

Wil Owens

The Lord is Worthy to be Praised, Feared, and Trusted; Psalm 33

GPBC

7.7.19

Introduction – Throughout all of Scripture, especially in the Psalms, we are commanded to praise, fear, and trust the Lord. I want us to see in Psalm 33 that all of those commands in Scripture of how we are to relate to God are not commands that stand alone. In other words, we are not told to praise, fear, and trust the Lord without being told why we should praise, fear, and trust the Lord.

Let me illustrate it this way. Sometimes as parents when we tell our kids to do something, they ask why. Sometimes from frustration or impatience, we might say, “Because I said to.” Now sometimes it’s ok to just say that because we need to learn in the home that sometimes in everyday life and sometimes in following the Lord, we won’t know the why and we simply have to do what is the right thing to do and trust the Lord with the outcome.

But we as parents also know when we are applying the Gospel to parenting and instructing and training and discipling our children, the more they understand the reason behind the command, the more prone they will be to obey it, to incline their hearts to it, to begin trusting the authorities God has placed over them for their good, and by extension then, begin learning how to trust the ultimate authority over their lives, which is God, who always instructs, directs, and commands for our good.

So when it comes to God, the Supreme, Infinite, Holy God, if all He said was “I told you to,” that would be sufficient because He is God. If we opened our Bibles and all we read were commands, that would be sufficient because He is God. However, God is not after rote obedience, He is after our hearts. He means to transform us into genuine worshippers. So He condescends to us by not just giving us good and right commands but also giving us His purposes and reasons why. He not only reveals to us how we are to relate to Him, but He reveals to us truths about Him so that we know why these commands are good and right. He doesn’t just say, “Praise Me, Fear Me, Trust Me.” He also says, “This is why I am worthy of praise, fear, and trust.” Simply put, the more we know about Him, the more we desire to glorify Him!

- I. Why It is Good and Right to Praise the Lord (vv1-7)
  - a. In vv1-3 we read the commands to praise the Lord, and it's not just any praise, it's joyful, celebrative praise. In v1, the psalmist says "Shout for joy in the Lord" because that's the right kind of praise to give Him. V2-3 tell us to give thanks to God on any kind of instrument we can play. V3 says sing to Him a new song, give Him loud shouts.
    - i. In other words, praise Him as much as you can, with as many means as you can, with as much heart as you can because that's what the upright do. Those who have been made right with our great God give Him great praise!
    - ii. Now that's the command to praise in vv1-3, vv4-7 tell us why. Why is it right and good to praise the Lord with shouts of joy and instruments and singing? And so the psalmist gives us reasons, and it's these reasons that cause us to praise Him in these ways.
  - b. Reason 1, v4, because of His word and His work.
    - i. His word is always upright. It is always right, true, correct. It is never tainted with error, corrupt with malice, crooked with hidden wrongs, or misleading. Everything He has said to us is upright, therefore, He is to be greatly praised.
    - ii. His work is done in faithfulness. Everything He does is faithful to His character of holiness and faithful to His children. He never acts in a way that is detrimental or destructive to His name or His people. He does everything in faithfulness, therefore, He is to be greatly praised. He keeps His covenant. He keeps His promise.
  - c. Reason 2, v5, because of His love.
    - i. He loves the best things, the highest virtues, the greatest qualities. He abhors every sin, every vice, every unrighteousness, every injustice. He loves His own holy attributes. He is the very fountain, source, and definition of righteousness, justice, and all good things, therefore He is to be greatly praised.
    - ii. His love reaches out, extends, shows itself in all of His creation. It is not Mother Nature that displays so much beauty. It is not fate that brings good things to our lives, it is the steadfast love of God that fills this earth. Therefore, He is to be greatly praised.

- d. Reason 3, vv6-7, because of His awesome power demonstrated in creation and providence.
  - i. His creative power is demonstrated in that He simply spoke, merely breathed out, the heavens. Ill. take a deep breath. That's all it took for God to create the heavens. When you look up and see the planets, the stars, the galaxies, they all came into being when God simply willed them into being and exhaled "Be!" Therefore, He is to be greatly praised.
  - ii. His providential power to care for His creation is demonstrated in His sovereign control over every square inch of creation, right down to the weather patterns. Therefore, He is to be greatly praised.
- e. But not only is He to be greatly praised by the upright, He is to be feared by all.

## II. Why It is Good and Right to Fear the Lord (vv8-12)

- a. V8 is the command for every living human being on the earth to fear the Lord.
  - i. It's difficult for us to grasp this way of rightly relating to the Lord by fearing the Lord partly for two reasons. (1) We know God as our loving Father and our gracious Savior, so how does fear fit in?, and (2) because we normally associate fear arising from wickedness, evil, and sin, like murder or terror, or tragedy, but God has no wickedness, evil, or sin, so how do we fear Him? And I think the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of v8 helps us see how to rightly fear the Lord in the right way.
  - ii. To rightly fear the Lord is to stand before His massive, infinite, all-powerful, all-consuming presence and to realize how small and fragile and powerless we are before Him. His greatness, our smallness. His power, our weakness. His might, our frailty. When the created beholds the Creator, it is right and it is good to behold Him in a trembling, speechless awe. To be awe-struck not because we think He's cruel and capricious, but because standing before the infinite, we realize how finite we are.
- b. Reason #1. V9 again points to His awesome power as Creator. The same reason believers are to greatly praise Him is the reason all should greatly fear Him, His unfathomable might and power!

- c. Reason #2. Vv10-11 speak about God's sovereign control over every nation and every people. Nations counsel and people plan, but it is the counsel and plans of God that stand! He stands sovereign above every person and every nation.
  - i. Almighty God stands in sovereign control over every nation and every leader. We don't fear nations and leaders, we fear God because He stands above them!
- d. V12 then reminds us that when we are His people, we not only fear Him but we are blessed by Him because His counsel and His plans are always good for His people! (counsel and plans in vv10-12) Yes, we fear Him because He is God, but He is also through Christ, our God, and so we are blessed, and so we can trust Him.

### III. Why It is Good and Right to Trust the Lord (vv13-19)

- a. Vv13-15 – we can trust Him because He knows everything about us. He watches over us. He made us. He knows us.
- b. Vv16-17 – tells us if we put our trust in our strength, our power, and our resources, that would be a tragic misplacing of trust. We don't deliver ourselves. We don't save ourselves. We don't empower ourselves. God is our salvation. God is our deliverance. God is our life. God is our strength.
- c. Vv18-19 – we can trust Him because we are His, and He will take care of His own, both for eternity and for this life! (order reversed)

### IV. The Believer and the Lord (vv20-22)

- a. Vv20-22 moves from telling us to praise, fear, and trust the Lord and why to responding to everything that has been said. Now that we have heard all of this about God, His power, His sovereignty, and His everlasting care and salvation for His people, now that we know all this about God, how do we respond?
- b. V20 – We're not going to fear man so we're not going to trust in our strength or the strength of man, our soul will wait for the Lord, He is our help and shield.
- c. V21 – Our heart is glad in Him (we are going to praise Him) because we are His by faith in Christ.
- d. V22 – He will not deny those who hope in Him.