

Learning to Praise

Opener: When are you most likely to praise God—when things are good or when they're tough?

Scripture: I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. ²Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. ³Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. ⁴One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. ⁵They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—and I will meditate on your wonderful works. ⁶They tell of the power of your awesome works—and I will proclaim your great deeds. ⁷They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.

⁸The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. ⁹The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. ¹⁰All your works praise you, Lord; your faithful people extol you. ¹¹They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, ¹²so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations.

The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does. ¹⁴The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. ¹⁵The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. ¹⁶You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

¹⁷The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does. ¹⁸The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. ²¹My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever. Psalm 145

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. Hebrews 13:15

Discussion Questions

1. King David is well known for praising God and that's what he did in Psalm 145. What does it mean to praise God? Is there a difference between praising and worshipping God? If so, what is it?
2. This psalm lists multiple things about God. Which ones stand out to you? How does understanding who God is make a huge difference in how we approach Him?
3. Does God need or want our praise? Why or why not? Do we need to praise God? Why or why not? If we need to praise God, does that shed some light on why He requires it of us?
4. Do we have to fully surrender to God before we praise Him, or does praise lead us to surrender? Can we harbor sin and worship God at the same time? How do surrender and repentance figure into offering a sacrifice of praise to God through Jesus? Hebrews 13:15
5. Knowing that praising God is His will for us, how can we do it even when we don't feel like it? How can our more challenging emotions become a cue to move towards God instead of away from Him?
6. Seven words for praise are in the OT describe ways to praise God: (i) with extended hands to indicate absolute surrender, (ii) by extending hands in confession and offering, (iii) by singing a spontaneous song to the Lord, (iv) by singing accompanied by instruments, (v) by kneeling in adoration, (vi) by boasting on God to celebrate who He is, and (vii) by loudly proclaiming His praises. How can understanding this make a difference in how we posture our body to align with our soul and spirit in praise?

Wrap Up: Psalms is the praise book of the Bible and it gives us hundreds of reasons why praise is important. The thing is, praise is vital to living a life surrendered to God. So what is God calling you to surrender so that you can worship Him more fully?