

Refuge City Church
“Praiseworthy”: Who is to be praised? (Psalm 48)
November 14, 2021

Introduction

- When the disciples asked Jesus “Teach us to pray”, the model given to us starts this way, “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed [holy, consecrated, sacred] be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”
 - Before we ask for anything, we are to praise His name!
- **What does it mean to praise?**
 - It is the expression of our admiration to God.
 - **Luke 4:8**, [in His temptation by Satan] “And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.”
 - When all we do in prayer is ask, ask, ask...who are we really worshipping?
 - **Psalm 29:2**, “Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness.”
 - We are to begin all things by giving praise and honor to our God.
 - Praise to the Lord is something that should define our life, and moreover, something we need to do better to prioritize.
 - For those who attended the Night of Worship, I hope that instilled a bit of holy fire in us all to move forward in praise.
- For the next 4 weeks, this is our focus!

Psalm 48

Verse 1: “Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain,”

- Wherever God dwells, there He is to be praised.
 - In the garden with His perfect creation.
 - On the mountaintop when the ark came to rest.
 - In the wilderness tabernacle as He desired to dwell with His people.
 - In the glorious temple in Jerusalem.
 - In our hearts as recipients of His grace.

Verses 2-3: “beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress.”

- His position on the holy mountain elevates His glory.
- Within His presence, we are secure and protected.
- In Him, we have joy.

Verses 4-8: “For behold, the kings assembled; they came on together. As soon as they saw it, they were astounded; they were in panic; they took to flight. Trembling took hold of them there, anguish as of a woman in labor. By the east wind you shattered the ships of Tarshish. As we have

heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God, which God will establish forever. Selah”

- Those that come against Him are terrified and turned back.
- There is no defeating Him. He is victory!
- **QUESTION:** Do you know Who you are truly seeking?
 - **Psalm 24:1-3,8**, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. For he laid the earth’s foundation on the seas and built it on the ocean depths. Who may climb the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place?... Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, invincible in battle.”
 - **Our God who created the world:** “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” **[Genesis 1:1]**
 - **Our God whose justice is swift and certain:** “Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven.” **[Genesis 19:24]**
 - **Our God whose glory is too brilliant to behold:** “And he said, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.”... “Moses said, ‘Please show me your glory.’...But, he said, ‘you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.’” **[Exodus 3:6, 33:18, 20]**
 - **Our God who is all consuming:** “Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire.”...“And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.” **[Exodus 24:17, Acts 2:2-3]**
 - **Our God whose presence is a holy gentleness:** “the sound of a low whisper...And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak...” **[1 Kings 19:11-13]**
 - **Our God whose presence brings revelation:** “Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.”... “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips...for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” **[Isaiah 6:2,5]**
 - **Our God whose Love is perfect:** “...if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.” **[1 John 4:12]**
 - **Our God whose presence emits glory and power:** “From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God.” **[Revelation 4:5]**
 - **QUOTE:** “As our bodily eye is dazzled, and its power of vision destroyed, by looking directly at the brightness of the sun, so would our whole nature be destroyed by an unveiled sight of the brilliancy of the glory of God.” [C.F. Keil]
- **The Ultimate Revelation:** that we are a sinful people, unworthy to be in the presence of God, in need of salvation!
- To experience the presence of God is to humble yourself in the realization that we need all of Him, His power and authority, His indwelling Spirit, and His Word to accomplish all that He wants in our life!
 - **1 Timothy 6:15-16**, “...he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.”
- Although we are told He is unapproachable, we are given the task multiple times throughout scripture that we are to seek Him with everything we’ve got!

- **2 Chronicles 7:14**, “if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and *seek my face* and turn from their wicked ways...”
 - **Job 5:8**, “As for me, I would *seek God*, and to God would I commit my cause;”
 - **Psalms 9:10**, “O Lord, have not forsaken those who *seek you*.”
 - **Psalms 105:4**, “*Seek the Lord* and his strength; seek his presence continually!”
 - **Amos 5:4**, “For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel: ‘*Seek me* and live;”
 - **Matthew 6:33**, “But *seek first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness...”
 - **Acts 17:26-27**, “And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should *seek God*, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him...”
 - **Hebrews 11:6**, “And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who *seek him*.”
- The Beauty Of It All
- We serve a God in whose presence we cannot bear to contain. He is thunder, lightning, fire, earth-quaking power in unapproachable light.
 - Yet, He gave us His only Son who reassures us that He is the only Way to everlasting life. That if we know Jesus, we know the Father who sent Him. In the presence of Jesus, we find all we are and all we need.
 - **Matthew 11:27-28**, “All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal to Him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
 - All things are made, done, completed, and purposed for Him and Him alone. And we get to be a part of it all, **if** we seek Him and abide in Him on a daily basis.
- [Back to Psalm 48:8] **“As we have heard, so have we seen...”**
- We are eyewitnesses to the glory of God.
 - Have you heard of the great works of God?
 - Remember Rahab’s salvation? [Joshua 2]: It came by hearing, and then faith & obedience.
 - The road to Emmaus [Luke 24]: The disciples heard of the resurrection account, and then came face to face with the risen Christ.
 - You first learned of God by what you heard, and then have experienced His presence. [Romans 10:17, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”]
 - In so doing, because of His great love for us, He has established us forever in His glorious city being prepared for our arrival.
 - **Psalm 148:13**, “Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.”
 - **Psalm 93:2**, “Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.”

Verses 9-10: “We have thought on your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple. As your name, O God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth. **Your right hand is filled with righteousness.**”

- It should be, that when you enter into His presence, His temple/His church, you think of Him.
- However, do you only think of Him at church?
 - **Luke 11:24-26**, “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first.”
 - Coming to church *only* to ‘get clean, swept, and put in order’, will simply allow the enemy to attack you with greater force, because you are not consistently filling yourself/thinking/abiding in God the rest of the week.
 - **1 Corinthians 6:19**, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,”
 - We need to meditate on His goodness, His love, His promises, every day!
 - **Psalm 73:21-26**, “When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you. Nevertheless, I am continually with you; **you hold my right hand**. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

Verses 11-14: “Let Mount Zion be glad! Let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of your judgments! Walk about Zion, go around her, number her towers, consider well her ramparts, go through her citadels, that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God forever and ever. He will guide us forever.”

- The promise of His presence [**Matthew 28:20**, “I am with you always...”; **Joshua 1:9**, “I am with you wherever you go...”]
- Wherever we go, God is with us. So as we go, we have joy.
 - We consider our ‘ramparts’ [**wall/fortification**] = God’s protection for us.
 - We consider our ‘citidels’ = Gods provision and shelter.
- We think of Him, who He is, what He graciously gives to us, and then tell others!
 - **Psalm 78:4-7**, “We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments;”

Conclusion

- **Revelation 1:8**, “I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says the Lord God, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’”
- This is the God we serve. This is the God we worship. This is the God we praise.