

When? How? Who?



Thanksgiving, Praise, and Worship (Part 10)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we draw near to the end of another week. Today I'm going to continue and conclude the theme that I've been dealing with all week, praise.

Let me begin with a brief review of some of the main truths about praise that I've been sharing with you this week.

First, praise is the unceasing activity of all the glorious creatures who have the most direct access to God in heaven.

Second, for us on earth, to praise is our way of access into God's presence and dwelling place.

Third, praise is the appropriate way that we relate to God as a King on His throne.

Fourth, it is also a royal garment that makes us fit for His presence.

Fifth, praise is the end purpose for which God blesses us.

Sixth, praise is a means of deliverance.

Seventh, praise is a weapon of spiritual warfare that can actually silence Satan's accusations against us.

Today I'm going to be answering certain specific questions about praise: when should we praise God, how should we praise God, and who should praise God.

Let's begin with the question, When should we praise God? In Psalm 145:2, David says this to the Lord:

> "Every day I will bless Thee, And I will praise Thy name forever and ever." (NAS)

"Every day" leaves out no days. How long is that to continue? "Forever and ever." In other words, there can never be a day or a time when we should not be praising the Lord!

And then I'd like to read also the words of David in Psalm 34:1. First of all, I want to point out the special title to this psalm. It is described as "A psalm of David when he feigned madness before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed." At this time, David was a fugitive from his own

land. He had been unjustly accused by King Saul, who is trying to catch him and put him to death. In desperation he had to flee to the court of a Gentile king, Abimelech, who was by no means a friend of David's people, Israel. In order to protect and preserve his life in the court of Abimelech, we read that David feigned to be mad; he slobbered on his beard and he scrabbled on the doors with his fingernails. And eventually, Abimelech was so tired of this apparent lunatic that he drove him out of his court. Now, that's the situation in which David wrote these words. I want you to listen to the words.

> "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth." (NAS)

What a victory! Right there in that desperate situation, with the humiliation of having to pretend to be mad in order to save his life, David comes out with this glorious declaration of praise! "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth."

How many of us would have felt like praising the Lord in such a situation? Of course, it isn't a matter of feeling; it's a matter of a decision. Remember, praise is a sacrifice. It comes from the will, not from the emotions, not from the circumstances. It's a decision and, you see, David had made that decision in advance. He was already decided what he would do. "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth." So that's when we should praise the Lord: every day, forever and ever, at all times, continually.

The second question, How should we praise the Lord? Psalm 111:1 says this:

> "Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart, In the company of the upright and in the assembly." (NAS)

So that's how we should praise the Lord, with all our heart. I believe God is grieved when we offer Him faint, halfhearted praises, our mind on something else, ashamed, perhaps of what people might think if we really expressed our real feelings and our real love and devotion to the Lord. But the Scripture says we're to praise the Lord with all our heart.

And then in Psalm 47:4, I'll read two versions. First, the King James:

> "For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding." (KJV)

But the New American Standard says:

> "For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm." (NAS)

So, we're to praise the Lord with understanding, or with skill. In other words, we're to give our mind and our ability to praising the Lord.

And then in Psalm 63:4-5, David says this:

> "So I will bless Thee as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Thy name. My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth offers praises with joyful lips." (NAS)

Notice what David says there about the various ways that he's got to praise the Lord. He'll praise the Lord with uplifted hands, he'll praise the Lord with his mouth, he'll praise the Lord with his lips.

And then in Psalm 150:4:

> "Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe." (NAS)

There's a lot there about praising the Lord. Three kinds of musical instruments are specifically mentioned: the timbrel, stringed instruments and the pipe. And these are three different classes of instruments. The timbrel was a percussion instrument. The stringed instrument, of course, was strings. The pipe was a wind instrument. So, we're specifically told to praise the Lord with all those three kinds of musical instruments: percussion, strings and wind.

And, also it says with dancing. Dancing, of course, involves the feet and, in fact, the whole body: hands, arms, legs, feet, every part of the body.

So, let's sum up how are we to praise the Lord. Here's the list:

With our heart

With our understanding

With our mouth

With our lips

With our hands

With our feet

With our whole body

And with various kinds of musical instruments.

Now I'll turn to the third question, Who should praise the Lord? Let me read to you from Psalm 148:2-4, and then verses 7-12. The first three verses deal with creatures on the heavenly realm, the remaining verses that I'm going to read deal with creatures on the earthly realm.

First of all, let's look at who should praise the Lord in the heavenly realm:

> "Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all stars of light! Praise Him, highest heavens, And the waters that are above the heavens!"

That's the list of those who should praise the Lord on the heavenly realm.

Now let's come down to the earthly realm and see who is actually exhorted and called upon to praise the Lord here on earth. Beginning in verse 7 through 12:

> "Praise the Lord from the earth, Sea monsters and all deeps; Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word; Mountains and all hills; Fruit trees and all cedars; Beasts and all cattle; Creeping things and winged fowl; Kings of the earth and all peoples; Princes and all judges of the earth; Both young men and virgins; Old men and children." (NAS)

Let's go through that list. It's rich. It's exciting. Who are called upon to praise the Lord from heaven?

Verse 2: angels, hosts.

Verse 3: sun and moon and stars,

Verse 4: the highest heavens and the waters above the heavens.

Who are called to praise the Lord from the earth?

Verse 7: sea monsters and deeps. I've always loved the thought of the sea monsters praising the Lord and the deeps.

Verse 8: fire, hail, snow, clouds, stormy wind. Isn't it good that even the stormy wind praises the Lord and fulfills His word! Next time you're in a stormy wind, remember that!

Verse 9: mountains and hills, fruit trees and cedars.

Verse 10: beasts and cattle, creeping things and winged fowl.

Verse 11: kings and peoples, princes and judges.

Verse 12: young men and virgins, old men and children.

I added up that list. You know how many different kinds of creatures are specifically called upon to praise the Lord? Thirty different kinds of God's creatures. Suppose you might think, though, that you're not included in that list, I don't really see how you could be left out, but suppose you felt left out, let me offer you this word: Psalm 150:6:

> "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." (NAS)

So you see, if you have breath, you have to praise the Lord! In fact, that's what your breath was given you for. You remember that I told you that your tongue is your glory, it's put in your mouth to glorify God? And your breath is given you to enable your tongue to praise the Lord.

Just one final question, and an important one. We've said who is to praise the Lord. Let's ask who does not praise the Lord. There's an answer given in Psalm 115:17:

> "The dead do not praise the Lord, Nor do any who go down into silence..." (NAS)

That's the only kind of persons in the universe who do not praise the Lord, the dead! And frankly, let me say to you dear friend, if you don't praise the Lord, that's a sign of spiritual death. The church or the group that doesn't praise the Lord aloud vocally, joyfully, continually, it's a sure mark of spiritual death. rigor mortis has set in when people cease to praise the Lord.

Well, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Last week and this week I've been dealing with the two related themes of thanksgiving and praise. Next week I'll be dealing with the theme that follows on very naturally from these, the theme of worship.

If you would like to study this whole theme of praise more fully in the quietness of your own home, all my five messages this week on praise are available on a single, carefully edited,

60-minute cassette.

Also this week I'm making a special offer of my book, Purposes of Pentecost, which will give you new insights into all that God has provided for you through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The announcement that follows will tell you how to obtain both the cassette and the book.

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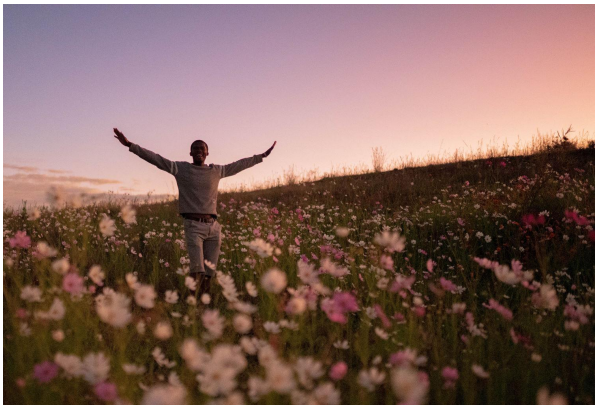

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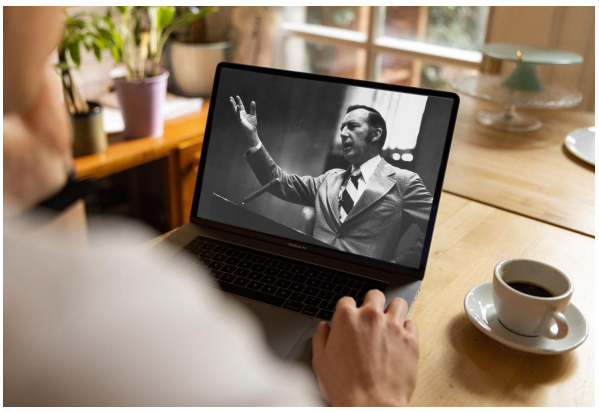

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