

☞ Principles of Praise

The Bible repeatedly says, "Praise the Lord." It is something we should do. It's referenced in the Bible more than many of our core doctrines. Last week we talked about the Purpose, Power and Practices of Praise. We were created to praise God and when we do, it attracts his attention and silences the enemy. There are many ways to praise the Lord, from singing and shouting, to lifting hands and bowing down. However, we can go through all these motions and still not really be praising God.

Isaiah 29:13

The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.

God deserves authentic praise; Praise that is more than just outward activity...

☞ Authentic Praise

John 4:19-24 and Romans 12:1

☞ **Authentic praise is Focused on the Potentate** – the Father v. 21-22

It's not about a specific place or a group of people, but it's about Him!

What do we know about God the Father?

Nehemiah 9:17

☞ ...a **forgiving** God, **gracious** and **compassionate**, slow to anger and abounding in love.

Psalms 145:9

The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

Joel 2:13

...and he relents from sending calamity.

Ephesians 2 says the God loves us, shows us mercy, makes us alive with Christ and raises us up to heavenly realms.

☞ **God is good...**

He is our Father; he is a good father who took drastic measures to rescue us. So authentic, heartfelt praise focuses on him.

☞ **Authentic praise Flows from a right Perspective** v. 23-24

Worship = to kneel to do homage; to come near and kiss the hand.

True worshippers – not just in name and appearance, but in nature.

Our perspective is not like some religions where we have to appease an angry deity. But our perspective is that of sons who have been rescued by our father. We honor him.

☞ **In spirit = with all that is within**; not just outward sacrifices.

Philippians 3:3

we worship by the Spirit of God, we glory in Christ Jesus, and we put no confidence in the flesh

☞ **In truth = with sincerity**

Hebrews 10:22

let us draw near to God *with a sincere heart* in full assurance of faith...

When we get the right perspective, authentic praise naturally flows. Think about who God is, and think about everything he has done for you. That inspires authentic praise.

☞ **Authentic praise is what the Father Pursues** v. 23

We talked last week about the Power of Praise. It's powerful because it attracts God's attention. It's powerful because God inhabits the praises of his people. He is drawn to our ☞ praises and ultimately **dwells in our praises**. He pursues us when we praise him.

Psalms 53:2

God looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.

☞ As followers of Christ, we long to **experience the presence of God**. When we praise him from our heart he is drawn to it and we can know the presence of God.

☞ **Authentic praise is Fueled by our Perception** Romans 12:1

☞ Brothers – we belong together in **God's family**.

We talked already about how great God is, and about our Father who has rescued us. To continue the point, that means we have become part of God's family.

John 1:12

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Have you received Christ? Do you believe that he died for you?

1 John 3:1

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

Romans 8:16-17

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. **17** Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

Now, think about this... Biblically, children receive an inheritance from their parents.

☞ Many still do today. As followers of Christ, **we are God's children...** and **we receive an inheritance from him!** How's that for a perception? That should fuel your praise!

☞ In view of God's mercy – **remember his compassion** and pity on us

1 Peter 2:10

Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

How did God demonstrate his mercy? By sending Jesus to die on a cross in our place. When we really understand what God has done for us; how God views us as his children; what he has in store for us yet to come... it fuels authentic praise.

☞ **Authentic praise is a Full Presentation of ourselves to God** Romans 12:1

☞ **Offer your bodies** = your whole self; surrender

1 Corinthians 6:20

you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

Romans 6:13

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

☞ **"Lord, whatever you will; wherever you say; whenever... I surrender; I say yes to you."**

A living sacrifice – contrast with OT animal sacrifices.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

☞ This “living sacrifice” is about **daily dying to yourself**. It’s about repeatedly giving your whole person to the Lord. It’s a costly process, giving up your plans to surrender to his purposes. And it’s a continual process...

Hebrews 13:15

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise.

☞ **Be Holy** = set apart; exclusive... You belong to God. **Give yourself fully to only him.**

☞ And **Pleasing**... When we give ourselves fully to God, that is true worship and he is pleased. Let’s expand on this for a moment. What does that look like?

1 Timothy 5 says that when we take care of our family, especially our aging parents, it pleases God.

☞ So, we surrender our **families** to him.

Romans 14 says that when we love each other it pleases the Lord.

☞ So, we surrender all of our **relationships** to him.

1 Timothy 2 says when we pray for those in authority and live peacefully it pleases God.

☞ So, we surrender our **rights** to him.

Proverbs 15:26 says when our thoughts are pure it pleases the Lord.

☞ So, we surrender our **minds** to him.

Philippians 4:18 says that when we give our money to God’s work, it pleases the Lord.

And, Hebrews 13 says that doing good and sharing with others pleases the Lord.

☞ So, we surrender our **money** and **possessions** to him.

Hebrews 10 says that doing God’s will and living by faith pleases the Lord.

☞ So, we surrender our **plans** and **priorities** to him. And, **we trust him with our lives.**

☞ **And, all of these things together are our spiritual act of worship. When we are Focused on the right Person, Flowing from a right Perspective, Fueled by our Perception and giving a Full Presentation of ourselves to God, then we are truly worshipping; then it is Authentic Praise! This is what the Father Pursues.**