

Oh Praise Him

Our #1 purpose is to praise the Lord! Praise is something that we are to give to Him....so shouldn't it be what He desires and wants?

Think of a time where you bought someone a gift and it was a disaster. Husbands, some of you have bought your wife a gift like a vacuum cleaner for an anniversary. You thought logically, "we need a new one, she is the one who uses it most, in fact she mentioned that we could use a new one, she must want one"

She wanted to just go buy one, she most likely didn't want it for your anniversary! Not only is that not a gift for HER (it's for the household), it's not what SHE wanted for a gift! It may have seemed like a good idea to the gift giver, but didn't please the gift receiver....

Do we do the same thing when we praise God? Do we give Him what He truly wants? What does the Lord desire from us?

Psalms 100:1-5 (NKJV)

1 Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!
2 Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before His presence with singing.
3 Know that the Lord, He is God;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.
5 For the Lord is good;
His mercy is everlasting,
And His truth endures to all generations.

That is what it looks like to praise our Lord. Praise should not be based on who you are or what you have. It is based on who Jesus is and what He has done.

Praise is different from worship, in fact, praise leads TO worship. You can praise things other than Jesus. To praise means to express approval or admiration, to commend. People praise each other. You praise friends, family, leaders, servants. You praise your child for going potty, sharing, picking up. You praise your dog for obedience. You can praise lots of things.

Praise is good, but keep in mind that praise can lead to worship. Worship is adoring, honoring, having reverence or high regard.

Worship is something that should be reserved for God. Many things are worthy of praise, but only God is good, only God is worthy of worship.

Luke 4:8 (NIV)

8 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

Above anything else we should praise the Lord!

Praise is when we joyfully think about all that God has done for us. Praise includes thanksgiving.

Let's look again at Psalm 100 to see how God desires to be praised.

Psalms 100:1 (NKJV)

1 Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!

We are to shout to the Lord with joy! Why? Because of who He is and what He has done (including His promises that we haven't yet seen fulfilled).

This can be hard when we are looking at what God hasn't done or what we don't have. Sometimes we must stop looking at what we don't have and start looking at all that we do have, for which we should be able to shout to the Lord with JOY!

Our attitude is important. If you are focused on Jesus, you can't help but be joyful. He is good, He loves you, He died for you, He saved you, He is coming back for you. How could you be downcast about those things.

When we are in a place where we can't be joyful, we are focused on everything except Jesus. How I feel, what I want, changes I desire, things I lack, ways I fail, who I'm not. The whole point of praise is to take the focus off of "I" and put it on Christ!

He tells us to make a joyful shout to the Lord! When people are joyful, they make noise, right? Not everyone is the same, not everyone expresses joy the same but very few express pure joy in silence.

If we truly know what the Lord has done for us, how can we remain silent? If you don't feel comfortable shouting, you don't have to, but if you feel joy, let out some kind of noise! Sing, clap, shout, stomp your feet, don't be silent!

The Lord says "Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!" All you lands, this is for everyone! We ALL have reason to make a joyful noise just because of who Jesus is. He is Savior, He is Healer, He is Deliverer, He is Victorious!

Consider Job....God let satan afflict Job pretty much any way he wanted as long as he didn't kill Job. He lost everything.....except God. Here is Job's response in the midst of this...

Job 1:20-22 (NKJV)

20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said:

“Naked I came from my mother's womb,
And naked shall I return there.

The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away;
Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

If we can only praise the Lord with joy, when we are happy about what we have, then we don't understand what He's done. Praise Him for who He is and what He's done.

Psalms 100:2 (NKJV)

2 Serve the Lord with gladness;

Come before His presence with singing.

We are to serve the Lord with gladness....when you do things for God, they ought to be joyful. Have you ever done some work for someone you really like? You are happy to help, joyful! Even if the job or the task is not the most pleasurable, you take joy in serving that person you really like!

That is how it should be when we serve the Lord. Sometimes we are called to do things that may not be enjoyable, you don't have to take joy in the task, but take joy in the one whom you are serving. God Almighty, Creator of the universe, your Creator, wants to use YOU!

Do you think Jesus took joy in suffering and death on the cross? NO! What He took joy in was serving you and me, those whom He loves.

We are to serve the Lord with gladness, THEN, come before His presence with singing....

This is where praise takes you....His presence. The Hebrew word here for presence is “face”. If you want to see God, sing His praises. Thank Him for all He is. Put your focus on Him and it will lead you to His presence.

How often do we desire God's presence and we sit down and tell Him all that is wrong in our life? Sing His praises and you will enter into His presence!

Psalms 100:3 (NKJV)

3 Know that the Lord, He is God;

It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;

We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Know that the God of the scriptures is the one true God. Just like last week when I shared that freedom begins with belief, so does praising God. We praise Him because we believe that He is the Lord, Creator of heaven and earth and giver of blessings.

In addition to that, He has made us! Yes, He is Creator so He created you as a being, without God you would not exist, period, not even possible.

But also consider what you are in life, what progress have you seen, if a believer how have you changed.

I believe I am a better father, husband, friend, and man in general than I used to be. I'll be honest with you, I've always worked hard, every job I have had I quickly gained the trust of management and was quickly given greater responsibility. I used to think it was because I was a hard worker, because I deserved it or earned it. I used to think if I made improvements in my life, it's because I worked hard.

Who I am today is a result of God's handiwork.....not Tim's. The Lord has made me the man that I am today. Some of it is the favor of the Lord, some is blessing, some is from pruning.....a lot of junk has been trimmed off of ol' Tim.....and praise Jesus there's more to be trimmed. But when you prune branches, they grow back more beautiful and healthy than before.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)

6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

God created you, shapes and molds you and will continue to do so.....
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves

and We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

This speaks of intimate care. He is our shepherd and according to John 10:14, He is the GOOD Shepherd who knows His sheep....

He knows everything about you and loves you anyway....PRAISE JESUS! He has a personal, intimate knowledge of you. The good and the bad.

He knows your weaknesses, what you need to be protected from, where you need guided. That's what a good shepherd does for the sheep, guides them to safety and protects them from harm.

But if a sheep takes off darting away from the shepherd toward danger and doesn't listen to the familiar voice of their shepherd, they may find themselves in a dangerous place. It's not the shepherd's fault. The same goes for you, you must listen to His voice and He will protect you and direct you with His rod and His staff.

Jesus is worthy of praise....He is always looking out for you!

Psalms 100:4 (NKJV)

4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

Jesus want's worship that is thankful! In the Old Testament when the worshippers would come to the Lord's temple, they would enter through the gates and courtyards with songs of thanksgiving.

As they gathered together to seek His presence, they did this being thankful to Him.

Our priority as we gather together should not be on making petition, learning from the message, or enjoying the fellowship of others. The priority should be to enter into His presence in a way that is pleasing to Him, that includes the joy in v1 as well as thanksgiving in v4.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)

18 Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

No matter what our circumstances are....we should be thankful to the Lord. The truly good things that you do have in life are from Him and more importantly IN HIM.

- In Christ there is salvation - 2 Tim 2:10
- In Christ you are declared righteous (justified) - Rom 3:24
- In Christ you are made righteous (sanctified) - 1 Cor 1:2
- In Christ there is wisdom - 1 Cor 4:10
- The veil of spiritual blindness and confusion has been taken away - 2 Cor 3:14
- In Christ you are a new creation - 2 Cor 5:17
- In Christ we have freedom - Gal 2:4
- We are all welcomed aside from race or gender - Gal 3:28
- We are seated in heavenly places (above all bondage, sickness, things of the world) - Eph 2:6
- In Christ we are brought close to Jesus - Eph 2:13
- In Christ there is boldness and faith - 1 tim 3:13
- In Christ we have our calling and grace - 2 tim 1:9
- In Christ there is true unity in the body - Rom 12:5

- In Christ there are all spiritual blessings – Eph 1:3

Tell me you don't have a reason to be thankful!!! If you still don't, listen to this:

Psalms 100:5 (NKJV)

5 For the Lord is good;
His mercy is everlasting,
And His truth endures to all generations.

The Lord is good! One thing about God....He is unchanging, meaning His character, who He is, does not change. He was good yesterday, He is good today, He will be good tomorrow!

We've got to believe that God is always good or none of the rest of this matters. Don't compare Him to humans. Sometimes I'm good, sometimes I'm not....Sometimes your mom/dad/sister/brother/son/daughter/friend is good, sometimes they are bad.

There is NONE like our God....He is always good! Praise Him

If you still can't think of any reason in the world to thank and praise God, think of a reason that's beyond this world..... His mercy endures forever!

If you grasp this alone it makes Jesus praise worthy.....you are a sinner. The penalty for sin is death....eternally. Separation from God....forever. But Jesus has mercy on you, that means He doesn't give you what you deserve...death. Instead if you believe in Him, He gives you LIFE!

Eternal life....knowing Him. There is nothing in this life on earth that compares to knowing Jesus. If you don't know Him, I pray today is your day. This mercy is something to be thankful for, it is something to praise Him for....every single day!

Try this week to thank the Lord for His mercy every day when you wake up. Start your day with thanksgiving and praise and see if it doesn't lead you into His presence....

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

I think this is means for a celebration! We must proclaim the praises of a mighty God who called us out of darkness! He says you are His special people!

Let's shout with Joy!

Let's Serve with gladness (worship team)

Let's sing in His presence

Let's proclaim that He is the one and only God and WE are HIS people

Let's thank Him and bless Him

FOR HE IS GOOD

HIS MERCY AND TRUTH ENDURE FOREVER