

Home Church Package, Sunday July 12th, 2020

Materials prepared by Rev. Jenn Swanson

Spiritual Flavours: Taste and See Series, Week 4

“A Taste of Praise”

What is a Praise Service?

Christian praise can be defined as the expression of gratitude and respect towards God and/or Jesus, especially in a song. There are three Hebrew words in the Bible that are translated as praise. One is “yadah” which means “praise or give thanks or confess”. Another one is “zamar” which means “sing praise.” And the third one is “halal” (which is the root word for hallelujah), which means to praise, honour, or commend. A praise service usually involves a lot of singing and music and often movement. While it’s hard to replicate that in a virtual setting, we have chosen some music today to convey some of the feel of a praise service.

Threshold Moment

Psalm 34: Verse 8 says: "O taste and see that the LORD is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him".

Taste and See.

There are many ways in which human beings connect with Spirit, with God, (with Jesus), with the Holy, with the Divine, with Ground of Being. For some, it's through nature...the beauty of God's Creation. For others, it's through the universal language of music. Some connect most deeply through meditation and prayer and contemplation, and for others the connection to God is through storytelling, movement and the arts.

This service is number 4 in a set of 6 services, where we offer 6 different "flavours" of worship... ways you too can taste and see that the Lord Is good.

Some of these themes might resonate more with you than others, some may seem familiar and others may be new to you. Each one is an invitation to do as Jesus said in John 1 verse 39, "Come and See".

Today we offer a taste of praise. The psalms are full of praise both TO God and ABOUT God. Over the centuries, these psalms, as well as other words of poetry and inspiration, have been put to different styles of music for different generations...music to touch the heart...to connect us with the Source of Life and Love...to help us pray...

Today we see the fallout of this pandemic on so many levels...the fear, uncertainty, and confusion... Yet, as we keep ourselves open to God, we find that Love does speak in the midst of it all...that hearts are indeed transformed...that God is still making beautiful things of us! And so we invite you...to open your hearts and minds to where the Holy Spirit may move you and stir within you this day.

You Make Beautiful Things (a song)

All this pain
I wonder if I'll ever find my way
I wonder if my life could really change, at all
All this earth
Could all that is lost ever be found?
Could a garden come out from this ground, at all?
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us
All around,
Hope is springing up from this old ground
Out of chaos life is being found, in you
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us
Oh, you make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us
You make me new,
You are making me new
You make me new,
You are making me new
(Making me new)
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us
Oh, you make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us
You make me new,
You are making me new
You make me new,
You are making me new

Source: LyricFind

Songwriters: Lisa Gungor / Michael Gungor Beautiful Things lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, BMG Rights Management, Universal Music Publishing Group

Scripture Readings: Psalm 84: 1-4, 10-12

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. Selah

For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; he bestows favour and honour. No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly.

O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (NRSV)

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Prayers & Lord's Prayer

(Prayer adapted by Jenn from one by Thom Schuman)

*Living God:
when there is a famine
in our souls,
you feed us with grace;
when there are pockets of poverty
in our love for others,
you bless us with generosity;
when we are empty and alone,
you move into our hearts.*

Be with us in this time, when we are together and yet not. When we can no longer greet each other with spontaneous hugs and enthusiastic handshakes...when our face to face encounters are fraught with concern, with physical distancing, with hyperawareness, and sometimes with suspicion.

Jesus, source of Love, teacher, servant leader...
open our hearts to those around us. Help us bridge the differences that divide, support those who need us right now, and teach us to listen and to be open.

We pray especially today for those in our communities and families and friends circles who are suffering in various ways...those in hospital and their loved ones left at home, those who feel alone or unloved, those who feel lost or afraid, those who have no voice. We offer the names we know and those we do not to your hearing now.

*Eternal Spirit:
you walk with us
wherever we go;
you take the fragments of our lives
and reshape us into holy people;
you are with us,
and not even death can separate us. And for that and so much more...we are grateful. Amen.*

Lord's Prayer paraphrase

(by Jim Hannah)

Holy Wisdom, Holy God
hallowed be your name.
Your kin-dom come, May your
wisdom bring peace to all the earth.
May every life have daily
bread,
and may we know your grace
prevails.
May we forgive all that needs forgiving.
Guide us in our times of trial
and keep us on the right path.

For the love and the power of
the spirit are yours.
Now and forever.
Amen.

You Say

(a song by Lauren Daigle)

I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough
Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up
Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low?
Remind me once again just who I am, because I need to know, ooh oh

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing
You say I am strong when I think I am weak
And You say I am held when I am falling short
And when I don't belong, oh, You say I am Yours
And I believe (I), oh, I believe (I)
What You say of me (I)
I believe

The only thing that matters now is everything You think of me
In You I find my worth, in You I find my identity, ooh oh

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing
You say I am strong when I think I am weak
And You say I am held when I am falling short
When I don't belong, oh, You say I am Yours
And I believe (I), oh, I believe (I)
What You say of me (I)
Oh, I believe

Taking all I have and now I'm layin' it at Your feet
You'll have every failure God, You'll have every victory, ooh oh

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing
You say I am strong when I think I am weak
You say I am held when I am falling short
When I don't belong, oh, You say I am Yours
And I believe (I), oh, I believe (I)
What You say of me (I)
I believe
Oh, I believe (I), yes, I believe (I)
What You say of me (I)
I believe (oh)

Source: LyricFind

Songwriters: Jason Ingram / Lauren Daigle / Paul Brendon Mabury You Say lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group

Blessing

Thank you Lord, for this wonderful and amazing blessing of TODAY,
for your WORD of hope which gives us strength,
for your LOVE that makes our life meaningful,
for your PEACE that gives us comfort,
for your GRACE that renews and restores our life.
WE give you PRAISE in Jesus' name,
Amen.