

“Let Everything That Has Breath Praise The Lord”

Psalm 150

Introduction:

1) For many, if not most Christians, Psalms is the richest and the most comforting portion of the Old Testament, if not the whole of God’s Word. Therefore it is appropriate that it would conclude on a hallelujah note, with a psalm (150) totally and completely dedicated to the praise of our good, great and gracious God. Indeed the psalmist’s exclaims with great exuberation in v. 6, “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”

2) • Psalm 150 is the grand finale of the book of Psalms.

- It functions like a final doxology. If Psalm 1 is an appropriate introduction, then Psalm 150 is an equally appropriate conclusion.
- The first 4 books of the Psalter ended with a benediction highlighting the word “blessed”, though book 4 also contains a concluding “hallelujah.” (see 41:13; 72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48). This final psalm along with its 4 companions (146-149) is a hallelujah hymn from beginning to end.
- The psalm is brief but exhilarating from start to finish. It encourages us eschatologically because it informs us how God’s redemptive story will end. It will end on a note of praise.

3) In this psalm we will see that worship is a universal privilege.

In this psalm we will see that praise is always and only for our God.

In this psalm we will see that praise is the result of who God is and what He has done.

In this psalm we will see that worship should be an exciting and soul-moving experience.

4) Praising God should change us. It should transform us. We should leave corporate worship different from how we came. Our minds should be better informed, our hearts more tender and thankful towards God, our wills more determined to live for the glory of this most excellent great God (v.2).

I. Where Should We Praise The Lord? 150:1

- The psalm begins and concludes in the same way as Psalms 146-149, with the word, “Hallelujah”, meaning “praise to *Ya*.” This is a shortened form of the covenant and personal name of Israel’s God, *Yahweh*. Note the word “praise” occurs 13 times in the psalm. Over and over and over we are charged to praise the God with whom we have a personal and intimate relationship.
- Following quickly on this verbal command are instructions specifying “where” *Yahweh*, the excellently great God (v. 2), should be praised.
 - His sanctuary, lit. “his holy place.” The earthly tabernacle or temple in Jerusalem is in view.
 - His mighty firmament (*NASV*, “mighty expanse”; *ESV, NIV*, “mighty heavens”). All of the vast universe and creation of God is in view. From a single point to every point is the idea.
- The voices of earth and heaven join in perfect harmony in praise of the Lord. From below and from above God is to be praised. By man and by angel, *Yahweh* is to be praised. Gathered today on earth in the place set aside for worship, or throughout the expanse of the universe, our most excellent God is to be praised!
- His greatness and glory fill the universe and so must His praise. There is no place where praise is not welcomed and rightly voiced.

Application: 1) Church buildings are fine but not necessary. Church buildings can be a good thing but never an essential thing.

2) We can praise God anywhere, anyplace and anytime. In a simple building like our church, in a magnificent European Cathedral, under a tree with South Americans along the Amazon, in prison like Paul and Silas, in a hiding place like a catacomb as did our first brothers and sisters in Christ or in a house church in China or Afghanistan, anyplace/anytime is where and when it is right to praise the Lord.

II. Why Should We Praise The Lord? 150:2

- Scripture does not call us to a blind or uninformed worship. Faith does not call us to look, spiritually speaking by analogy, for a black cat in a dark room who is not there.
- No, the Bible calls us to embrace an informed faith, a reasoned faith. We do not check our brains at the door as we enter the room of faith.
- On the contrary, we come in faith to a living God who 1) has done mighty acts and 2) is excellent in His greatness. We engage our minds to grasp something of the awesome God who has done awesome things.
- “Mighty acts” (*NIV*, “acts of power”) speak of what He has done. They look to His 1) great acts of salvation, 2) His mighty work of Creation, and 3) His sovereign reign over all that He has made. In the Old Testament one cannot help but think of the Exodus. In the New Testament one cannot help but think of the cross and an empty tomb of King Jesus.
- “Excellent greatness” (*NIV*, “surpassing greatness”) speaks of who He is. To praise God we must know God. He is not the God of deism, pantheism, polytheism or finite

theism. He is not the God we create in our own minds that we are comfortable with, that we wish Him to be.

- We must know, acknowledge and praise His omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. His holiness, love, mercy, grace, righteousness, justice, faithfulness must continually be kept before our mind's eye. We need 20/20 spiritual vision when it comes to our God. We see what He has done with one eye and who He is with the other.

III. How Should We Praise The Lord? 150:3-6

- The simple answer is with everything that we are and with everything that we have. The psalmist however has some particular things in mind that are instructive for God's people as they come together for worship. They should put to rest some aspects of the unfortunate "worship wars" that have actually been raging for centuries.

- The worship of Jehovah is properly accompanied with a variety of musical instruments. 8 are listed in vs. 3-5 though the list is selective and not exhaustive. Wind instruments, string instruments and percussion instruments are welcomed in a symphony of praise to the excellently great God. Anything that rightly honors God should be welcomed.

1) Trumpet (*sophar*) – the ram's horn.

2) Lute – harp like but smaller. (?)

3) Harp – stringed instrument larger than the lute.

4) Timbrel & dance – tambourine. We find this instrument in Exodus 15:20-21

where the Bible says, "Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the

timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them: “Sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!”

- 5) Stringed instruments – general term for all types.
 - 6) Flutes – (ESV, “pipe”).
 - 7) Loud cymbals – perhaps small percussions like castanets.
 - 8) Clashing cymbals – large, loud cymbals with a crashing sound.
- To the instruments of praise are added the voices of praise in v. 6. Note all are a part of this choir! C. S. Lewis wisely reminds us, “let choirs sing well or not at all!” (*The World’s Last Night and Other Essays*, 80-81). This is a good concluding word on how we should praise the Lord.

IV. Who Should Praise The Lord? 150:6

- This question receives an easy and expected answer: everything!
Everything/everyone should praise the Lord. This theme finds ample support in both our Old and New Testament.
- Psalm 148:7-14 provides a helpful commentary at this point concerning just what the psalmist means. “Praise the LORD from the earth, You great sea creatures and all the depths; Fire and hail, snow and clouds; Stormy wind, fulfilling His word; Mountains and all hills; Fruitful trees and all cedars; Beasts and all cattle; Creeping things and flying fowl; Kings of the earth and all peoples; Princes and all judges of the earth; Both young men and maidens; Old men and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven.

And He has exalted the horn of His people, The praise of all His saints—Of the children of Israel, A people near to Him. Praise the LORD!”

- Revelation 5:13 provides a good New Testament word as well. “And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

Conclusion:

Arising out of the “Passion” movement among Christian young people in recent years has been a genre of music rooted in and based on the psalms. This is a good thing. One, in particular, finds its inspiration in Psalm 150 in general and verse 6 in particular.

Everything That Has Breath

Let everything that, everything that
 Everything that has breath praise the Lord.
 Let everything that, everything that
 Everything that has breath praise the Lord.
 Praise you in the morning
 Praise you in the evening
 Praise you when I’m young and when I’m old.
 Praise you when I’m laughing
 Praise you when I’m grieving
 Praise you every season of my soul.
 If we could see how much your worth
 Your power your might your endless love
 Then surely we would never cease to, praise you.
 Praise you when the heavens, joining with the angels
 Praising you forever and a day.
 Praise you on the earth now, joining with creation
 Calling all the nations to your praise.
 If they could see how much your worth
 Your power your might your endless love
 The surely they would never cease to, praise you.