

## 33. PRAISE BEFITS THE UPRIGHT: Psalm 33

**INTRODUCTION.** Why do we sing praises to our triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit?

**DOCTRINE.** Praising the Lord with song is the duty, decorum, and battle cry of the saints.

**OUTLINE.** As for the outline, it is the same as the doctrine. So there are three main points in this Psalm from verses 1-19, then we are given specific application in verses 20-22.

### I. PRAISING THE LORD WITH SONG IS THE *DUTY* OF THE SAINTS (Ps. 33:1-3).

#### Psalm 33:1-3

- 1 Shout for joy in the LORD O you righteous!  
Praise befits the upright.
- 2 Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre;  
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!
- 3 Sing to him a new song;  
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts."

#### I) The Lord commands His saints to *rejoice* in Him (Ps. 33:1a).

**Psalm 33:1a** "Shout for joy in the LORD O you righteous!"

- **SPURGEON:** "To rejoice in temporal comforts is dangerous, to rejoice in self is foolish, to rejoice in sin is fatal, but to rejoice in God is heavenly."
  - **THOMAS GOODWIN:** "In public worship all should join. The little strings go to make up a concert, as well as the great."

#### II) The Lord commands His saints to *give thanks* to Him (Ps. 33:2a).

**Psalm 33:2a** "Give thanks to the LORD with (*accompanied by*) the lyre;"

- **JOHN WELLS:** "In singing of psalms, the gracious heart takes wings, and mounts up to God, to join with the celestial choir."

#### III) The Lord commands His saints to *make melody* to Him (Ps. 33:2a).

**Psalm 33:2b** "make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!"

- **SPURGEON:** "Israel was at school, and used childish things to help her to learn; but in these days, when Jesus gives us spiritual manhood, we can make melody without strings and pipes. We who do not believe these

things to be expedient in worship, lest they should mar its simplicity, do not affirm them to be unlawful, and if any George Herbert or Martin Luther can worship God better by the aid of well tunes instruments, who shall gainsay their right? We do not need them, they would hinder than help our praise. . ."

- **PLUMER:** "If instruments are used in public worship, it ought to be only as aids to congregational singing. Where they discourage this, they are an intolerable offence. "Light and silly voluntaries, long and unmeaning interludes between the stanzas, loud accompaniment, fancy stop, and see-saw swell-playing, and other things similar," should be wholly discountenanced." — **William S. Plumer, commentary on the Psalms**

#### **IV) The Lord commands His saints to *sing* to Him (Ps. 33:2a).**

**Psalm 33:3a** "Sing to him a new song..."

- **NATHANIEL HOLMES (1599-1678):** "Singing is making, in a special manner, man's tongue to be God's glory."
  - **THOMAS MANTON:** "Self-love may lead us to prayers, but love to God excites us to praises."
  - **THOMAS WATSON:** "Praising God is one of the highest and purest acts of religion. In prayer we act like men; in praise we act like angels."

**OBJECTION I.** I do not like to sing, so why should I do something I do not like?

**ANSWER.** Worship is not about what you like; worship is about what God likes. God likes His saints to praise His name through song. Do you not want to like what God likes? Ask Him to change your desires if that is you.

**Now the Lord God not only commands our praise, beloved, He also commands *the manner in which we praise Him.***

In Psalm 33:3, He says His righteous ones must praise Him "skillfully" and "with loud shouts."

**Does our triune God who redeems us not deserve better than sloppy singing and low volume?**

**OBJECTION II.** I am not good at singing, so how can I do it skillfully?

**ANSWER 1.** First of all, I would ask, *How do you develop any skill?* Hard work and practice. Some are surely become skillfully more easily than others, but that does not excuse your hard work and practice. The third longest book in the Bible is God's Hymnal, the Psalms. God wrote 150 of them through men, using over 30,000 words, and He did it so His saints would praise His name through song. *Summary of answer 1: Hard work and practice is how you sing*

*skillfully to the Lord!*

**ANSWER 2.** You do the best you can with what God has given you, not being flippant in any way, even trying to learn how to best sing by any means necessary.

**SPURGEON:** "It is wretched to hear God praised in a [messy] manner. He deserves the best that we have. Every Christian should endeavour to sing according to the rules of the art, so that he may keep time and tune with the congregation. *The sweetest tunes and the sweetest voices, with the sweetest words, are all too little for the Lord our God;* let us not offer him limping rhymes, set to harsh tunes, and growled out by discordant voices."

**THOMAS FORD (1598-1674):** "It is unlovely when some in the congregation *sing* out of tune — but the greatest absurdity of all is when our *hearts* are not in tune."

### **OBJECTION III. I do not like others to hear me sing, so why should I sing loudly?**

**ANSWER 1.** Because God directs you to, and it pleases Him.

**ANSWER 2.** One of the reasons we sing praises to God is to encourage and admonish the other people around us. **Paul says,** "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (**Col. 3:16**).

**SPURGEON:** "Heartiness should be conspicuous in divine worship. Well bred whispers are disreputable here. It is not that the Lord cannot hear us, but that it is natural for great exultation to express itself in the loudest manner. Men shout at the sight of their kings: shall we offer no loud hosannahs to the Son of David?"

### **QUESTION. Where should saints sing praise to the Lord?**

– ANSWER I.

**Saints should sing praise to the Lord by themselves during private worship.**

– **Psalms 59:16** "I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning."

– ANSWER II.

**Saints should sing praise to the Lord in their homes during family worship.**

– **Psalms 118:15** "Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous."

– ANSWER III.

**Saints should sing praise to the Lord in the assembly of the saints during public worship.**

- **Psalm 149:1** "Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly!"
- ANSWER IV.  
**Saints should sing praise to the Lord in even smaller gatherings.**
  - **Just after Christ's institution of the Lord's Supper, still in the upper room, Matthew 26:30 says,** "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."
- ANSWER V.  
It is my conviction that **Saints should sing praise to the Lord outside of the church building even as an act of spiritual warfare.**
  - **2 Chronicles 20:21** "And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the Lord and praise him in holy attire, as they went before the army, and say, 'Give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures forever.'"

## II. PRAISING THE LORD WITH SONG IS THE *DECORUM* OF THE SAINTS (Ps. 33:1b, 4-19).

\*Decorum means "Appropriate behavior."

### **Psalm 33:1b**

"Praise befits the upright."

- **SPURGEON:** "God has an eye to things which are becoming. When saints wear their choral robes, they look fair in the Lord's sight. A harp suits a blood washed hand. No jewel more ornamental to a holy face than sacred praise. Praise is not comely from unpardoned professional singers; it is like a jewel of gold in a swine's snout. Crooked hearts make crooked music, but the upright are the Lord's delight. Praise is the dress of saints in heaven, it is meet that they should fit it on below."
  - **Praises are like appropriate clothing that a Christian wears.**  
A Christian without praises regularly coming from their hearts and out their lips is as inappropriate as a grown man going to the grocery store in his underwear. **BOYS AND GIRLS.**

### EXAMINE YOURSELF.

**Q.** Do you praise the Lord with song when you are alone, in your home, in the assembly, even in public? Why or why not?

**Hopefully you see the duty and appropriateness of singing praises to the King.** Now you should, I think, be asking for some help because you want to do it with all your heart, mind, and strength.

**That is exactly what the Psalmist does in verses 4-19 in Psalm 33.** The following verses serve as multiple ways for you as a believer to stir yourself up

to praise God through song. Look at the word "For" at the beginning of verse 4." That means the Psalmist is giving us reasons to praise God!

**Therefore let me turn these truths into Directions** so you can use them to stir yourself up to praise the Lord in private, in your family, in the assembly, and in public.

**I) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon the perfection of His Scriptures** (Ps. 33:4a).

**Psalm 33:4a**

"For the word of the LORD is upright,"

- **PLUMER:** "If one precept, promise, doctrine, threatening, or prediction of God could fail, then indeed we would be undone. But that can never be."
  - **What do we need for eternal life and happiness that is not revealed in the pages of this sacred book?**

Hear me: Every syllable can be trusted,

- **BOYS AND GIRLS:** Because the Scriptures are perfect, every warning in the Bible can be heeded (paid attention to), every command obeyed, every bad example avoided, every good example imitated, and every promise trusted with clear conscience.

**The Word of the Lord is upright.**

**II) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon the perfection of His actions** (Ps. 33:4b).

**Psalm 33:4b**

"and all his work is done in faithfulness."

- **SPURGEON:** "God writes with a pen that never blots, speaks with a tongue that never slips, acts with a hand which never fails. Bless his name."

**III) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon His love for righteousness and justice** (Ps. 33:5).

**Psalm 33:5a**

"He loves righteousness and justice;"

- **I think many believers take for granted that our God loves righteousness and justice.** Can you imagine if the Lord were indifferent? What hope would there be for things to ever get better? What would the new Earth look like if righteousness and justice were not perfectly established.

**IV) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon**

**His lovingkindness, which fills the whole earth** (Ps. 33:5).

**Psalm 33:5b**

"the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord."

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- **1 Corinthians 3:21-23** "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

**V) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon His immeasurable creating power** (Ps. 33:6).

**Psalm 33:6**

"By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,  
and by the breath of his mouth all their host."

- **The Lord our God breathes stars!**

**VI) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon His sustaining power** (Ps. 33:7).

**Psalm 33:7**

"He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap;  
he puts the deeps in storehouses."

- **KJV HERITAGE:** "God separated the waters to form the dry land (Gen. 1:9; Job 38:8–11). He demonstrated the same power to save Israel when He put the Red Sea and the Jordan River in a heap (78:13; Ex. 15:8; Josh. 3:13,16)."

**VII) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon His awesomeness** (Ps. 33:8).

**Psalm 33:8**

"Let all the earth fear the Lord;  
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!"

**VIII) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon His creating all things out of nothing with a word** (Ps. 33:9).

**Psalm 33:9**

"For he spoke, and it came to be;  
he commanded, and it stood firm."

**IX) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon the futility of man's plans and the sufficiency of God's** (Ps. 33:10).

**Psalm 33:10**

"The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;  
he frustrates the plans of the peoples."

- **PLUMER:** "If plans and plots, counsels and devices, the most cunning and the most cruel, could have injured the church of God, there had not been left even a small remnant. Long, long ago the enemy hoped to make a full end of the worship and service of God on earth; but he has failed, and shall ever fail."
  - **Daniel 4:35** "all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?""
  - **Isaiah 46:9-11**
    - "**9** I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me,
    - 10** declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'
    - 11** calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it."
    - **Eph. 1:11** "He works all things according to the counsel of His will."
- **Q.** What does this look like? **A.** It looks like the jews, the romans, and the devil setting their faces against Jesus to thwart God's place, and God in the midst of all that working His plan perfectly to get Christ onto the cross and out of the tomb.

**X)** Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon **His immutable decrees** (Ps. 33:11).

**Psalm 33:11**

"The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations."

- **O PLEASE HEAR ME, BELOVED: Every moment of history has been carefully orchestrated by the Godhead to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ** by Him rescuing His people from their sin and restoring the whole universe!
  - **Q. Do you see how this applies to you, believer? A.** See the immutability of God's decrees! God's plan has always been to get Jesus into the manger as your Kinsman, preaching in Galilee as your Prophet, nailed to the cross as your Priest, out of the tomb as your

Advocate, seated at the right hand of God as your King, and returning again as your Restorer!

**XI) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon His electing love for you (Ps. 33:12).**

**Psalm 33:12**

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,  
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!"

- **PLUMER:** "It is a rich mercy that God makes the first motion towards the salvation of men! If any people are his inheritance, it is because he has chosen them, verse 12. The doctrine of the New Testament is the same. 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.'"
- **HERE IS A REASON TO REJOICE, believer:**  
**Our triune God delights in you.**
  - The Father chose you as His inheritance before you were created.
  - The Spirit effectually called you when you were straying.
  - The Spirit also sovereignly regenerated you when you were dead.
  - Christ forgave you when you were guilty.
  - Christ washed you when you were filthy.
  - The Father justified you when you were unrighteous.
  - The Father adopted you when you were a rebel.
  - The Spirit is sanctifying you even in the midst of your indwelling sin.
  - Christ is interceding for you even right now at the right hand of the Father.
  - Christ will discipline you when you are idle or obstinate.
  - Christ will glorify you when He resurrects you and makes you like He is.
- **Nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus.**  
**O sing praises to the Lord, you saints, for He has chosen you as His inheritance!**

**XII) Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon His omniscience (Ps. 33:13-15). \*Omniscience means "God knows everything and has never learned anything."**

**Psalm 33:13-15**

"13 The Lord looks down from heaven;  
he sees all the children of man;  
14 from where he sits enthroned he looks out  
on all the inhabitants of the earth,  
15 he who fashions the hearts of them all  
and observes all their deeds."



**XIII)** Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon **the futility of man's strength and the sufficiency of God's** (Ps. 33:16-17).

**Psalm 33:16-17**

"16 The king is not saved by his great army;  
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.  
17 The war horse is a false hope for salvation,  
and by its great might it cannot rescue."

**XIV)** Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon **His providential love for you** (Ps. 33:18).

**Psalm 33:18**

"Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him,  
on those who hope in his steadfast love,"

**XV)** Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon **His redeeming love for you** (Ps. 33:19a).

**Psalm 33:19a**

"that he may deliver their soul from death"

**XVI)** Stir yourself up to sing praises to God by thinking upon **His preserving love for you** (Ps. 33:19b).

**Psalm 33:19b**

"and keep them alive in famine."

*RESPONSE*

**III. HOW THE SAINTS SHOULD RESPOND** (Ps. 33:20-22).

**Psalm 33:20-22**

"20 Our soul waits for the Lord;  
he is our help and our shield.  
21 For our heart is glad in him,  
because we trust in his holy name.  
22 Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,  
even as we hope in you."

– **PLUMER:** "The cry for mercy ever becomes us, till we get our crown."

**CONCLUSION. PRAISING THE LORD WITH SONG IS THE  
BATTLE CRY OF THE SAINTS** (Ps. 33:3b).

**Psalm 33:3b**

"with loud shouts."

**Psalm 33:1-3**

1 Shout for joy in the LORD O you righteous!

Praise befits the upright.

2 Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre;

make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!

3 Sing to him a new song;

play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts."

*TEXT WORK*

# Psalm 33 - The Steadfast Love of the LORD

- [1] <sup>imperative</sup> Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous!  
<sup>to give a ringing</sup> Praise befits the upright. Counted and Walking
- [2] Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre;  
<sup>imperative</sup> make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!  
<sup>imperative</sup> Sing while playing <sup>prep.</sup> with the harp <sup>prep.</sup> of ten strings!
- [3] Sing to him a new song;  
<sup>imperative</sup> play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.  
<sup>to make a thing right + beautiful</sup> Singing <sup>prep.</sup> with loud shouts <sup>prep.</sup> with the harp <sup>prep.</sup> of ten strings!
- [4] For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness.  
<sup>because</sup> <sup>Scripture</sup> <sup>righteous</sup> <sup>conj.</sup> <sup>Providence</sup> <sup>truth stability</sup>
- [5] He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.  
<sup>He is a lover of</sup> <sup>conj.</sup> <sup>He said</sup> <sup>def.</sup> <sup>perfect</sup> <sup>loving kindness</sup>
- [6] By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.  
<sup>prep.</sup> <sup>visible universe</sup> <sup>perfect</sup> <sup>Creation</sup> <sup>conj.</sup> <sup>prep.</sup> <sup>spirit</sup> <sup>all of creation</sup>
- [7] He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses.
- [8] Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!  
<sup>one verb</sup> <sup>def.</sup> <sup>revere</sup> <sup>one verb</sup> <sup>abide</sup> <sup>remain</sup>
- [9] For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.  
<sup>because</sup> <sup>conj.</sup> <sup>and it was</sup> <sup>conj.</sup>
- [10] The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples.  
<sup>breaks</sup> <sup>purpose</sup> <sup>those who oppose</sup> <sup>prep.</sup> <sup>Christ</sup> <sup>frustrates</sup> <sup>make averse</sup> <sup>thoughts</sup> <sup>all men</sup>
- [11] The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations.  
<sup>purpose</sup> <sup>thoughts</sup> <sup>prep.</sup> <sup>repeated in Hebrew to show emphasis</sup>

[12] Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,  
 (Happy) (Typically those who oppose Christ) (conj. Elshim)  
 the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!  
 def. (elected) selected prep. (possession)

[13] The LORD looks down from heaven; Inheritance  
 prep.  
 he sees all the children of man;

[14] from where he sits enthroned he looks out  
 on all the inhabitants of the earth,  
 prep. prep.

[15] he who fashions the hearts of them all  
 def. (of Djinne) (pre-ordination) (inner man) (mind, affections, will) altogether  
 and observes all their deeds.  
 def. (discerns) (understands) (yasa) (works - good or bad)

[16] The king is not saved by his great army;  
 def. (neg. part.) (Nasa) (multitude) Host  
 a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.  
 (mighty man) (strong man) (neg. part.) (abundant) (power/might) (it-suff.)

4 different words used in Hebrew to emphasize that salvation belongs to the LORD. vv. 16-17

[17] The war horse is a false hope for salvation,  
 def. (chariot horse) (disappointment) prep. (vanity) (malat)  
 and by its great might it cannot rescue.  
 conj. prep. (abundant) (strength) neg. part.

[18] Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him,  
 (see) (prep) (fear) (reverence)  
 on those who hope in his steadfast love,  
 prep. (farry) (remain) (rest) (Loving kindness)

[19] that he may deliver their soul from death  
 (prep) (verb) (prep) (Lit. Death and Hell) (Fig. pestilence and rain)  
 and keep them alive in famine.  
 conj. (preserve) (revive) (hunger)

[20] Our soul waits for the LORD;  
 (farry) (prep) (remains)  
 he is our help and our shield.  
 (ezer) (conf.) (aid) (succor) (Defense) (Scales) (Like on a dragon)

[21] For our heart is glad in him,  
 (certainly) (inner man) (mind, affections, will) (places)  
 because we trust in his holy name.  
 conj. (faith) (confidence) (Sacred) (Who He is)

[22] Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,  
 (Here) (Loving kindness) prep.  
 even as we hope in you.  
 (wait) (farry) (rest) (remain)

RESOURCES