

"The Music of Worship"

"The Music of Worship" Psalm 150

April 3, 2005 by C.W. Powell

- 1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.
- 2 Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.
- 3 Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.
- 4 Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.
- 5 Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
- 6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD." (Ps 150:1-6)

- I. Praise Ye the Lord. "Hallelujah" or "Alleluia" It is an imperative, a command. It is not a request or a suggestion. It is a great sin not to praise the Lord.
 - A. Why should I praise the Lord? Illustration: Blind people cannot see. They do not see why you should praise the Lord. "What has he done for me lately?"
 - B. Elijah was about to go back to heaven. He visited the schools of the prophets. The young prophet Elisha was sticking close to him as he went from place to place. At Gilgal Elijah said, stay here for I am going to Bethel. Elisha said, I will go with you. At Bethel, the young prophets said to Elisha, "God is going to take your master away from you today." Elisha said, "I know it." Elijah said, I am going to Jericho. Elisha said, "Me, too." The young prophets told him the same thing there at Jericho. Elijah said, "I am going to Jordan" Elisha said again, "As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." Fifty of the young prophets followed them away off, watching what would happen. At the Jordan River, Elijah took his mantle and struck the water and the waters opened up so they could go across. Do you wonder why Elisha stuck so close. You don't meet a man like Elijah every day.

Elisha then asked Elijah, Give me a double portion of thy spirit. Elijah said, 'That is a hard thing. It really isn't mine to give. But if you see me go to heaven, then you will know that God has answered your request.'
 - C. You know the rest of the story. Elisha did see the chariots of fire and the horses of fire that divided between them and the whirlwind that snatched up Elijah into heaven.
 - D. My point is this: The ability to see is a requirement for being a prophet of God. The chariots, the horses and the whirlwind were going to come and take Elijah away, and the test for Elisha was whether he could see them. God does not call a man to serve Him without equipping him for the service.
 - E. So it is with all of God's calls. Praise ye the Lord. Has your heart been tuned to praise the Lord. Are you so blind as not to see the reason for it? Is your heart so hard, your eyes so blind, your ears so deaf that you cannot understand any reason why you would praise the Lord?
 - F. God gives us some reasons why we should praise the Lord, but first He tells us where we are to praise the Lord.
- II. We are to praise Him in his sanctuary, in the firmament of His power. That means in the entire universe. The whole world is a temple for God. God cannot dwell in temples made by hands. Jesus teaches us this when he expounds the Third Commandment:
 - A. "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." (Mt 5:33-37)

- B. The point is there is nothing that you can swear by that does not bind you to do what you say you will do. In fact God will hold you accountable for everything you say, for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. Nothing is outside His temple, for The heaven is God's throne and the earth His footstool. Do you think that you can go out of His presence where He will not hold you accountable for what you say and what you do? Of course not.
- C. So you are to praise the Lord everywhere you go and praise Him in all that you do. You are witnesses for Christ and everything you say and everything you do is to be for the glory of God. "Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all for the glory of God." "Glory" means to display or to give proof of. Evidence is the meaning, for the word "evidence" also comes from the Latin for "see." The video in electronic communication is what you see. When you give evidence, you are showing your reasons. This is what glory means. We glorify God when our life and our deeds are a display of the truth of His Being, His Word, and His Works. Amen, so let it be.

III. Vs. 2: We are to praise Him for His great work, and for His most excellent Being.

- A. He has created all things. All things in time and space. In all of time and in all of space. This great universe is a most excellent display of the greatness and immensity of God. It is a display of the glory of God in a physical sense. God, of course, is a most pure and holy Spirit and cannot be sensed with the senses of the flesh, but the universe can be sensed, and our minds have been created to make the leap from the things we sense to the things we cannot sense. And we must make that leap, for we do not worship God in the creature. Even our Lord Jesus had to return to heaven so that we might understand that we are not saved because we know Him after the flesh, but we are saved because we know Him after the Spirit.
- B. We are to praise Him for His excellent greatness. The greatness of God is displayed in what we call the incommunicable attributes. There are tracts in the rack in the foyer that show the biblical doctrines concerning these attributes:
 1. His self-existence: or Independence. He has no support system and needs nothing. He has life in Himself.
 2. His immutability: He does not change.
 3. His Infinity: there are no limits to His wisdom and power, and presence. He fills all time and space, and nothing can be hidden from Him. He knows the most secret things of our hearts that we even try to hide from ourselves. He cannot be fully explained, but can be worshipped in awe and wonder.
 4. His Unity: all other God's are idols and fakes: He is the one and true and perfect God. How wonderful and gracious He is to all that He has made.

IV. Vs. 3-5. The whole universe is to be a symphony of praise to the Lord.

- A. All the musical instruments that were known at that time are mentioned. Music was primitive. How much more advanced it is nowadays. Man, in the image of God, is inventive and creative. Because he is a sinner he is creative in evil and well as in good. It is good that man is imaginative and creative, for he is in the image of God; it is very bad that he so uses this great gift of God to devise evil ways and deeds.
- B. The way that we are to praise the Lord has two very important principles:
 1. All the gifts of man are to be used in the praise and worship of God in the universe.
 2. The praise and worship of God, however, is to be done in a way that displays the nature, the holiness, and the attributes of God.
 3. God is not silly, and our lives are not to be silly.
 4. God is not childish, and our lives are not to be childish.
 5. God is not irrational, and our lives are not to be irrational.
 6. Especially in the times and places appointed for worship, the attributes of God are to be on display.
 7. Illustration: there are times and places. There are times when you play with your children, and children have a way of making children out of adults. You may be giving your little boy

a piggy back ride, and you may be having a great deal of fun. That is wise and appropriate. But don't try it when he is eighteen. And please shift gears when you go to your job and don't treat your fellow employees the way you would treat your two-year old.

8. If we are to treat others in a way commiserate with their station and age and dignity, then ought not our approach to God be one that displays His attributes? Everything about divine worship should be according to the character and dignity of God who made us, and this great universe and all that is in it. There are playful and silly things in the world—kittens and tumbleweeds; there are things of high dignity and grandeur: the stars in the heavens, The Grand Canyon, and the soul of a man. All are for men from their gracious Father. Our hearts must be filled with love and praise and glory.
-
- C. What part do you play in the great symphony of praise to God? Remember that your part is just one part. Some instruments are solo instruments; some are not. Cymbal solos should short. A violin solo may be an extended one. The one who writes the score decides these things. Play the part that God has designed for you. How wonderful are the people of God when they are all playing the part designed for them and the music has no discordant voices and no one out of time or tune. Ultimately this will only be in heaven, but we should work toward it now.
-
- V. Vs. 6. The call is to every thing that has breath:
 - A. All living things have a part to play in the symphony of praise to God,. But chiefly men, who have more than a natural animal soul; but also an everlasting soul that does not depend upon the breath of air and oxygen, but upon the Spirit of God.
 - B. The wholeness of man is to be used for the glory of God. Nothing in the universe anywhere is exempt from the decree of God: Praise Ye the Lord.
 - C. Not to do so is blindness, hardness, ingratitude, and wickedness.

Amen and Amen.

May God bless you.