

Why Praise God?

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[0 : 01] We are going to be in Psalm 33 this evening, and we're going to read that for us now. And this will be, this is a psalm, a psalm of praise.

And so a question I want us to think about this evening, as we look at this in just a very brief amount of time, would be, why do we praise God? Begin in verse 1.

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breadth of his mouth all their host. He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap, and he puts the deep in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and it came to be. He commanded, and it stood firm.

The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing. He frustrates the plans of the people. The counsel of the Lord stands forever. The plans of his hearts to all generations.

[1 : 29] Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage. The Lord looks down from heaven. He sees all the children of man.

From where he sits enthroned, he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth. He who fashioned the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds. The king is not saved by his great army.

A warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a false hope for salvation. And by its great might, it cannot rescue. Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, and on those who hope in his steadfast love.

That he may deliver their soul from death, and keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the Lord, for he is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name.

Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you. So, this psalm is a psalm of praise.

[2 : 36] And as I was thinking about this psalm, just reading through it a couple of times, a question that came to mind is, why do we give praise to God?

Why would there be this psalm here of praise? And, you know, at some level, it's like, of course you're supposed to praise God. That's just what you're supposed to do. But I just took a step back. Why do we give praise to God? And almost, not this is a question I think we should ask, but from a jaded opinion, like a jaded perspective, we could say, you know what, you know, Jesus says that rocks could praise him.

And absolutely, that's what Jesus said as he was entering into Jerusalem and his final week of life before he would be crucified and ultimately resurrected. Jesus says that, you know what, even the rocks could praise him.

So, if the rocks can praise God, then why do we need to do that? And then, when we come to God as well, we find that God has no need of our praise.

[3 : 33] God is complete and whole without our praise. So, God is not standing around thinking, wow, if only the people would praise me, then I would feel fulfilled.

God is complete as he is and has no need of our praise. So, the question, why do we praise God? Why should we praise God? And a simple answer is because that's what we're told to do.

And we'll certainly go beyond that. But as we look at the model prayer that Jesus put for us, one of the first things that we're told is, hallowed be your name, hallowed be the name of God.

So, part of that is just a matter of obedience, that we are called to give praise God. As we look at this, we're going to find, through this psalm, we're going to find a bit more of a sophisticated answer than simply we're told to do it.

So, with that question in mind, why do we praise God? We're going to take a look at this psalm. And we're going to look at a pattern that develops, particularly beginning in verse 4.

[4 : 37] But here in the first three verses, we are showed a means for praising God. And so, I'm going to reread those verses for us.

And as I'm doing that, I want you to just think of the means that are listed there for praising God. Shout for joy in the Lord, O you righteous. Praise befits the upright.

Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre. Make melody to him with a harp of ten strings. Sing to him a new song. Play skillfully on the strings with loud shouts.

So, hopefully you're able to pick up and just hear some of those means that were listed there, from the lyre to the harp, to song, to shout, ways that we are given to praise God.

And now we're going to see a little bit more of a pattern that develops. So, here over the next three verses, four through eight, I'm going to be rereading those. But what I want you to watch for is three things that we see.

[5 : 36] The first that we'll see in verses four and five is God's being. So, it's an understanding of God's nature is described there for us. So, an idea of God's being.

And then we're going to see, following that in verses six and seven, God's actions. So, how God acts as a result of that being. And then we're going to see the response of people, the human response that is listed there.

So, once again, it's going to be God's being, to God's actions, to the human response. Let me begin in verse four. For the word of the Lord is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness.

He loves righteousness and justice. The earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord. By the word of the Lord, the heavens remain, and by the breadth of his mouth, all their host.

He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap. He puts the deep into storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

[6 : 41] And as we go through the next section, we're going to see a similar pattern develop over verses nine through 12. This is going to be, first we'll see God's actions, followed by God's being described, followed by the human response.

So, it's going to be actions, being, and response. This is going to be nine through 12. For he spoke, and it came to be. He commanded, and it stood firm.

The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing. He frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the Lord stands forever. The plans of his heart to all generations.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage. And then we're going to come and look at the verses 13 through 18.

What I want us to look then is at God's actions, and then at the human response. And what we're looking for in each of these, and I'll pull all this together at the end, is the human response.

[7 : 48] That is part of what we're keen on. But these others are vital here as well. So, it's going to be God's actions, and then watch as it changes to the human response. Begin in verse 13. The Lord looks down from heaven.

He sees all the children of man. From where he sits enthroned, he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth. He who fashioned the hearts of them all and observed all their deeds.

The king is not saved by his great army. A warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a false hope for salvation. And by its great might, it cannot see.

Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love. And as we continue, we're going to look here at the next section.

God's being, his actions, and his response. And I'm going to pick it back up in 18, verse 18, and I'll continue that through the end.

[8 : 49] So, it's going to be being, God's being, actions, and response. Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the Lord. He is our help and our shield, for our heart is glad in him because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us as we hope in you.

So, the question we started with this evening is why praise God? Why should we praise God? And just as we've looked at this psalm, what I want us to see is that the human response that's taking place.

So, we have God's being being declared. We have God's actions being declared. And then there's a human response to that. And that response is going to give us some insight into this question of why do we praise God?

Because after looking at God's beings and God's actions, there's something that should come from that. And that is our response. In verse 8, we're told to stand in awe of God.

[9 : 57] So, why do we praise God? Because we need to stand in awe of God. In verse 12, we're told that we will be blessed by God. So, why do we praise God?

Because we will be blessed by God. Verse 19, we're told that God might deliver our souls from death and keep us alive in famine. Why do we praise God?

Because God is the one who delivers our souls. God is the one who protects us in famine. Verse 20, we're told that God is our hope and our shield.

Why do we praise God? Because God is our hope and God is our shield. Verse 21, our hearts will be glad. Why do we praise God? Because our hearts will be glad when we do.

Verse 22, the steadfast love of God is upon us. Why do we praise God? Because the steadfast love of God is upon us.

[10 : 53] As we think of this praising God, it's not for God's benefit that we praise him. It's for our own. So, when we come and praise God, we recognize who God is. We recognize the things God does.

And we also recognize that in praising God, that is our appropriate response when we look and see the great and mighty work that God has done. Let me close this point in prayer.

God, we're thankful that you are indeed our great God. A God who is worthy of our praise. A God who has done miraculous and amazing things. And God, we come and we do acknowledge that your great sovereignty, not only over us, but over all things.

And God, we come and acknowledge your greatness and your amazing nature and your awesomeness. God, your ability to do all things. Your ability to hold all things together. And God, amidst of all of that, you love us so much.

And you have a great compassion and concern and love for our individual beings. God, who we are and for our lives. Amidst all the great things that are in your hand, God, that you love and care for us as people and as individuals.

[12 : 04] God, and for that, we come and acknowledge you. God, we try to give you our allegiance. God, we come seeking to follow you completely and wholly. We ask this in your name.

Amen.