

Psalm 148

Ps. 146, a praise for being an abundant helper. **Ps. 147** praises God for restoration and prosperity. **Ps. 149** invokes Israel to praise God for a new song, dancing, music, and to let the praise be on their lips always. **Ps. 150** lists what to praise God for: His mighty expanse, deeds, greatness. How to praise Him: with trumpet, lyre, timbrel, dancing, instruments, pipe, loud cymbals. Finally, we are to express that everything that has breath praises the Lord. Our Psalm today is a psalm that invokes the whole creation to praise the Lord.

Vs. 1-6 Praise Him from above. Matthew Henry notes, *"This psalm is a most solemn and earnest call to all the creatures, according to their capacity, to praise their Creator, and to show forth his eternal power and Godhead, the invisible things of which are manifested in the things that are seen."* In this dark and wicked world, we know little about the heavens except what the Scriptures tell us. The Psalmist expresses the "heavens or the heights" where thousands upon thousands praise the Lord, and God doesn't need them, but they praise Him.

(a) The sun, moon, and stars praise Him by shining and existing. It's a reflection of His creation (vs. 5). The highest of the heavens will praise Him, and myriads of angels do continually. This is why we seek and look upwards. Colossians 3:1-2 *"Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."*
(b) The decree to praise the Lord from the highest to the moon to the stars and even the waters.

(c) Why should these things praise Him? They were created. The creature has no right over the creator. Romans 1:25 *"For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen."*

Vs. 7-12 Praise Him on the earth. Matthew Henry, *"As the rays of the sun, which are darted directly from heaven, reflect back (though more weakly) from the earth, so should the praises of God, with which this cold and infected world should be warmed and perfumed."* Sea creatures, fire, hail, snow, clouds, wind, mountains, hills, trees, cedars, beasts, cattle, creeping things, fowl, kings, princes, judges, men, virgins, young and old men, and children. Even those creatures that are not dignified with the powers of reason are summoned into this concert, because God may be glorified in them. Not even the creeping things have sunk so low, nor do the flying fowl soar so high, as not to be called upon to praise the Lord.

NOTE: How does your life reflect the praise of God? The heavens and all above praise Him, the earth and all creation praise Him, do you?

Vs. 13-14 The application of praise. Let them, all of creation and men and princes and you and I, praise the name of the Lord. His name alone is exalted, and His glory is above the earth and heaven. Why should we praise Him today? How much higher are we than the mountains, creeping things, cedars, and hills? We have reason to praise Him.

Exalting God. Because He is a jealous God for His glory. Isaiah 48:9-11 *"For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, And for My praise I restrain it for you, In order not to cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another."* His people on earth are the climax of His praise and glory. Isaiah 49:3 *"He said to Me, you are My Servant, Israel, in whom I will show My glory."*

(a) We should be consumed with a desire to glorify and exalt Him. 1 Corinthians 10:31 *"Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."* 1 Corinthians 6:20 *"For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."*

(b) The faithful church is God-centered, not man-centered. The church has been redeemed so that believers might glorify Him by serving one another and proclaiming Him in a dark world. 1 Peter 4:11 *"Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."* 1 Peter 2:9 *"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."*

How does the church exalt God? How is His name only exalted (vs. 13)? The church exalts God through worship and praise, cf. Psalm 150.

(a) The woman at the well and the unfolding of true worship, John 4:23-24 *"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* This passage conveys both future expectation and present reality. Jesus' work in the present inaugurates a new phase of redemptive history. The present way is ordained of God, but there is one coming (vs. 24) where you will worship Him in spirit and truth.

(b) Worship consists of ascribing to God the honor due and the praise, declaring His glory in words of praise. Psalm 29:2 *"Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in holy array."* Psalm 95:6 *"Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."* NOTE: The church public worship should not be about self-help speeches or theatrics or circus-style performances. It should center on His name, His glory, and His praise. If we elevate ourselves or draw attention to ourselves or anything else, we have not ascribed glory and honor to His name.

We bring glory to His name by being obedient, Romans 12:1 *"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."*

His name is above every name, and His name is to be exalted above all. Hebrews 7:26 *"For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens."* Gathering in a remote area of Uganda, He is exalted. Gathering here today, He is to be exalted. There should not be anything done that diminishes that.

(a) We are just preparing here. Think about the future glory and exaltation of our God. Revelation 4:10-11 *"The twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."* Don't sing about you or how you feel or how you've been troubled. Sing about Him and His redemption and His mercy and His love. Don't preach about how you can be true to yourself or fulfill your dreams. Preach about His redeeming grace.

Psalm 148