when we gather to worship. How does this connect to Jesus' command in [Matthew 5:44](#), where He tells us to pray for our enemies? How can we apply this to our lives, especially in situations where it's difficult to pray for those we disagree with or struggle to love?
2. The sermon emphasizes that our worship should extend beyond the sanctuary and into our daily lives. Think about people in the Bible like Daniel, who continued to pray three times a day despite the decree in [Daniel 6:10](#), or Ruth, who faithfully served Naomi in [Ruth 1:16-17](#). How do these individuals demonstrate living out their faith everyday?

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Rev. Dr. Cosby emphasizes that we don't come to worship just to feel good, but to be empowered to make a difference in the world. What is one change you feel called to make in your life, community or the world, and how does your faith inspire you to take action?
2. We were reminded that “we are living in the prayers of the saints.” Reflecting on this, what are some prayers we can pray to give hope to the future? How might those prayers inspire change in future generations?
3. What are some intentional practices and habits that help you prepare your mind and heart for worship? How might this routine help you experience God in a deeper way?
4. We should have “a full display of thanksgiving” when we enter the sanctuary. What does that statement mean to you? How can we respect and learn from other displays of thanksgiving?
5. Rev. Dr. Cosby expressed how wonderful it is to come to church and have smiles and love shown to us as we enter. He used part of scripture to teach us that as the people moved toward Jerusalem, they were joyfully singing and speaking to each other. He referred to this as not waiting to have church when you get to church. How can we extend this practice to our daily interactions with others?

“CAN I PUSH IT?” QUESTIONS

1. Psalm 122 calls for us to pray for the peace and prosperity of others. Given the deep political divide we see today, how do you think the church should navigate its role in promoting unity and peace? How can we balance our faith with addressing injustice? Can focusing on justice risk creating more division?

2. Rev. Dr. Cosby reminded us that when we come to God's house, we aren't just here to feel good, but to be empowered to make a difference. In a society that struggles with issues like immigration, racial injustice, and wealth inequality, how do we, as Christians, extend our prayers and efforts to those who may be responsible for perpetuating these injustices?

FOR INDIVIDUAL OR VILLAGE STUDY

SPIRIT WORK/ACTIVITY

Devotion: *How to Pray for Others*

Activity Steps

1. Scripture Reading and Reflection (15 minutes)

- Read each scripture:
 - "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." **Psalm 122:1 KJV**
 - "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." **Micah 6:8 NIV**
 - "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." **John 3:16 NIV**
 - "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." **James 5:16b NIV**
- What word sticks out in each verse and why?
- Write out how these scriptures relate to your community engagement and social justice.

2. Preparation of Heart (5 minutes)

- Have a moment of silence for personal reflection.
- Think about God's love and your role in fostering justice within your community, country, or world.

3. Identifying Neighbors (10 minutes)

- Write down the names of your neighbors (co-workers, students, friends, president, vice-president etc.) and any specific challenges you know they face.

4. Praying for Peace, Wholeness (*šālôm*), Prosperity, and Discernment (10 minutes)

- Pray for:
 - **Peace:** Pray for harmony and healing in relationships.
 - **Wholeness (*šālôm*):** Pray for restoration for those facing injustices.
 - **Prosperity:** Pray for the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of neighbors.
 - **Discernment:** Pray for discernment on how to serve neighbors and community.

5. Call to Action (5 minutes)

- After prayer, commit to one action that you can take before the end of the year to serve neighbors and community members. Ideas might include volunteering, organizing events, or supporting local initiatives.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. Rev. Dr. Cosby's sermon was a great reminder of how marvelous it is to enter into the house of the Lord. What are some practices that will help you enter the sanctuary as well as your personal devotional space with a heart full of thanksgiving?
2. What does it mean to prioritize the Lord's peace in our everyday lives and communities? How can we actively promote peace in our homes, workplaces, and among our friend groups?
3. How does understanding the concept of *šālôm* deepen your commitment to pray for others?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

1. ["Glad To Be In The Service" Video](#)
2. [History of the Book of Psalms](#)
3. ["If I Could Help Somebody" Lyrics and Video](#)