

Begin and End with Praise

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[0 : 00] Our God is a holy God and He is deserving of what? Everything. He is certainly deserving of our praise, isn't He?

! And how important is it that we praise God? Every day we need to. How important is it that! How important is it that we praise God every day? He's number one. I heard very important.

Any other responses to that? He is part of the Trinity, but how important is it that we praise Him? I mean, He gives us life. He gives us everything. And I know we've talked already about our needs, and we always have needs. All of us have needs. None of us...that is something we all have in common.

We all have needs. And we have a God that we can take those to. But we have a God also that we need to be just as focused, not only on giving Him our needs, but on praising Him. That is so vital. This isn't part of the sermon, but in Isaiah chapter 41, God is talking here to His people. And I want to read you real quick what He says. Let me get on the right page here. This people have I formed for Myself, that they shall show forth My praise.

God says He formed them. He made them His people for a purpose, and that purpose was to do what? To praise Him. To give Him their praise. Who are God's people today? There He was talking specifically to the Israelites, to the Jewish people, but who are God's people today?

[1 : 40] Yeah. Every believer. If you're a believer, I want you to say, I am part of God's people. I am part of God's people. And I need to give God praise.

And I need to give God praise. That's really what we're going to be talking about this morning is praising God. And I'll share that one of the things that really has gotten my mind focused on giving God the praise.

We have Bible study on Wednesday night, 7 o'clock for everybody, all the whole family. If you don't come, come. But Wednesday night, we always share praises before we start studying God's Word, and we pray too. But the praise time was just wonderful. It was person after person that had something to praise God for. And you know, I love it when as a pastor, we're sitting around the tables up in the chapel, and I say, all right, who has a praise tonight? And people are almost stumbling over each other because they all have praises to share at the same time. Folks, that is how it should be.

Praising God is vital. And this morning, we're going to look, I want you to turn to Psalms chapter 150. It is the last chapter in the book of Psalms. And again, I encourage you to follow along in your Bibles. There's always Bibles in the back. If you forget your Bible, give it to people if they don't have a Bible. But you need God's Word. It is His truth for us today. Psalms 150, the last chapter in the book of Psalms. We're going to read the whole chapter. Don't worry, it's only six verses long. It is not a long one. But I want you to take note of... Well, we'll talk about that in a minute. I'm going to ask if you're able to stand as we read God's Word this morning. Psalms 150, and this is what God has to share with us today.

[3 : 21] Praise you, the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary. Praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts. Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.

Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet. Praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance. Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals. Praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals.

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise you, the Lord. Let's pray. Lord God, thank You again for this morning that You've given us. Thank You that we could be together in Your house. Thank You for Your presence here among us. Thank You for the things that we could hear about, Lord, with Samaritan's Purse and all they're doing around the world.

We give You praise for all these things. And thank You that You have a message for us this morning. And I pray, Lord, that it sinks into our hearts, that we're able for the next few moments to set aside all the busyness of our lives, all the thoughts that run through our minds.

Help us to focus on Your Word. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen. Amen. You can be seated this morning. Psalms 150 is only six verses long. What do you notice is kind of a very repeating theme in this chapter? Praise. In six verses, it mentions praise 13 times. Over and over and over again, it mentions praise. Do you think there's a reason for that?

[4 : 50] Praise God. Yeah, absolutely, because it is stressing the importance of that. And this is the last book in Psalms, the last chapter. And I hope we understand. A psalm is a song. And these, all the psalms, they were sung for the Israelites as they worshiped God. Now, as they're translated, they don't always come into song as much as they were originally, but they were a song to help them worship and praise God. And we know a lot of the psalms were written by David, and this is one that really, they're not sure who wrote it. David may have, but they don't know for certain.

But it is so intentional about pointing us to praise. It starts off, what are the beginning words of this psalm? Praise you, the Lord. What are the ending words of this psalm? Praise you, the Lord.

It begins and ends the same way. Praise you, the Lord. It begins and ends actually with hallelujah. In the Hebrew, that's what that means. It means to praise the Lord. I'm not a Hebrew scholar. You all know that. But the word hallelujah comes from the word hallel, which means praise.

Hallelu, which means you praise. And then Yah means God. Hallelujah means praise God. That's how this chapter starts and ends, telling us that we need to praise God. And I think it is fitting that it starts and ends the same way. And what I want us to think about just a little bit this morning is that starting and ending with praise to God should be a lesson for us. We start and end a lot of things, don't we? We have all started our day today, haven't we? I don't know when or how you start your day. I don't know what time you get up in the morning. I know I don't understand some of you. Some of you I talk to, I get up at 4 o'clock. I don't understand that. I like to look at 4 o'clock and think, good, I can sleep some more. But whatever time you got up, you started your day, didn't you? How did you start it? We start our days in a variety of ways, don't we? Some people start their day, the alarm goes off or they wake up on their own, they jump out of bed with a smile. Other people start their day, my wife is looking at me over here like, don't you dare mention me. I love my wife. She doesn't always have a smile on her face first thing in the morning. She's not a morning person. Some of us get out of bed, maybe grumbling when we get up. I don't want to get up. I don't want to go to school. So we start our days in a variety of ways. But here's the thing, how should our days start?

This chapter is a lesson in and of itself just how it starts and ends. We start and end many things every day. We start and end. We wake up and then we go to sleep. That's a beginning and an end to it. And you know what? Our day should start out with praise, shouldn't it?

[7 : 56] And I'm guilty. I don't always do that either. But as we open our eyes in the morning, what do we have to praise God for? We can grumble, but what do you have to praise God for when you wake up in the morning? For waking up, for another day of life that God has given you, that He sustained you overnight and He's giving you the gift of another day. We can start and should start with praise. Now, we're going to go through our day today. I don't know what all you have planned, but at some point today your day is going to end, isn't it? And you're going to lay down in bed for the purpose of going to sleep. How should your day end?

With praise. Thank you, God. Praise you for the things you've given me today, that I got to go to church and I got to be in your presence and I got to be with my family, that I had whatever you're going to eat today, food to eat today, whatever your day consists of. Praise God for that. It should start and end with praise. Our lives themselves should start and end with praise, shouldn't they? And we maybe understand that a little more. You know, a baby is born and what do people do? Do they give God praise for that new life? They should. For a believer, a person's life ends, what should we do? Give praise to God for that person's life and the eternal life that they have if they were a believer. Starting and ending with praise, and that is exactly what this chapter does. And who does it say should praise God? I'll give you a hint.

It's in verse 6, the last verse. Let everything that has what? Breath. Breath. Do you have breath? Are you breathing? So what should you be doing? Praise God. I mean, I don't think that leaves any doubt whatsoever who it is that should give God the praise. All of us should give God praise. And then you start thinking about praise. Well, what do we really praise God for? What is praise?

What is praise? What is praise? What is praise? What is praise? What is praise? What is praise? What really our praise should consist of? Because really there's two things underneath praise that we should praise God for. And they are found very specifically in verse 2. Look at verse 2. Praise Him for His...what's the first thing it says? His mighty acts. An act is something you do. It's an action. So we are to praise God for His actions, for what He does. It's the what part of it. We are to praise God for what He does. What all does that include?

What are some of the things that God has done for you? He's kept you safe. That's a what? What else? He's provided you with healing. That's a what? He's given you a home, a place to sleep, talents that He's given us, the church that He's given us. What else has God done for you in your life? There's one you haven't said yet, I don't think. He gave you salvation. He gave you the opportunity to have your sin, and you had sin, we all do. The opportunity for that sin to be forgiven because He gave us His Son, Jesus Christ, to live and die for us. That was an action, something God did, wasn't it? That's a what?

[11:20] Something we are to praise God for. But if you ever think, well, I don't know what to praise God for, it's the what's. Everything He has done for you. And the reality is, if we truly sit down and start thinking of a list of what God has done, guess what? That list is pretty long. We should never be absent of something to praise God for because He has done so many things for us. So the first is the what? We praise God for His actions. But look in verse 2 what it says after that. Praise Him for His mighty acts. But it also says, praise Him according to His excellent greatness. What does that mean? That's not a specific act. So what is it?

For being God. Praise Him for who He is, for His attributes, for things that describe God. Here it says for His excellent greatness because our God is great, isn't He? That is just who He is. And we are to praise God for who He is, that He is holy, that He is perfect, that He is all-knowing, that He is all-powerful. Those are things that God is that we need to praise Him for. And why is it so important that we praise God that He's all-powerful? Yeah, Sophie. Yeah, she agrees. My granddaughter agrees with me. Why is it important that we praise God that He's all-powerful? She is speedy, by the way, so I'm not surprised she made it this far. Why is it important that we praise God that He is all-powerful?

Without Him, we wouldn't be here. The reason we need to be so thankful that God is all-powerful, because we aren't powerful enough. Isn't that the truth? Are you able to always take care of every need that you have? No, we are not. So we praise God that He is.

Do you always have the answers in your life? Realistically, do you always have the answers? Sometimes we think we do, but do we really always have all the answers? So we praise God because guess what God has? All the answers, because He is God. He is all-knowing. He knows the past. He knows the present, and He knows the future. Praise God for who He is. And Psalms here really helps us to understand that. But it's not just Psalms 150. Look back a little bit. I want you to look. It really all starts in Psalms 146. So just turn back a little bit. It's not very far back in your Bible.

[14:08] Psalms 146, 147, 148, 149, and 150. Guess what? They all start the same way. Praise you the Lord. Psalms 146 verse 1. And again, the end of 146 and verse 10, it says at the end, praise you the Lord, praise you the Lord. It starts and ends in the same way, telling us to praise God.

And in Psalms 146, it goes through a bunch of things that we need to praise Him for. The what? Look in verse 6, and we're going to kind of fly through Psalms 146. Verse 6, it says, who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein, and He keeps truth forever. God made, didn't He? What did God make? Everything. It's what He did. That's an action of God, and we need to praise Him for it. And that includes He made who? Me and you and the people sitting around you, God made. Do we praise Him for that? Look in verse 7 of 146, which executes judgment for the oppressed. He gives food to the hungry, and the Lord loosens the prisoners. Those are all things God does. He gives judgment, and God's judgment is always right. He gives food to the hungry. He provides needs. And the last part is the best. He said He loosens the prisoners. He sets people free. And folks, when it's talking about prisoners there, I don't think it means just people that are in jail. It means people that are prisoner to sin, and that is everybody apart from Jesus Christ, those that know Jesus Christ. We were prisoners to sin, but we come to know Jesus Christ, and He forgives our sins when we ask. And guess what? We are freed from that. That is something that God has done. These are all His actions. In verse 8, He says, the Lord opens the

eyes of the blind. Do you know God can open eyes? And who are the blind? Is it talking just about people that are physically blind there? No, people that are spiritually blind that don't know Jesus Christ, that don't have that understanding? God can help to open their eyes. He raises them that are bowed down. That means He gives strength. And it says the Lord loves the righteous. God loves. Aren't those amazing things that God does that we should praise Him for? It says God loves the righteous. Who does that include? Children? Us, if you're a believer, if you have Jesus Christ in your heart, you know what?

You're righteous. Sometimes we have a hard time calling ourselves righteous, don't we? But when we have Jesus Christ in our lives, when He has forgiven our sins, we already sang earlier, power in the blood. Didn't we sing that? The blood will never lose its power. That power is to set us free from that sin. That's what it's all about. That's what God does for us. These are all things that God has done that we need to praise Him for. Look in verse 9, the Lord preserves the strangers.

He relieves the fatherless and widow. But the way of the wicked, He turns upside down. These are all things that God does. Things that we need to praise Him for. Things that He has done in our lives. And God is deserving of that praise. Look to Psalms 147. I told you we're going to kind of fly through these. How does it start? Praise you the Lord. And then it tells all that God does. Again, in verse 3, He heals the broken in heart. He binds up their wounds. And then in verse 4, it says something He does it's pretty amazing. He tells the number of stars and He calls them all by their names.

[18:00] Is that not incredible? One of the Bible studies this week, we were talking about the stars and how many of them there are. Did you share that, Ron? Do you remember how many stars are there? 200 billion trillion. That's how many stars there are.

That they know of. The question I ask is, how many zeros is that? 200 billion trillion. I mean, do you, can you understand that number? 200 billion trillion.

I think it's one of those numbers that if you started counting when you were a child and counted your entire life, you'd never get to that number. That's how many it is. 200 billion trillion. And what does it say that God does?

He calls them all by name. That to me is incredible. Do you think He ever mixes up their names? I shared, I have three children. And you know what I would sometimes do?

Mix up their names. So it was like, no, hey, you, just, you know who I'm talking about. Come here. But God knows all these stars by name. If He knows all the stars by name, 200 billion trillion, there's not nearly that many people right now on the earth, are there? So do you think God knows every one of us by name? Absolutely. Praise Him for that, that He created you and He knows you by name. It says He knows how many hairs are on our head. Isn't that amazing? Well, never mind.

[19:28] Some people, it's a quick count, but we won't. That's a whole other thing. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. It's talking about God's care for us. And it is amazing and something we need to praise Him for. And then look in Psalms 147 verse 5. We've talked about the what, and then it goes back again to the who, praising God for who He is. Great is our Lord. He is a great God God. And of great power. And His understanding is infinite. That word infinite is another one we can't fully comprehend. That means it's beyond our understanding. There's no end to it. And it says His understanding. Again, that means He knows all. That is praising God for who He is. We're not going to go into Psalms 148 and 149 other than to say, if you look at them, do you know how they start? Praise you, the Lord. Do you know how they end? Praise you, the Lord. Praise you, the Lord. That you means you are to praise God. Because folks, I don't know if we fully comprehend how much our God deserves praise. I think we are a people, and

I group myself with that. I'm just not talking about you. I'm talking about me too. We are a people that often underestimate how truly great our God is. I'm not sure that we can always fully understand how great our God is. But we need to try. We need to remind ourselves and remind each other of the God that we serve, how amazing a God He is. And folks, we have the opportunity to serve Him. We have the opportunity to do His will. We have the opportunity to give Him praise for all these things. And folks, He deserves that praise. You know, we're not sure if David wrote these Psalms or not, but he wrote many of the Psalms. And it says that David was a man after God's own heart. David was far from perfect. He had a lot of faults. But you know the one thing that David was really good at? Well, many things. But what was the one thing David was really good at? Praising God. Praising God. Do you think God valued that in David? I think He did. Do you think God values it when we give Him the praise?

You know, we can praise people and they don't always deserve it, do they? But we can praise God and you know what? He always deserves it. He has given us everything.

Every good thing we have comes from God. And folks, I know the sermon this morning, it's not complicated. It's simply make sure that you are praising God the way that He deserves. I need to make sure that I am praising God the way He deserves. We need to make sure that our church is praising God the way that He deserves. Because folks, we serve an amazing and wonderful God that is deserving of our praise.

[22 : 44] Start your day with praise. End your day with praise. Let your heart be filled with praise for the God that we serve. Let's pray. Lord God, thank You again for this morning that You've given us.

We thank You for this time that we've had to be in Your house. We thank You for Your Word that we can read from and just the reminders that it gives us. And Lord, there is no way to read through these Psalms without being reminded that we are to praise You with all that we are.

We are to praise You morning and night and everything in between. You are a God that deserves our praise. Everything we do, everything we accomplish, everything that we have, Lord, is a result of Your goodness.

Help us to praise You for it. And not just for the things that You've done for us, but just for the God that You are, help us to always praise You. Thank You, Lord, again for Your message. Remind us that You're a God that loves us and You are an amazing God. In the name of Jesus, we pray.
Amen.