

THE JOY OF TRUE WORSHIP

By Terry Jones, September 7, 2008

Christ's Church at Tiffin, Ohio

Psalm 150:1-6

CENTRAL SERMON THEME – Worship God, everyone, in every place because of what God has done and who He is.

INTRO. - I need to confess to you I have never excelled in praising God. I cannot claim to have an experience with God that Moses had when he prayed to see God's glory. God placed Moses in a break in the rock to protect him from being overwhelmed with God's glory. As God passed over Moses the Lord placed His hand over him to protect him from the brilliance of God's glory. God said, "No one can see My face and live." After God passed over him Moses saw the back side of the glory of God. I have never seen the glory of God but I want to see some of God's glory. The preacher, John Piper, includes when he says, "People are starving for the grandeur of God."

The prophet Isaiah went into the temple of God to pray after King Uzziah died. He grieved as we humans do when someone has died. He saw a vision of God. He saw the Lord on an exalted throne with His robe so large it filled the temple. Special angels, called seraphim, flew above God. The angels cried out to each other, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of host, the whole earth is filled with His glory." Isaiah cried out to God, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King the Lord of host." One of the angels brought a burning coal from the altar and touched his lips saying, "Behold, this had touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven." God was calling Isaiah to be His prophet. Isaiah would write and speak of the glory of God. "He will tend His flock and carry them in His arms." "He measured all the water of the sea in His hand." "He weighed all the mountains and hills." Isaiah witnessed the glory of God. I confess I have never seen a vision of God as Isaiah did. At those times when God seems so distant, I want God to show Himself.

Am I mistaken to think I must have a special vision to God to praise Him? Am I trying to experience God like attending a thrilling rock and roll concert? Do I want God to give me the excitement of being on a roller coaster that sends my body up quickly and drops me so fast I lose my breath? Have I made worship the thrill of victory when my favorite team

wins, the war against terrorism is won, or I win the \$100 million lottery when I bought no ticket? Is praise to God a learned experience? Can we believe and trust the Bible to show us to praise God?

I was confused about praising God. I examined the verses in the 150 chapters in the book of Psalms about praising God. I never found what I wanted to see. I wanted to know what I needed to do to experience the grandeur of God. Could I experience God's glory that I too might praise Him? The verses about praise in Psalms never required conditions necessary for praising God. God excluded us in the Scriptures about praise. All the praises in Psalms are about God. We are told to praise God. That is it!

I believe I know what God is doing with us. God wants us to be focused on praising Him to the extent we recognize His greatness and glory. Once we gain a sampling of who God is, we are confident we can place ourselves totally in His grace and mercy. Our needs become secondary to knowing and praising God. The movement away from ourselves to God shows His glory.

I. WORSHIP GOD EVERYWHERE

A. Praise the Lord!

1. The word praise is used thirteen times in these six verses meaning to cheer, brag on, extol the greatness or excellence of a person with a focus on the confidence one has in the person.
2. We are familiar with the word, hallelujah, which comes from the Hebrew word, hallelu, meaning praise and the Hebrew word, Yah, a shortened name for God.
3. In Psalm 150 two verses use hallelu-jah (Praise Yahweh), one says hallelu-el (Praise Elohim), and others say halleluhu (Praise Him).
4. Warren Wiersbe quotes William Temple in his definition of worship: *For worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of mind with His truth; the purifying of imagination by His beauty; the opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of will to His purpose.* Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Integrity Crisis*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991, p. 119.
5. The prophet Isaiah sees a portion of God's holiness, His glory, which makes him conclude he is undone but is attracted to God.

B. Extol and speak of the excellence of God in His sanctuary.

1. People on earth are to praise God in His house with God's people.

2. For this reason Hebrews 10:24, 5 say - Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
3. Applic. - We have come here today to praise God.
 - a. Illus. - The church is more like grapes than marbles. Marbles bounce against one another but they do not blend together. They may chip away as they bounce off another but grapes become juice and mix together. We Christians are like grapes who mingle together and become part of one another.
 - b. We have come together to be reminded of how great God is.
4. Praise to God starts with God's people in His place of worship.

C. Praise God in His mighty expanse.

1. We praise God along with the inhabitants of Heaven.
2. We want to do what is done in Heaven.
 - a. Rev. 4:11 records a worship scene in Heaven - Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed and were created.
 - b. God is so great everyone wherever they may be is to praise Him.
 - c. Illus. - Heidelberg College presents the oratorio, The Messiah, each year during the Christmas season. Handel composed a masterpiece when he finished The Messiah but I go to hear again the magnificent piece, The Hallelujah Chorus. We all stand as is the tradition when this portion of the oratorio is presented. The music is great but God is greater.

D. Worship God everywhere but we need reasons to praise God.

II. WORSHIP GOD FOR WHAT HE DOES AND WHO HE IS

A. Praise God for His mighty deeds.

1. Creation is one of God's mighty deeds.
 - a. We praise God for creation because the angels sang praises to God according to Job 38: 4 -7 "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who

- laid its cornerstone--while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?
- b. God rested on the seventh day after the six days of creation to provide us an example to rest and remember Him.
 - c. We reject the theory of evolution because it removes God as the Creator.
 - d. Example - The light of the sun takes eight minutes to reach the earth traveling 186,000 per second. Robert Roy Britt, Science Writer, for Space.com says a planet has been discovered that is 27,000 light years from the earth. Space is so large we cannot imagine how big it is.
 - e. Our weakness in understanding God's power enhances God's greatness.
 - f. How great is our God!
2. Salvation is God's greatest deed.
 - a. Salvation is our first reason to praise for we personally experienced His forgiveness.
 - d. The foundation of our praise is the time we experienced God's grace through our faith that brought us to surrender ourselves to God.
 - c. Illus. - One of my Bible college professors tells the inspiring story about being a tour to the area described in Acts 19. The Ephesians created a riot because Paul had led many of them to forsake their idols and turn to Jesus Christ. The favorite idol was Artemis, the statute of a woman believed to have fallen from Heaven. In this riot they cried out for two hours to their idol, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" After the guide finished his presentation about this site, the professor asked if he could speak to the group. Instead of speaking he led them in singing - "All hail the power of Jesus name let angels prostrate fall. Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all!" That is praise for His great salvation.

B. Praise God for His excellent greatness.

1. With reverence, according to the greatness of his being.
 - a. God is the greatest being that exists.
 - b. We cannot understand how great God is so we just praise Him.
 - c. Personal Ex. - I have been weak in praising God for who He is. I realized in a prayer time this week, I could only think of God's holiness and glory through my own holiness, which is weak. I

asked God to help me praise Him for who He is instead of who I am.

2. With gratitude, according to the greatness of his love.
 - a. God is holy and we are not holy.
 - b. Applic. - We sing of the holiness of God but do not realize how holy God is. God experiences great tension between His holiness and love. His holiness is provoked at our sin but His love holds back His anger at our sin. God prefers to show His love for us.
 - c. The cross of Jesus convinces us of His great love for while we were sinners Christ died for us.
3. With hope, according to the greatness of his promises.
 - a. God promises to take us to Heaven when we die.
 - b. How can I believe in God's promises about the future?
 - 1). We experience His smaller promises today.
 - 2). God comes through for us in our deepest doubts.
 - 3). God takes care of us.

III. WORSHIP GOD WITH MUSIC

- A. Praise the Lord implies the use of the voice.
 1. "Praise the Lord" is first done vocally.
 2. We can speak or sing of the greatness of God.
 3. Music expresses our feelings that words cannot express.
 - a. Ex. - Great movies have a great musical theme.
 - b. Ex. - Weddings use music for couples to express their feelings for one another.
- B. Old Testament worship included instruments of worship: trumpet, harp and lyre, timbrel with dancing, stringed instruments, pipe, cymbals, and loud cymbals.
 1. Can we worship in a similar way in the New Testament period?
 2. Being a New Testament church we want to know how the NT uses the Psalms.
 - a. Matthew 21:9 "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, Psa. 118:26.
 - b. Matthew 21:42 "The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief corner stone." Psa. 118:22.

- c. In Peter's sermon in Acts 2 he says, "Because You will not abandon My soul to Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay." Psa. 16:10
- d. The most quoted verse from Psalms is Psalm 110:1 - Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."
- 3. How do we use the Psalms?
 - a. When we feel God has forsaken us, read Psa. 22:1 - My God, why have You forsaken me?
 - b. When we are grieving, read again Psalm 23.
 - c. When we are guilty from sin, confess all to God, Psa. 32.
 - d. When depressed and desperate, seek God from Psa.40
 - e. When you want to praise God, use Psa. 145-150
 - f. When you are lost and want to know how to accept Christ, read the New Testament.

C. Illus. - One Sunday I preached on praising God. After the sermon Chris led us in singing, "Come, Now is the Time to Worship." That song really touched my heart because I had not realized the time for worship and praise is NOW!

D. Quote - Through music and singing God is exalted and glorified in ways that unembellished speech could not do, and in ways that are fitting for his holy and glorious nature. *Recalling the Hope of Glory* by Allen P. Ross, p. 261

IV. WORSHIP GOD EVERYONE

A. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

- 1. The reference is to Adam when God gave him breath or life.
- 2. God deserves praise from everyone.
- 3. Applic. - You and I are invited to praise the Lord.

B. Praise the Lord!

- 1. Illus. - Have you ever played church? Someone leads the songs. Another child preaches. The rest must sit and listen. Anne Ortlund tells about a girl once who mesmerized the audience with her statement, "Boo, I'm the Holy Ghost!" If the entertainment level was high, we continued to sit and listen but if not, we left out of boredom. Have you changed since that time? Are we still playing church?

2. God is the center of worship or it is not worship.

CONCLUSION - Video - The Gift of Worship