

Worship - Praise

This morning we're starting a new series on Worship. This thing we are doing together right now...we call it a worship service. So the things we do here are to be acts of worship.

What do we mean by worship? Worship is giving honor to God. We aim to honor God with everything we do. That's what our goal is.

For me personally, I'm not a fan of doing things because everyone else is doing them. I prefer to know what we are doing and why we are doing it.

Everything we do here at Connection Church, we desire to do what the bible says. So over the next few weeks, we will look at the biblical view of the different aspects of worship.

Today we're going to look at Praise. We do a lot of praising in the church. Praise is an expression of approval or admiration.

It's something we direct toward God and toward others about God.

Has God been good to anyone here? Has He saved anyone? Has He blessed anyone?
Worked in anyone's marriage? Brought restoration? Given you peace and joy?

Do we have a reason to praise Him church?

Praise starts in your heart and works on your mind, and is released through your body! (mouth, hands, feet, head, neck, shoulders, etc.)

As we look at what the Word says about praise, I want to note a couple of things. People praise and worship in their own way, that's ok. The goal is not to get everyone to praise and worship the way I do, but for the Holy Spirit to take you deeper.

I want to see people FREE in worship, worshiping the way the Spirit leads them. It's the truth that sets you free. And the truth is God's Word!

This requires you listening to the Word of the Lord today. Draw near to Jesus, He'll draw near to you. Take a few steps into the waters this morning!

So what does it look like to praise, how is this thing in our heart released through our body?

Psalms 47:1 (NKJV)

Oh, **clap** your hands, all you peoples!

Shout to God with the voice of triumph!

We clap to give God praise.

What do we do at a sporting event, an concert, your kids band concert or award ceremony? We clap and shout...as a way of praise, expressing approval or admiration.

Why wouldn't we do the same and more for Jesus?

We can shout with praise to Jesus! We can give a WOOOOH! Or raise a Hallelujah! Or a shout Amen! Or yell God is good! Declare that He is Faithful! These are shouts of triumph (the act of being victorious)

Psalm 100:2 (NKJV)

Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before His presence with **singing**.

We sing to praise Him. Express your heart to God! It's not about talent, it's about heart. Sing to the King. Sing the words to the song or sing a new song in your understanding or in the Spirit! It's all praise...

Psalm 134:2 (NKJV)

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary,
And bless the Lord.

Tim Hawkins - Carry the tv, big screen, fish is this big, liar, hold my baby, goal post, heartburn
Pointer, high five, wash the window

But seriously, the Word says when you lift up your hands in the sanctuary, you bless (praise) the Lord.

- Hands out, low - Receiving
- Reaching out - It's like a child wanting to be held...can I tell you that God will hold you?
- Hands up - surrender
- Waving - Hosanna, palm branches
- High five - it's a high five

You do you...but can you let the Holy Spirit guide you? I don't think about what I do, it just happens. I get lost in worship because it's all about Him, not me, not the people around me.

I just love to praise Jesus!

Psalm 150:3-5 (NKJV)

Praise Him with the sound of the **trumpet**;

Praise Him with the **lute** and **harp**!

4 Praise Him with the **timbrel** and **dance**;

Praise Him with **stringed instruments** and **flutes**!

5 Praise Him with **loud cymbals**;

Praise Him with **clashing cymbals**!

We praise Him with dancing! Give Him your best, jump around, sway, hop and skip...whatever your heart desires. You don't have to be "good" at it...If nothing else you'll bring a smile to His face!

We praise Jesus with instruments, keyboard, guitar, loud drums!

Psalm 144:1 (NKJV)

Blessed be the Lord my Rock,

Who trains my hands for war,

And my fingers for battle—

What our worship team is doing up here is leading us in spiritual warfare. Battle!

How do we praise?

Clap, shout, sing, raise your hands, dance, play instruments. Praise the Lord!

Genesis 49:8 (NKJV)

"Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise;

Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;

Your father's children shall bow down before you.

Judah means praise...Judah (praise) shall have his hand on the neck of your enemy

Like a wrestler, chokeslam

Grab fear by the neck, depression by the neck, cast it to away from you

We've got to be praisers!

And praise is not about the praiser. It has nothing to do with you and everything to do with Jesus. Don't believe the lie that you don't have a reason to praise. Don't believe the lie that you aren't worthy to praise. Jesus is worthy OF praise!

Psalm 8:1 (NKJV)

O Lord, our Lord,

How excellent is Your name in all the earth,

Who have set Your glory above the heavens!

When you praise...You are praising His name, not yours! It's not about you. You can't make His name less than it is and it is already excellent in ALL the earth.

No matter what you've done, you can't mess up His name but the more you say it, the more you praise Him, the more it will change you. Jesus is the name above every other name! It's excellent!

At the name of Jesus every knee will bow... When I praise Jesus, everything has to come into submission to His name. Like it's being chokeslammed! His name is excellent...

Throughout the OT, God revealed Himself in many ways. When we see the word LORD in English, many of them have a deeper meaning in the original Hebrew text.

Here are some ways God revealed Himself. (Jehovah means - the One whom God reveals...)

Jehovah Rapha - Healer (physical body, mind, broken heart)

Jehovah Jireh - Provider (makes a way out of no way, finances, relationships)

Jehovah Nissi - Our Banner of Victory (you may feel like you are losing but He shows up with a banner of victory. By faith you don't have to wait, you've already won, you can shout right now!)

Jehovah Shammah - The Lord is There (Say Shammah, God is there...wherever you show up, God shows up because He's IN YOU)

El Shaddai - The Almighty One (bigger and stronger than anything you will ever go through)

Church we praise God for who He is. And if we praise Him for who He is...then we can praise Him for what He has done and what He will do...but it starts with who He is. His name is excellent in all the earth.

If we stopped right here, don't you have a reason to praise Him this morning?

Psalms 8:2 (NKJV)

Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

In Matthew 21, "Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants, You have perfected praise"

And out of that praise, He has ordained (founded) strength...Praise is the foundation of strength!

Psalms 118:24 (NKJV)

This is the day the Lord has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.

When you praise God, strength comes upon you because He gives you what you need in that moment. Why do we need that strength?

“Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.”

The enemy opposes you and hinders your forward progress. Why? Because he's also the avenger (not good) who is trying to bring harm and humiliation for your past.

You know how you have those things from your past that keep creeping back up? You can silence that voice...with praise.

The Hebrew word here for silence is shabath (sha-vath) meaning to cease and desist. You ever heard of a cease and desist letter? You don't want one, it means if you don't stop you will be sued. You are violating someone's legal rights.

Cease means stop the illegal activity. Desist means do not restart it.

When you praise you are given strength to silence your enemy and avenger. You proclaim that you belong to Jesus and satan is violating your legal right as a son or daughter of God and he has to stop right now and don't try it again!

Psalm 34:3 (NKJV)

Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
And let us exalt His name together.

When you magnify the Lord - the enemy has no place in your life - magnify your purpose not your problem.

Psalm 8:3-4 (NKJV)

When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,
4 What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?

The work of His hands - what He's created, what He's done. When you look I look at my wife, my family, this church, the sunset (I don't see many sunrises)...

When I consider the work of His fingers...all that He has created...I praise Him!

Psalm 8:5 (NKJV)

For You have made him a little lower than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory and honor.

God crowns you with glory and honor not guilt and shame. Some of you come into this place and feel good for a moment but then you are reminded of your problems. The enemy condemns you with guilt and shame.

But see God doesn't make you feel guilty for the things you've gone through. He will bring conviction, but He draws you near through His love and grace to set you free!

When you praise Him, He crowns you with glory and honor. He says that's not who you are. He will change you for good.

"You are no longer _____" You are who He says you are!

His, loved, worthy, purposed, changed, redeemed, victorious, son/daughter, citizen of heaven

Psalm 8:6-8 (NKJV)

You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,
7 All sheep and oxen—
Even the beasts of the field,
8 The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the seas.

When you praise you have dominion. You can start to bother the things that bother you. You can have dominion and authority in your life if you live a life of praise.

God created us for dominion and He created us to praise Him. They are tied together. Many of you wake up grumpy, complaining, mad at life, you are already defeated. You already lost that day before you got out of bed.

But if you can praise Him. If you can thank Him for the breath in your lungs. If you can thank Him for His goodness. If you can praise the name of Jesus...you will have dominion over your day.

You won't just "get through it" you will dominate it. You'll live! A lot of people are willing to die for someone or some cause but God is calling us to LIVE for Him.

Psalm 8:9 (NKJV)

O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

How excellent is His name? Is it enough to praise?

Have you heard that God inhabits the praises of His people?

Psalm 22:3 (NKJV)

But You are holy,
Enthroned in the praises of Israel.

When you praise, He comes and sits down in your midst. He pulls up a chair. He's staying a while. He is enthroned there.

So it starts with praise. The tribe of Judah (praise) was sent out first in battle, and there were more from that tribe than any other tribe.

Do you praise first?

Do you praise the most?

From it comes strength....victory...His presence!

Can we praise Him today? Can we let what's in our heart be released through our body...clap, shout, sing, raise your hands, dance, play instruments.

Just because Jesus is worthy!