



November 5, 2017

Psalm 140 – 150

“Ways to Praise”

Pastor Gary Hamrick

In today's teaching, Pastor Gary answers four questions on the topic of praising God: What is praise to God; Who should praise God; Why should we praise God; and How should we praise God? We might be surprised to learn how much this topic affects all aspects of our lives. Praising God helps us to “verticalize” our lives instead of always looking at the horizontal. Praising God also helps us to center our lives, in that praise helps us focus our priorities and gives us the right perspective on life.

“Verticalize” And Focus On The Lord

1. Pastor Gary encouraged us to reshape our thinking so that we “verticalize” ourselves instead primarily being concerned about the horizontal (the things of this world and this life).
2. **2 Corinthians 4:18** – *“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”* (Emphasis added)
3. **Hebrews 3:1** – *“Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.”* (Emphasis added)
4. Pastor Gary said: “The [reason] this topic is important is because it helps get the right perspective and priority on life. You see, when my focus is on the Lord there's this wonderful thing that happens in praising him, where the greatness of God begins to make me realize the smallness of my problems. [I realize the] smallness of my anxieties or my fears or my worries. When [I] begin to just

focus on the greatness of God, everything else dwarfs in comparison, and [my heart gets] aligned with him, and I begin to get the right perspective, and get the right priorities in my life."

What Is Praise To God? – Psalm 145

5. The Hebrew word for praise is hallel, which is used in the English word, hallelujah, which means praise the Lord!
6. Psalms 146 through 150 are known as the hallelujah psalms, because each psalm begins and ends with, "*Praise the Lord.*"
7. When we praise the Lord, we are ascribing value to him, in the same way that an appraiser would value a home or property.
8. **Psalm 145:3** – "*Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.*"
9. "If God were small enough to be understood, He would not be big enough to be worshiped." – Evelyn Underhill¹
 - a. "If God was small enough for us to figure out, He wouldn't be big enough for us to worship." – J.B. Phillips²

Who Should Praise God? – Psalm 148

10. This psalm helps us understand who and what should praise the Lord:
 - a. **Psalm 148:2** – Angels
 - b. **Psalm 148:3** – Solar system
 - c. **Psalm 148:4** – Atmosphere
 - d. **Psalm 148:7** – Land and sea creatures
 - e. **Psalm 148:8** – Weather
 - f. **Psalm 148:9** – Plant kingdom
 - g. **Psalm 148:10** – Animal kingdom
 - h. **Psalm 148:11** – Rulers of government
 - i. **Psalm 148:12** – Men, women, and children

¹ <http://www.beliefnet.com/quotes/christian/e/evelyn-underhill/if-god-were-small-enough-to-be-understood-he-woul.aspx>

² https://books.google.com/books?id=Lcvk9j2s0oIC&pg=PT1217&lpg=PT1217&dq=j.b.+phillips+quote+if+god+were+small+enough&source=bl&ots=EhJUIxr6KF&sig=cjqKuJ7DbjnccUGz83Ezh6XMUfw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi71fHs6q_XAhVKjVQKHViBmMQ6AEIPDAE#v=onepage&q=j.b.%20phillips%20quote%20if%20god%20were%20small%20enough&f=false

11. Pastor Gary said: "In other words, let the "crea-tion" and the "crea-ted" worship the "Crea-tor." (NOTE: Pastor Gary verbally emphasized the pronunciation of these words.)
12. Pastor Gary said: "Creation is actually in a fixed state of glorifying God... [He] has displayed himself in the beauty and the wonder and the complexity of the universe. And, that with an intelligent examination of the data one can see that there is a Divine Creator behind all of this wonder and complexity of our universe. And so, creation stands in a constant fixed state of praising God by virtue of its design, which testifies to God as Creator... So, God tells us in his Word that his handiwork is constantly testifying [about him] and glorifying him."
 - a. [Romans 1:20](#) - "*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made...*"
 - b. [Psalm 19:1-2](#) - "*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.*"
13. Everyone who knows the Lord personally will have a natural desire to praise and worship the Lord.
 - a. Pastor Gary gave an overview of [Luke 7:36-50](#), concerning the account of the female prostitute who wiped her tears from Jesus' feet with her hair, and how she also anointed his feet with expensive perfume, how she did this as an act of thanks and worship for the forgiveness she had received from the Lord.
14. Everyone who has been forgiven of their sin should want to joyfully and thankfully worship the Lord!
15. [Psalm 150:6](#) - "*Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.*"

Why Should We Praise God?

16. Pastor Gary said: "Why should we worship him? Because he's worthy of our praise, but we should worship him because there's [a] natural exuberance that comes from our heart over the most glorious thing that's ever happened to mankind! That God so loved the world that he would send his son Jesus to die on a cross.³ ... Real enthusiasm is knowing about God and all that he's done, and

³ [John 3:16-18](#) - "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does*

being captivated [by] his love and who he is! ... And [praise] will naturally flow from a heart of thanksgiving."

17. **Psalm 48:1** – "Great is the LORD, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain.
18. The Lord, in response to receiving our praise, will bless us in many ways.
 - a. We read in **Acts 16:16-40**, that in response to Paul and Silas' praise, the Lord freed them from a jail in Philippi.
 - i. **Acts 16:25-26** – "*About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.*"
 - ii. The Lord can set us free from prisons of fear, anxiety, grief, and all kinds of prisons we find ourselves in
 - b. We read in **2 Chronicles 20**, that the Lord gave victory to Jehoshaphat and the people of the tribe of Judah, in response to their praise.
 - i. **2 Chronicles 20:22** – "*As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.*"
 - c. We read in **2 Samuel 12**, that when the child that was conceived in David's adulterous affair with Bathsheba died, he went to worship the Lord.
 - i. **2 Samuel 12:20a** – "*Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped.*"
 - ii. Pastor Gary said: "[What the Bible tells us that David did is] very challenging. I know that there are people in our own congregation [who have] lost children. And that's almost unthinkable to go to the house of the Lord and to worship God. Now, he was not worshiping God because his child died; he was worshiping God because he realized that God [was] the only source for [his] comfort. And God [was] the only source to help [him] through [his] grief. And God [was] the only source, ... the only one who could help [him] to carry on when [he] didn't feel like carrying on. That's what God does. That's why [David] worshiped the Lord."

How Should We Praise God?

19. Praise the Lord with singing!
 - a. There are more than 400 references in the Bible concerning singing praise to the Lord, and 50 of the 400+ are direct commands to sing to the Lord.
 - b. [Psalm 149:1](#) - “*Praise the LORD. Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints.*”
 - c. [Psalm 105:2](#) - “*Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts.*”
20. Praise the Lord with instruments!
 - a. [Psalm 150:3-6](#) - “*Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and flute, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.*”
21. Praise the Lord with lifted hands!
 - a. [Psalm 63:4](#) - “*I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.*”
 - b. [Psalm 134:2](#) - “*Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD.*”
22. Praise the Lord with clapping!
 - a. [Psalm 47:1](#) - “*Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.*”
23. Praise the Lord with dancing!
 - a. [Psalm 149:3](#) - “*Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp.*”

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the ways we can intentionally “veritcalize” our focus/thinking? (See #1 through #4 above)
2. How have you experienced a change in your thinking, especially when it concerns problems in your life, because you were able to fix your eyes and your thoughts on the Lord?
3. Read [Psalm 145](#) and discuss what it means to praise the Lord.

4. Read and discuss the quotes by Evelyn Underhill and J.B. Phillips. (See #9 above)
5. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's remarks about the ways all of creation praise the Lord. (See #12 above)
6. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about why we should praise the Lord. (See #16 above)
7. Read and discuss all three of the biblical examples Pastor Gary shared concerning the Lord's blessing in response to praise. (See #18 above)
8. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about the ways they actively praise the Lord. (See #19 through #23 above)
9. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).