

**Pastor Paul Bawden**  
**Sunday, January 18, 2009**  
**"God – Our Praise"**  
**Deuteronomy 10:21; Psalm 22:3; 145**  
**Moody Symphonic Band Concert**

The Psalmist penned in Psalm 145: 3:

"Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised."

The reason we have come together today is to praise the LORD.

In fact one of the words for praise that is used in Psalm 145 is the word "Halal" and when the word, YAH, (referring to Yahweh or LORD – capitalized) is added, we have the words we are familiar with from Scripture, "Praise the LORD!" In fact it is used in the next Psalm, Psalm 146 which starts with "Praise the LORD – Hallelujah!"

**Have you ever thought, "Why do we praise the LORD?"**

**It's interesting that the LORD has created us to praise Him (Isaiah 43:21).**

**But why do we praise the LORD?**

**1. We praise the LORD because of who He is.**

The Psalmist penned "Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised." (Psalm 145:3).

**(1) We praise the LORD because He is great (Psalm 145:1-6).**

**The LORD is great** because He is LORD. That is He is the eternal God, for the word, LORD is capitalized telling us that it is Yahweh, the one who is the great I AM – Yes, the "I AM THE ONE WHO IS." Who we know later is Jesus Christ Himself, who said that before Abraham was, "I AM." (John 8:58).

This means, that the LORD is different from all other gods. He exists in and of Himself as the eternal personal God who involves Himself in the lives of His people. That is why the Psalmist penned that His greatness is unsearchable, He has glorious splendor, and has awesome omnipotence. He performs mighty acts.

**(2) We praise the LORD because He is good (Psalm 145:9, 7, 14-20).**

**"The LORD is good to all." In fact God has abundant goodness.** Goodness is always related to God accomplishing His will for the benefit of His people, of letting His people know that He is with them even in their difficulties and trials, while supplying their needs. We make wrong choices, but God has not left us. He is there with us to encourage us on in the midst of our trials and challenges.

Romans 8:28 summarizes how involved God is in the lives of those who love Him. "We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Of course that only can happen through the death, burial, and bodily resurrection of Christ for the believer in Him. In the midst of tragedy is God in His goodness, to bring hope, and encouragement. Nothing can separate believers in Christ from the good God in His love for them (145:20; Romans 8: 380-39). The believer is eternally secure in Jesus Christ.

**(3) We praise the LORD because He is the gracious God (Psalm 145:8).**

**God is gracious** telling us that He is a God of grace and forgiveness. He is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness – His hesed. In the full revelation, Christ has come to provide us His forgiveness and eternal life through faith in Him. The one who accepts Christ as personal Savior is forgiven before God, and receives the very life of God. Even when the believer sins against God, God encourages us in I John 1:9 to ask God's forgiveness and He will forgive our sin. He restores us to fellowship so we can continue serving Him. Our God is a gracious God. The biblical God is overflowing with grace.

#### **(4) We praise the LORD because He is the glorious God (Psalm 145:5; 11-13).**

**The LORD is the glorious God**, unique from all other gods. Glory refers to the summary of all of God's characteristics – all of His attributes. It's referring to the indescribable person and presence of the living God. He is the glorious God. In this Psalm the glory of God is used to describe God's sovereignty in ruling in His everlasting kingdom. He has a glorious kingdom – a kingdom of pure righteousness, holiness, and love. Through faith in Jesus Christ we are apart of the church of Jesus Christ, but we have also been transferred out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son, made heirs of God and joint heirs of Jesus Christ.

Regardless of what is happening in our world today, God's is still the ruler yet. Eventually, He will put down all the rebellion of man, establish His kingdom on earth for 1000 years, showing His magnificent glory. After which, He will bring into existence a new eternal heaven and earth where all His saints will live with Him forever – It will be a glorious eternal kingdom. You can count on it.

We praise the LORD today because He is great, good, gracious, and glorious.

But then we praise God, not just for who He is, but also

## **2. We praise the LORD for what it does.**

### **(1) We praise the LORD for it brings pleasure and joy to the LORD'S person and into His presence.**

John Piper has said that God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.

Without faith it is impossible to please the LORD (**Hebrews 11:6**).

Faith pleases the LORD. And it would be not just faith in the LORD for salvation, but also as we live for Him part of our living for the LORD is praising Him. So our praising pleases the LORD, brings pleasure, yes, joy to His person and into His presence. That is why in the LORD'S presence is fullness of joy and at His right hand are pleasures forever more (Psalm 16:11). That is why the LORD seeks worshippers who will bring joy and pleasure to His person and into His presence. God is most glorified in us, when we are most satisfied in Him,

### **(2) We praise the LORD for it gives God His rightful place in our lives.**

**Psalm 22:3** says that God inhabits the praises of His people. It could be translated that God indwells praise, or is enthroned on the praises of His people.

Praising God is not faith in God. Faith is trusting in God for salvation in Christ, and taking God at His word as believers live for Him each day.

But praising God comes out of our faith in Jesus Christ, where now we look to God to admire him, to honor him, to tell Him how much we appreciate Him for who He is. Praise is really lifting God up, giving Him His rightful place in our lives and in the world. We worship Him, giving Him the worth and glory He deserves. Praise is even different from thanks, where thanks is telling God how much we appreciate what He has given us and does for us, although praise can be given to God for what He does as well.

**Thusly, when we praise the LORD from hearts right with the LORD we are telling the LORD that He is NUMBER 1 in our lives – That He rules on the throne of our lives – He is first in our lives – We lift Him up as truly God.** In praising the LORD we are also telling HIM that He is enthroned on His kingdom ruling over the world – He is truly the Sovereign God who is great, good, gracious and glorious.

### **(3) We praise the LORD for it takes the focus off of ourselves in our challenges and difficulties and focuses on the LORD who is in control and loves us regardless of what is happening in our lives (Psalm 42-43).**

When David finds himself in dumps, even depressed, he refocuses his life off of himself, and asks why is he in despair, "Hope in God, For I shall yet praise HIM, the help of my countenance and my God." (Psalm 42:11; 43:4-5).

Warren and Ruth Meyer tell of the time when they were out taking a walk on a beach that borders the Singapore harbor. They were praying together, and suddenly remembered that he hadn't written an urgent letter. They talked briefly about how this might negatively affect the receiver.

After lamenting about the procrastination, they started praising God together for His sovereignty, His unlimited power, and ability to overrule his procrastination. Praise helped them fix their attention on God's unlimited power and ability to take care of the situation. The Meyers testify to God relieving them of unbelief and encouraging to trust Him.

Weeks later after receiving the letter, the friends wrote back telling them, "We would not have been ready for your suggestions a week earlier." God used the delay to get the letter their just at the right time.

#### **(4) We praise the LORD for it releases the power of God (II Chronicles 20).**

The victory of Jehoshaphat over the enemies of Judah came as the Jerusalem praise team went out before the army praising the LORD for His lovingkindness, the LORD set ambushes against the enemy and they were routed. Praise acknowledges God's sovereignty and releases His power over the enemy.

#### **(5) We praise the LORD for it lifts our spirits and gives us a renewed sense of God's presence in our lives (Psalm 44-43).**

That's why David found refreshment and renewal in his spirit when he began praising the Lord in the midst of his challenges. That's why Deuteronomy 10:21 tells us that "God Is our praise. He is our God."

**A person can't be complaining when he or she is praising the LORD. That's why a first evidence of a life controlled by the Spirit of God is praise to Him.** The believer in Christ has a new tune in his or her life. Negatives will be experienced, but the believer has a new LORD and Savior, who is in control, and he or she can praise the LORD, focusing on HIM, in the midst of life's challenges.

And of course our praise to God will also be an encouragement to others. David wrote in Psalm 34 that others will hear of his praising the LORD, and the humble will hear it and rejoice in the LORD.

### **3. We should engage in a life of praise continually (Hebrews 13:15).**

What a privilege we have as followers of Christ to be able to praise the LORD – bring our sacrifices of praise to Him continually ---

**(1) We can praise the LORD in the silence of our heart, as we think about who our God is, or we see a magnificent sunset – or we read something in God's Word.**

**(2) A believer can praise God out loud.**

**(3) We can praise the LORD as a family. I remember one time we were on vacation driving through some of the great mountainous regions in the Western part of our United States, we got out a Bible and started reading Psalm 19.**

**(4) We can praise God as a church family as we are doing here today as a congregation, and as the Moody Symphonic Band leads us in praise to our eternal LORD.**

**God is desirous of our praise. Let's not disappoint Him in our lives. May we be people of praise at all times to His glory!!**

I understand that a number of years ago a young hippie was sitting on a park bench reading the account in Exodus of the Red Sea victory. Suddenly, he began to shout, "Hallelujah! Praise the LORD! What a miracle! Hallelujah!"

A distinguished-looking agnostic stopped to ask the reason for his unseemly exuberance. The hippie replied, "I was just reading in the Bible how God parted the Red Sea and the whole nation of Israel walked through it on dry ground, and I just couldn't help saying, "Hallelujah! What a miracle!"

"But my dear young man," said the agnostic, "Don't you know that it was not a real sea at all, but just a few inches of water in a marsh?" After delivering this rebuttal the agnostic turned and started walking away leaving behind this confused and disheartened young believer in Jesus Christ.

But he hadn't walked very far, and he heard the hallelujahs again piercing the air. Hearing him, the irritated agnostic returned and asked, "Now what are you shouting about?"

**"Well, sir, I just read how God drowned the whole Egyptian army in a few inches of water. What a miracle! Hallelujah! Praise the LORD!"**

But there is also the serious side of praise. Bill Bright tells the following true story.

A friend was going through difficult divorce proceedings. Her whole life had fallen apart and she was at the point of despair and had actually decided to take her own life.

But God intervened. A praise tape that one of my associates and I had produced was put in her hands by a loved one with the suggestion that she listen to it.

Shortly later, while driving alone in her car, she placed the tape in the tape player and began to listen. As the music and the praise began to come forth, God began to speak to her heart. As she continued to listen, all of the dark satanic powers that had been enveloping her were forced to flee because Satan wants nothing to do with praise of God and praise music. Some theologians believe that before he rebelled and fell, Satan was the great choir director in heaven, and now every time he hears praise music he flees.

I have no doubt that Satan hates praise and praise music and cannot stand to be around it. If you want victory over the devil, just begin praising the Lord with your words and with music.

So as the lady was driving along, the Holy Spirit suddenly captured her out of Satan's clutches and away from his influence. Even though she was a believer she was influenced by the agents of darkness, as we all can be if we open ourselves up to his influence.

She found herself sobbing in tears and surrendering all in her life that had not been yielded to Christ. She had been living her own way and doing her own thing. Now she said, "Lord, I surrender all to you." That is what God was waiting for.

Love flooded her heart. She called her loved ones to say, "God has touched my life listening to this praise tape."

"Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,  
praise him with the harp and lyre,  
praise him with tambourine and dancing,  
praise him with the strings and flute,  
praise him with the clash of cymbals,  
praise him with resounding cymbals.  
Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.  
Praise the LORD" (Psalm 150:3-5, NIV).

**Yes, Praise the LORD! Let's do that now as we join in singing.**

**May God be our praise this week!!**