

## Sacred Songs, Life Lessons

### A Song of Praise

#### Psalm 150

July 21, 2024

HDBC

Let's wrap up our series, **Sacred Songs, Life Lessons**. I've really enjoyed preaching this series and I'm already looking forward to coming back to the Psalms in the future. We've explored some of life's more difficult experiences through these songs, so I think it is fitting that we wrap it up on a positive note. That's what God does in the Bible's songbook. He ends it with a positive, spirited song of praise.

Praise is found in all six verses of this little song. There are 77 words in this song and 13 of them are the word **praise**. In every case the subject of the praise is God. **Praise** is a translation of the Hebrew word *Halel*. When accompanied by the word *Yahweh*, it is translated *Hallelujah*. It means **to boast in the Lord, to give glory to the Lord, to praise the Lord**.

**This phrase is found 332 times in Scripture.** Interestingly the last five Psalms each start with this phrase *Praise the Lord*. **It is missing** in too many lives. Yet it is commanded over and over in the Psalms. We are consistently commanded to offer praise to the Lord.

*As Corrie Ten Boom said, God doesn't make suggestions.*

The reception following a wedding in Israel today is similar to what occurs here. Singing, dancing, laughter. It is called a **Halel Party**. A praise party. **Word implies** an atmosphere of joy and celebration. Closer to a pep rally than funeral procession. ***Praise is acknowledging and celebrating the person and work of God.***

**What I want you to see** is that praise is important part of worship and an important part of our lives. Our praise is the overflow, the outward expression of our worship. It can happen individually and personally, as well

as corporately. Psalms are full of references to praise. Last Psalm good illustration. **Read Psalm 150.**

**The single focus** of this song is the praise and worship of God. **You will notice** that the focus is absolutely on God, and in no way on us. When we are truly praising God, we push our selfishness to the background and completely think of Him.

### **Four Presuppositions on Praise**

#### **1) Time spent in praise to God is never wasted.**

Any exercise that occupies the full time of angels in heaven cannot be wasted time.

#### **2) Praise is a vital part of any true worship celebration**

Praise and worship are not the same thing. Praise is a part of worship. But without praise there is no true worship celebration in a corporate sense.

Also, if you are not personally praising God, you are not participating.

#### **3) The lack of private praise produces fear & discomfort in group praise.**

If you are not accustomed to praising God in your private times, you will have a weak understanding of praise. When those around you truly begin to praise the Lord, it will often make you feel uncomfortable.

#### **4) When a believer does not praise God, there is a reason.**

Hidden Sins: Unconfessed sins will restrict a believer's praise to God.

Ignorance: Too much illiteracy in the church when it comes to worship. Don't know the meaning, purpose and importance of praise.

Pride: Pride is a killer of praise. Unwillingness to sing because someone may hear us. Unwilling to raise hands because someone might see us. Unwilling to get on our knees because of what others might think.

Well, let's look at the passage. **Note five things.**

## **1. The Recipient of Praise (1)**

The Lord is the recipient of our praise. Not the preacher, singers, other worship leaders. Our praise must not be centered on the building, the music, personalities, decorations, etc. But on the person of the Lord.

**Why is the Lord the recipient?** He is the only one worthy of our praise. Spurgeon *To give the least particle of his honor to another is shameful treason, to refuse to render it to Him is heartless robbery.*

## **2. The Setting For Praise (1b)**

### **A. His sanctuary.**

We know that God cannot be confined to a building, but He has chosen to identify places of worship where His presence can be felt in unique way. Tabernacle, Temple, Church congregations. But there is another sanctuary. **The sanctuary of your life.** The Holy Spirit lives in us. In our bodies and through our lives we express praise to Him.

### **B. His mighty heavens**

The house of God should be filled with praise to Him whenever we meet together in this building. But our praise is not confined to this place. Anywhere in His creation, praise is appropriate. All of creation is to be an amphitheater echoing the praise of God from His people.

## **3. The Focus of Praise (2)**

### **A. His deeds**

Think of the great deeds done by God that are recorded in the Bible. Creation. Flood. Deliverance of Israelites from Egypt. Gideon, David, Elijah, Elisha, and so many more. Salvation is His greatest deed.

### **B. His character**

Not all rulers are worthy of praise. Many world leaders are cruel tyrants, who rule kingdoms. They are not worthy of our praise. The Lord is not like them. His character is one of **love, mercy, purity**. That makes Him worthy of praise.

#### 4. The Methods of Praise (3-5)

Praise is an expression of our **adoration of God**. It is more than a feeling on the inside. Wherever you find *praise* in Scripture **you find movement, action, sounds and songs**. Praise involves activity.

Jack Taylor, in his book *The Hallelujah Factor* has identified three categories in which praise is expressed.

##### A. Vocal

*My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. (Ps. 145:21)*

*My lips shall praise you. (Ps. 63:3)*

Singing, shouting, speaking.

##### B. Audible, but Not Vocal

Clapping of the hands. This is audible but not vocal.

*Clap your hands, all you nations. (Ps. 47:1)*

Instruments are used in praise. (3-4)

*Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre . . . (Ps. 150:3-5)*

##### C. Neither Audible, Nor Vocal

Lifting of your hands.

*In your name I will lift up my hands. (Ps. 63:4)*

Dancing. David danced before the Lord when the ark was brought to its rightful place. *Let them praise his name with dancing. (Ps. 149:3)*

Kneeling. Word is often used in a context of praise. Bowing before the Lord. Showing that we are yielding to His sovereignty.

## 5. The Magnitude of Praise (6) *Everything that has breath.*

All living things receive their life from the one to whom they can now offer praise. From the least to greatest, smallest to largest, wisest to most foolish, all can offer praise to the Lord.

*The whole Christian life is one big "thank you," the living expression of our gratitude to God for His goodness.* Vance Havner

### What Can We Expect When We Begin to Praise God?

- 1) New sense of joy.
- 2) Increased spiritual warfare
- 3) New awareness of spiritual truth
- 4) New enthusiasm for group worship
- 5) Growing depth in your understanding of God

According to Psalm 22:3 God inhabits the praises of his people. Though God is everywhere at all times, his presence is manifested in the midst of a people who are praising Him.

I rarely quote Steve Martin during my sermons. But in 2011 he performed a song on the Late Show which called the entire atheist hymnal. The title of the song was ***Atheists Don't Have No Songs.***

Christians have their hymns and pages,  
Hava Nagila's for the Jews,  
Baptists have the rock of ages,  
Atheists just sing the blues.

Romantics play Claire de Lune,  
Born agains sing "He is risen,"  
But no one ever wrote a tune,  
For godless existentialism.

For Atheists there's no good news.  
They'll never sing a song of faith.  
In their songs they have one rule:  
The "he" is always lowercase.

In his attempt at humor, Steve Martin struck a chord of truth, pun intended.  
Because of our relationship with God, we of all people have something to  
sing about. We have a song that resonates deep in our hearts. It is a song  
of praise to the only one worthy of unconditional praise.

Feel it in your hearts. And as you feel it, let it come from within through  
expressions of praise, throughout the week, and when we gather on these  
Sunday mornings.