**PRINCIPLES OF PRAISE**

Sunday School Lesson 8

*Bible Principles for Daily Living*

Psalm 150

7/31/2022

**Introduction:** It is obvious that praising God is the theme of Psalm 150. A simple definition of praise is “commendation bestowed for personal virtues or worthy actions; it is expressed in words or song; it is different from fame, popularity, or celebrity.” A celebrity may draw a crowd due to his accomplishments, which may be good or bad. Getting notoriety in that fashion is not the same as being praised. Praise is bestowing accolades on someone for what he has done that is of value. Praise is the act of glorifying, offering approval, or expressing gratitude. When we praise the Lord, we are glorifying Him and expressing our gratitude to Him. False doctrine has made many Baptists afraid of words such as praise, worship, holiness, and separation. Bible-believing Christians should not be afraid of these words because they are Biblical words. As Baptists, we cannot allow worldly or apostate churches to cause us to avoid speaking about or correctly practicing praise. Each child of God ought to place an emphasis on praising God properly, not with commotion or confusion. We can praise God at church every time we hear the choir sing. We can praise God every time we hear the preaching of the Word of God. We can praise God every time that we hear that a prayer has been answered. We ought to be people of praise because of the overwhelming goodness of our God. We cannot honor God without praising Him with Biblically principled praise. Let’s consider these principles today:

1. **PRAISE IS A RESPONSIBILITY THAT ALL OF US SHARE TOGETHER.**

* The Bible says in Psalm 150:6: “Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.” This makes it clear to us that the responsibility of praise rests on every one of us. Every person in this world ought to praise God because He is their creator. Every kingdom in this world ought to praise God because He has allowed them to exist (Psalm 68:2; 117:1). All the earth is instructed to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise (Psalm 98:4). We understand that the Lord expects to hear the praise of His saints (Psalm 148:14). It is sad to think that there are lost people in this world who might make more effort to praise God than the Christian does. I think of those who were worshipping and praising an unknown God (Acts 17:23). While they did not know the true living God, they understood that there was a supreme God over all. They understood that this God was worthy of worship and praise. If they could understand this without knowing the Lord, how much more should Christians understand the need and expectation to praise God on a regular basis?

1. **PRAISE IS AN OUTWARD EXERCISE PERFORMED THROUGH SPEECH AND MUSIC.**

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* The psalmist tells us in Psalm 109:30 that he will greatly praise the Lord with his mouth. While the Bible does speak of the praise from the soul (Psalm 104:35), it ought to be clear to us that the overwhelming examples of praise in Scripture are vocal in nature (Psalm 34:1; 51:15; 63:5; 71:8; 145:21; 149:6; Matthew 21:16; Luke 1:64; 19:37). When we regard vocal praise, we must understand that this is not limited to singing. We ought to be speaking praise. When you give praise to another person (Proverbs 27:2), how often do you sing that praise to them? I would think that the answer to this would be not very often. Why is it then that we tend to associate praising God only with music? Let’s just be constantly speaking praise of God whether there is music or not. Psalm 150:3-5 is not a command to only praise God with music. On the other hand, though, we do understand that music is often a vocal form used to give praise to God. Why is that? I believe it’s because music is a very expressive way for a person to show their love or appreciation for someone. It speaks to the inward part of man (Ephesians 5:19). There are over forty examples of singing praise in Scripture (Exodus 15; Judges 5:3; Psalm 7:17; Heb. 2:12)!

1. **PRAISE IS EXPECTED TO BE THOUGHTFUL AND PURPOSEFULLY DIRECTED.**

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* Praise is the commendation of a particular virtue or action. While we see some examples of general praise in the Bible (Psalm 96:4; 135:3; 147:1), we find mostly that praise is given to the Lord with a specific virtue of His in mind. He is not just praised for being good or awesome. In Judges 5:2-3, He is praised for avenging Israel. In 2 Samuel 22:49-50, He is praised for delivering one of His saints from the enemy. Frequently, He is praised because of the fact that His mercy endureth forever. In Psalm 7:17, He is praised for His righteousness. In Psalm 150:2, He is praised for His mighty acts. Throughout Psalm 42, the Lord is praised for being the health of the psalmist’s countenance. In Psalm 56, the Lord is praised for His Word and His promises. Wouldn’t it be great if men would actually praise the Lord for His specific wonderful works that He does (Psalm 107)? Our praise is supposed to let the next generation know what God has done and who He is (Psalm 145:4). “Sing ye praises with understanding.” – Ps. 47:7

1. **PRAISE IS MEANT TO BE THE INITIATOR AND ACCOMPANIMENT OF OUR PRAYERS.**

* We just looked at principles of prayer last week. Did you notice in the example of prayer that the Lord Jesus gave, He first gave praise to His Father? He said: “Hallowed be thy name” (Matthew 6:9). We are told in Psalm 100:4 that we are to enter into His courts with praise. The reference to entering into gates with praise is used in Psalm 118:19. We know that it was customary in many nations to praise the king when you appeared before him. How much more should we praise the King of Kings when we go before Him with our requests and petitions? Not only should praise be an initiator of our prayers, but it should also be an accompaniment to our prayers. Paul and Silas prayed, and then they sang praises unto the Lord (Acts 16:25). They spoke to the Lord, and then they gave more praise in song unto the Lord. Praise ought to accompany prayer because the answers to prayer that we receive ought to produce more praise of God! Essentially, prayer is sandwiched by our praise. We enter into prayer with praise, and we enter out of prayer with praise (Luke 18:43; 1:64; Psalm 118:21; Heb. 13:15). The Bible shows us that the sacrifice of praise is giving thanks to His name. We are thanking Him for answered prayers.

1. **PRAISE IS DELIGHTFUL TO THOSE WHO KNOW THE LORD AND LOVE THE LORD.**

* If praise is a chore, then there is something wrong with your praise. There is a lack of love in your praise. There is a lack of knowledge in your praise. The Bible tells us in Psalm 33:1 that praise is comely for the upright. When our heart is fixed on the Lord, the natural result will be that we give Him praise (Psalm 57:7). I’ve mentioned before that the Christian who does not like praising God better get ready for what we are going to be doing for all of eternity. We will be forever praising His name (Psalm 111:10). We will never get tired of it. We will never get bored from praising Jesus throughout eternity. Why then do we struggle so much with praise now? Are we not upright? Is our heart not fixed on the Lord? Psalm 112:1 correlates the desire to praise God with those who fear the Lord and delight greatly in His commandments. This is echoed again in Psalm 119:7. The psalmist tells us that he will praise the Lord with uprightness of heart, but it won’t happen until he has learned the righteous judgments of the Lord. It is hard to praise the Lord and delight in that praise if we do not even know who the Lord is and what His righteousness even looks like. Let’s learn more about God so that we can better praise Him!

1. **PRAISE IS THE MEANS BY WHICH WE COMMUNICATE WHO GOD IS TO OTHERS.**

* When we communicate to others about the Lord, it ought to be led by praise. What else can we even say about Him that’s not praise? Throughout the Word of God, we find that praise of the Lord is meant to be communicated to others. I’ve had people tell me that they can praise and worship God on their own privately. While we should praise Him when we are alone, we ought to shout His praises when we are around others. I’m convinced that we could be better witness for Christ if we would have a greater desire and willingness to simply praise God to others. The Gospel is praise. We get to praise God for His love in the Gospel (John 3:16). We can praise the grace of God in the Gospel (Ephesians 2:8-9). We can praise the power of God in the Gospel (Romans 1:16). What did the Samaritan woman do when she left the well to tell the people of the city what had been done? She praised the Lord, and they had to come and see Jesus for themselves. Again, this is why it is so important for our praise to be thoughtful and directed. Don’t just tell them that God is good. Tell them why He is good. Let’s show forth the praise of God. (Psalm 9:14; 22:22-25; 51:15; 78:4; 79:13; 106:2; Isaiah 43:21; 60:6; 1 Peter 2:9; Acts 16:25)

1. **PRAISE SHOULD NEVER COMMUNICATE ANY OTHER IMAGE OF GOD.**

* As we noted in the last observation, praise is the means by which we communicate who God is to others in this world. With that in mind, we should understand that God takes no pleasure in praise that depicts Him in a manner inconsistent with His character. This ought to cause us to be somber when it comes to praising God. We want to do it right. We want for the praise to be honoring to Him. We want for others to truly see Christ in our praise. We do not want to praise a figure that has been molded by man’s hands. Since the fall of man, we find that mankind has been trying to reshape God into what they want Him to be. In Isaiah 42:8, the Lord tells us plainly that He will not give His praise to graven images. The Lord took no pleasure in the Israelites praising the golden calf or anything else (Deuteronomy 4:16-18; 27:15; Exodus 32: Psalm 78:58). It brought about His anger. God deserves for us to give Him proper praise. He deserves to be represented as the holy, righteous, and loving God that He is. Let’s truly praise the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Let’s praise Him every day. Let all who are alive in Christ praise the Lord.