

The Transformative Power of Dangerous Praise

There's something revolutionary happening when God's people truly understand praise. Not the polite, measured singing we sometimes settle for, but the kind of wholehearted, abandoned celebration that changes everything. This isn't about preference or performance—it's about encountering the living God in a way that transforms us from the inside out.

When Stones Would Cry Out

Picture the scene: Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, crowds spreading their garments on the road, cutting branches from trees, shouting "Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" The religious leaders were furious. "Teacher, rebuke your followers!" they demanded.

Jesus's response cuts through centuries of religious pretense: "If they kept quiet, the stones along the road would burst into cheers."

Think about that for a moment. The very rocks beneath our feet would split open and declare His worth if we remained silent. This isn't hyperbole—it's a profound truth about the nature of Christ. He is worthy of praise whether we give it or not. Creation itself recognizes what we sometimes forget: the King of Kings deserves our wholehearted adoration.

Remembering Who He Is

The foundation of genuine praise begins with remembering who God actually is, apart from what He's done for us. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Before time existed, before matter, before anything we can comprehend—God was.

Everything we marvel at—the technological wonders, the architectural achievements, the scientific breakthroughs—are merely creations of the creation of the One who spoke it all into existence. When we truly grasp this, how can we remain unmoved?

Consider the book of Job, where God reminds His servant of the vastness of divine power: "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Who determined its dimensions and stretched out the surveying line? Who kept the sea inside its boundaries? Have you ever commanded the morning to appear?"

The intricate design of a single human eye, the perfect distance of earth from the sun, the gravitational details of planets and moons—all point to a Creator of unfathomable wisdom and power. True science, honestly pursued, leads us to our knees in wonder!

The Vision That Changes Everything

When John, Jesus's closest friend on earth, encountered the risen Christ on the island of Patmos, he saw something that shattered every comfortable notion of worship. He saw someone "like the Son of Man" wearing royal robes, with hair white as snow, eyes like flames of fire, feet like polished bronze, and a voice like mighty ocean waves. His face shone like the sun in all its brilliance.

This wasn't the Jesus who walked dusty roads and ate fish with His disciples. This was the resurrected Savior, the Victor, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

John's response? "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if I were dead."

For the church to stand casually with coffee cups, waiting for our favorite song, seems almost absurd in light of this revelation. We've domesticated the Divine, reduced the Almighty to a life-enhancement tool rather than recognizing Him as the sovereign Lord of all creation.

Gratitude That Overflows

"Let all that I am praise the Lord. With my whole heart I will praise His holy name. Let all that I am praise the Lord. May I never forget the good things He does for me."

Psalm 103 reminds us that praise flows from deep gratitude. He forgives all our sins, heals our diseases, redeems us from death, crowns us with love and tender mercies. He fills our lives with good things.

Each of us was once lost, broken, separated from God. We are only who we are now because of His grace alone. How could we not praise Him? And when others say our worship is "too much," do they understand what He's saved us from?

Worship in Spirit and Truth

True worship must be both emotional and theological. Jesus said genuine worshipers "worship the Father in spirit and in truth." This means our praise cannot be based solely on feelings, nor can it be merely intellectual assent to correct doctrine.

RC Sproul said, "*Truth without emotion produces dead religion and artificial admirers. Emotion without truth creates empty frenzy and cultivates shallow people who refuse rigorous thought.*" But when strong affections for God are rooted in sound doctrine—that's when Biblical worship comes alive.

The question shouldn't be "How did I feel during worship?" but rather "Was God pleased with my offering of praise?" This shifts everything from a consumer mindset to a worshiper's heart.

The Woman Who Understood

In Luke 7, an immoral woman crashed a Pharisee's dinner party. Everything about her presence was scandalous. She shouldn't have been there. She certainly shouldn't have approached Jesus. But she fell at His

feet weeping, washing them with her tears, drying them with her hair, kissing them repeatedly, anointing them with expensive perfume.

The religious host was appalled. But Jesus saw something beautiful: a heart that understood the depth of its need and the magnitude of grace received. "Her sins, and they are many, have been forgiven. So she has shown me much love."

Abandoned worship flows from those who truly comprehend what they've been saved from and who they've been saved by. When we grasp the enormity of grace, restraint becomes impossible.

Living a Life of Praise

Praise isn't confined to Sunday mornings. Romans 12:1 calls us to offer our bodies as "living and holy sacrifices"—this is true worship. Every moment becomes an opportunity to honor Him.

Praise in your car. Praise in your bedroom. Praise before you sleep and when you wake. Don't worry about your voice or who might hear. He delights in the worship of His children.

When life feels overwhelming, when circumstances seem insurmountable, praise lifts our eyes to the One who is above it all. He doesn't exist to enhance our lives—but when our eyes are fixed on Him, even death itself becomes merely the doorway to eternity in His presence.

The world desperately needs to see a church that actually believes what it sings, that lives in the reality of who God is, that cannot contain its joy in the Savior. Let praise become the very substance of who we are, because He alone is worthy. Not just on Sundays, but every single day.