

REAL TALK

PRAISE

December 19/20, 2020

Various Psalms

Pastor Daniel Hahn

MESSAGE NOTES

God, the Creator of the universe, the one who sustains our lives, our Redeemer and King, is present through proclamation and remembrance. He wants to communicate to us, to penetrate our inner self, to take up residence within us. And as we go through the experience of meeting with Him in this mystical moment of public worship, we are to respond. — Robert Weber, *Worship Is A Verb*

1. Praise inspires gratitude for God's provisions and faithfulness, which in turn fuels our own joy and perspective.

Joy is not a requirement of Christian living, it is a consequence. It is a byproduct that we experience as a result of faith. — Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience*

This joy in Scripture is not dependent on our good luck in escaping hardship. It is not dependent on our good health and avoidance of pain. Christian joy is actual in the midst of pain, suffering, and loneliness. — Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience*

We can decide to live in response to the abundance of God and not under the dictatorship of our own poor needs. We can decide to live in the environment of a living God and not our own dying selves. We can decide to center ourselves in the God who generously gives and not in our own egos which greedily grab. — Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience*

2. Praise humbles us and aligns us with the reality of who God is and who we are as His people.

I think we delight to praise what we enjoy, because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation. It is not out of compliment that lovers keep on telling one another how beautiful they are; the delight is incomplete till it is expressed. — C.S. Lewis, *Reflections On The Psalms*

3. Praise causes us to stop what we're doing and remember what God has done and is doing.

Worship is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering love in the presence of that most ancient Mystery ... which we call Our Father Which Art in Heaven. — A.W. Tozer, *The Purpose of Man: Designed to Worship*

4. Praise ignites a fresh passion for God as we seek new and creative avenues of expression.

5. Praise overcomes our greatest enemy who is always seeking to silence any expression of real and lasting joy.

In my praise:

- Am I thanking God for all His blessings to me?
- Am I humbling my heart, submitting myself, aligning myself afresh with God?
- Am I taking time to really stop and think about who I am in relation to God?
- Am I looking for new and creative ways to express my devotion and gratitude?
- Am I aware that praise is actually like doing battle with my greatest enemy?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How would you define or explain the Biblical concept of praise?
- Would you agree that the MOST important thing you'll do this Christmas—is praise? Why?
- Why do you think God gave mankind praise as a way of relating to Himself?
- Why do you think God actually commanded his people in the OT to come together for praise and celebration at designated points (feasts) throughout the year?
- How was this gathering for corporate praise actually a gift from God to the people themselves?
- What does that tell us about the value of coming and worshipping together with God's people now?
- What does it say about us if we aren't praising God?
- Why do you think praising God actually contributes to human joy?
- What connection is there between some sort of physical expression (kneeling, raising our hands, etc) and our focus in praise?
- What are some things you learned (or were reminded of) from our study of praise?
- How would you like the week in front of you to be different because of what we've discussed?