

Well, maybe you are familiar with Meredith Wilson's famous musical, The Music Man.

Of course, Harold Hill made sure that they recognized that they had trouble.

There's that beard again.

That's trouble with a capital T, and that rhymes with P, and that stands for pool.

Of course, the...

marquee song, and it is 76 trombones.

Seventy-six trombones led the big parade, and 110 cornets close at hand.

They're followed by rows and rows of the finest virtuosos, the cream of every famous band.

Oh, stop.

You guys are going to walk out.

Yeah, I was the music man in high school, and I played that part.

But if you recall, what Harold Hill is doing is he's telling the people of River City that everyone can be included in this River City Boys Band, that all have a part to play.

And he's building up the enthusiasm as he lists all of the instruments that will be part of this grand, grand parade.

There'll be 15 mounted cannons on the battery, thundering and thundering louder than before.

Now, likewise, the psalmist here, although not a con man like Harold Hill, is reminding us that everything, that all that we are, that everything that exists, that everything that we say is to be worship, that our lives are created and were created for the sole purpose of giving glory and honor.

to our God.

In this psalm, there's just four movements, or four theaters, we'll say, that the psalmist says, look, this is what we are called to do.

In fact, this is what God even desires.

Now, I know many people want to say, hey, we're here at Pinewood, and we want to be Christians who follow the Word of God.

We want to do what God's Word says, but I don't see tambourines, and you guys sure don't dance.

One, I'm not all that great of a dancer.

I'm glad that we don't dance.

I don't expect you to dance.

But then again, it really isn't about us.

God says he loves things that are soft.

He loves things that are loud.

He loves it when we are still.

And he loves it when we're moving.

And the more that we understand, as the psalmist here says, that worship, we should never ask the question,

How did I like that?

The question should always be, how did I do?

How did I do?

Well, here's the first thing we see in verse 1, that all places.

We're to worship everywhere.

Praise the Lord, praise God in His sanctuary, praise Him in His mighty heavens.

Now, what you might not see there is what the psalmist is saying is that, yes, we are to praise God in His sanctuary.

Now, if you think about the sanctuary, we're talking about the Holy of Holies.

And Solomon's temple is larger than the tabernacle, but more than likely, the psalmist is referring to the tabernacle that really was under 200 square feet.

basically the size of, you know, your family room.

They're saying in that small area, that intimate place, we worship God, that God chooses to dwell in that tiny, itty-bitty living space.

But then...

He's also to be proclaimed and praised, and He is worthy of a praise that fills the entire cosmos.

That's what's being stated there, the mighty heavens.

Talking about all of creation.

Something that can be measured in billions of light years.

From a small amount of square feet, size of a living room, to the vastness of space.

We are called and we are able, and His praise is deserving of the small and the big.

You can worship God everywhere.

And for some of you guys, you've talked to me about that.

You've said, well, can't I worship God on the golf course?

True, yeah, God is on the golf course, although there's a lot of lying and cheating that happens on those things.

But anyways, yeah, you can worship Him on the golf course.

You know what you can also do?

You can celebrate your wedding anniversary on the golf course with all of your buddies, too.

You can do that.

But just because you can doesn't mean that you should.

And so there is a sense where we're called ultimately to come and worship together.

But we're going to see is what the psalmist is saying is, yes, there is individual worship.

You have breath.

You might be at home.

You might be in the car.

You might be at church.

You might be at work or school.

Or you might be out on the golf course or out in the wilderness.

The small and the vast.

We're called to worship God everywhere.

not just on Sundays, not just here in this building, but rather everywhere, we are called to worship God.

And He receives our worship whether it's in a small area with a small group of people or whether it is in all of the cosmos or as it's described in heaven with 10,000 times 10,000, a number that cannot even be counted.

So we have to realize that worship isn't necessarily located or bound by a particular place or even a particular time.

But worship is everywhere, regardless of where you are.

And God receives that.

And you know what?

He's deserving of it, whether it's my individual worship
or the worship of a congregation.

All places, the Psalmist says, praise the Lord.

You praise Him in the small and you praise Him in the big.

The second is all reasons.

We worship because of who God is and what He has done.

All right, that's what the psalmist says, praise Him for His mighty deeds.

God has done great things, the greatest of which is sending His Son Jesus to be our Savior, to redeem us from a position and condition that we got ourselves into individually and personally.

Yes, we understand the covenant of works.

We understand that Adam and Eve were given a command.

They failed in it.

But the reality is, friends, you know the commands of God as well.

And every day, sometimes for some of you, twice a day, you fail and break those commands.

I'm being facetious.

It's way more than twice, and you know it.

Way more than that.

So we praise Him for what God has done.

We praise Him that He continues to do what He promised us to do, which is to love us, to be with us, to never forsake us.

Even though we forsake, we leave, we're distracted, and we're all about ourselves.

We don't think, I mean, we're not much, but we're all we think about.

And so we're called to praise God because in all of His power, in all of His autonomy, His ability to do whatever He wants to, He remains faithful to us.

He continues to provide and to continue to be our God, even though we don't deserve it.

But the psalmist says it's not just what God has done, because sometimes in your life you see what God has done, and it's great, and you celebrate, and you'll call me or you'll email or text and say, hey, pastor, I just got that new job, or I got accepted into this school, or I just have an interview with a medical school, or I've got this promotion, or I had a grandbaby.

It's easy to praise God in those times because of what He has done.

But I also get calls and texts and emails and conversations that talk about cancer, miscarriages, death of a loved one, loss of life and job.

And so the psalmist says there might be times where the deeds of God, you might be in a time where you're like, oh, this is tough.

The psalmist says it's okay if you can't praise Him right now for the deed that you're experiencing and for His providence in your life, then praise Him for He's excellent.

because He is one who is faithful.

And even though this might be a season, there are other seasons to come.

And as we look back upon who God is, and we praise Him, whether by ourselves in the car, around the dinner table, at a small group, or even a Sunday school.

Now, sometimes we like to praise God and feel like we want to praise God when we kind of are able to do it the way that we want or only talk about the things that He's done that we like.

It reminds me of, well, an illustration that I've used before.

It's like going to a birthday party.

You're invited to a birthday party, and you get there, and dag nabbit, everything is decorated in green.

And everybody knows the best color is blue.

I mean, that's my color, blue.

Yeah, there's that.

Amen.

I hear some amens out there, blue.

And you know what?

They're playing games, me as a kid, and they were playing Duck, Duck, Goose.

Everybody knows you don't play Duck, Duck, Goose.

You play Red Rover.

That's the birthday game.

That's it.

And then they serve up sandwiches.

Who does that?

It's pizza.

Pizza is the way that it's done at birthday party.

And then they do the worst thing.

They serve carrot cake.

That's a vegetable for crying out loud.

It's chocolate cake.

Chocolate cake.

And then you have to realize, oh, by the way, it's not my party.

And when it comes to worship, it's not our worship.

It belongs to God.

He's the one who invites us and calls us.

He's the one that tells us what He likes.

And let me tell you, some of the things He likes, I don't.

Tambourine and dancing, that sounds like hippies.

I played the trumpet.

A trumpet by itself is not all that pleasant at times.

It's pretty loud.

pretty much in your face.

I like the lute and the harp, softer, gentler, melodic.

But it's not my decorations.

It's not my cake.

It's not my games.

It's not my party.

I want everybody to remember that.

I know that as we're going through this time, and I think one of the good things is just for us to take the time that we have and ask.

Had someone say, well, this must be your preference, J.D.,

You want to know what my preference is?

Let me tell you one thing.

Do you know what the first murder that ever happened was about?

Worship styles.

Worship styles was the basis of the first murder.

I know this is an emotional time for a lot of you.

I don't want you to think that somehow it's just the traditional service that somehow is going to change.

No.

Our contemporary service is changing and has been changing.

We kind of want to be at a place where we're able to do all of these things because it's not our party.

If it was up to me, I'd sing metrical psalms.

It's what I learned in seminary with the Covenanters, because no one can complain about the words because it's the psalms.

And they sing it a cappella, so no one can complain about the instruments.

except for the voice.

Maybe they might complain about your voice, but that's beside the point.

That'd be my preference.

It's not about me, though.

It's about what God wants.

Jerry O'Neill is my pastor and a professor of pastoral theology.

And he gave a great illustration that really has been a reminder for me for a lot of things.

And that is, don't forget the rose.

That's the end idea.

Don't forget the rose.

In our class, he was saying, when you think about your spouse, if it's her birthday, big birthday, maybe it's a 40th or a 30th or something big, and you ask your wife, what is it that you would want?

And she would say, I just want a single red rose.

Now, every guy out there knows that your wife is more deserving of something than just a single red rose.

And like good husbands, we're going to have a big bash.

It's going to be great.

We're going to add all types of things.

Probably not carrot cake, but we're going to have some other good things.

And so we come with what we think is

is exactly what they deserve and exactly what we think that she deserves.

And we present all that.

Will she receive it?

Yes.

But so often we forget the rose.

We don't give the exact thing that she wants.

Friends, our desire is just to give to God the exact thing that He wants.

And what He speaks of

is unity, togetherness, recognizing that the new and younger generation needs to learn from the older generation, and the older generation needs to remember that things are still new and God is making all things new.

Don't forget the rose.

Do exactly what God asks.

So all places, all reasons, all means, worship with everything you've got.

Praise Him with trumpet sound.

Praise Him with lute and harp.

Praise Him with tambourine and dance.

Praise Him with strings and pipe.

Praise Him with sounding cymbals.

Praise Him with loud clashing cymbals.

I like that last part because it's really showing not so much.

This is an exhaustive list.

It's not like it's saying, oh, these are the only instruments that you could use.

But rather, they're expressive of the type of instruments that are used.

Think about the sounding cymbals.

And then you have the loud clashing cymbals.

In some ways, they're referring to the zills.

Think about it.

It's Middle Eastern culture.

The little, little, you know, just the soft little dinky dinks, you know.

Women celebrating, dancing with the little.

And then you've got the John Philip Sousa big slam and crashing cymbals announcing that the parade has begun.

God loves it all.

He loves the stillness and the contemplativeness of the harp and the lute, but He also likes that trumpet blast.

He likes the strings and the pipe, but He even likes that hippie stuff, tambourine and dancing.

What's being said here is that everything is to be used for worship.

Every part of who you are used for worship.

Every way that we can express praise to God should be used in worship.

He's not just locked into a particular style or to a particular instrument.

It doesn't mean we get rid of those instruments.

No, we make sure that we include them and have them and engage with them.

And the most important instrument, our heart.

Making melody in our hearts to God is what Paul says in Colossians.

That's the most important instrument.

You and me.

Giving what God wants.

He redeemed us.

He bought us.

He owns us.

This is His party.

And we celebrate Him.

And we honor Him.

in times of celebration, but also in times of quietness and softness.

And the final theater area, all people, worship with every breath.

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord, praise the Lord.

In the Hebrew, there's two words for breath.

We're more familiar with the one that refers to the breath or the movement of the Holy Spirit, ruach.

All right?

That refers to the wind and breath of God.

But there's a second Hebrew word that's used here, neshama.

And neshama is found when it says that God breathed into Adam and He became a living being.

It's that life breath.

It's what gives and declares us to be the image of God, the special relationship.

He has given us the ability to create.

He's given us the ability to move.

He's made us alive.

He's given us reason and consciousness to be able to engage with us and us with Him.

That's the breath.

You see, what it's saying is that if you've received that breath, that breath is borrowed.

And it's to be used being breathed out in praise to God for who God is, for what He has done in all places, for every reason, for all people.

So, hold out your hand.

Put it in front of your face.

Breathe on it.

You're now qualified to praise God.

You made it.

You got the job.

The position's yours.

So if you have breath, if you can speak, you can bless.

You can encourage.

You can praise.

Worship isn't just about what happens on Sunday mornings.

It's how we live.

It's how we speak to one another.

It's how we show grace.

It's how we show up and build up.

and how we encourage one another to press on, to keep on as long as it's called today.

So all places, all reasons, all means by all people.

Here's your takeaway.

Don't waste your breath.

How will you use your breath this week?

It definitely wasn't given to us to promote ourselves.

but to glorify God.

In fact, the Apostle James says that with the same tongue we bless God and curse people who are made in His image.

So let our worship extend beyond Sunday mornings.

Let it extend beyond the worship service.

Let it be heard in how you speak to one another, how you respond, how you encourage, how you bless.

Don't waste your breath.

Use it for worship.

And that is worship, when we encourage and when we love and when we share.

Psalms 150 doesn't just close the Psalms, it points to eternity.

Revelation 5 shows every creature in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, worshiping Jesus.

That's where we're headed.