

**“Praise the Lord!” Psalm 150 (10/5/25)**

We are now about halfway through our journey through the Psalms together. If you haven’t started yet, I want to encourage you to join us this week as we begin the month of October. And if you’ve been faithfully reading, I hope you will continue strong and finish well.

Our Psalm series will continue throughout this month. For now, we have learned about the way of the blessed person—someone who delights in God’s Word and meditates on it day and night. We have seen how God is with us in our suffering and weakness, and how, even when life does not go the way we expect, it is still good to be near to God.

Before we move into the fourth book of Psalms, today we turn to Psalm 150, the very last psalm, to understand where the whole journey of the Psalms is heading.

The final five psalms—146 through 150—are like the grand conclusion of the entire book. Each one begins and ends with the same word: “Hallelujah,” which means, “Praise the Lord.” So the Psalm that began with “Blessed is the one…” ends with “Praise the Lord.” The Psalm starts with “blessed person” and ends with praise. The person who is rooted in God’s Word goes through joy and sorrow, despair and thanksgiving, and in the end, arrives at praise.

Before we look closely at Psalm 150, let us think about what praise really means. The word “Hallelujah” comes from two Hebrew words: “halu,” meaning “to praise,” and “Yah,” the holy name of the Lord. So “Hallelujah” literally means “Praise the Lord.” Then, what does it mean to praise God, and why does God call us to do it? To know this, let us see human history without our God. Throughout human history, people have worshipped many gods. And humans believed that these gods could bring them prosperity or safety. Each god asked humans to worship them in

the way they liked. But most of the worship methods or styles of many gods were not understandable with our understanding in the present day. I cannot believe people in history truly believed they would get prosperity and safety when they practiced those methods of worshiping gods. For example, like the child sacrifices in Canaan during the time of Israel's Exodus. But our God is different. When God taught Israel how to worship, God's purpose was to help them love God and love their neighbors. At first, worship involved offering animals and grain, but we do not practice offering animals anymore. As time went on, one source of worshiping our God remained constant through all generations. It is praise.

When we think of praise, we often think of music or singing. But praise is much more than that. In the English dictionary, the definition of praise is "to express admiration or approval for someone's character or deeds." So when we praise God, we declare who God is and what God has done. Music is simply the language that helps our hearts express that truth. Praise keeps us aware of God's presence in every moment of life. So, the reason why God called us to praise, why praise is so important, is because we can worship God through praise, and we can love our God and our neighbors through praise. And we can know more details about praise through Psalm 150.

Firstly, Psalm 150 tells us where we should praise God. Psalm 150 begins with these words: "Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty heavens." As we learned last time, the sanctuary was the place of God's presence. And the heavens are also the place of God's presence. This shows that we should praise God in God's presence. Then, we may ask this question. Is it possible to praise God without God's presence? Sadly, yes. We can sing songs and praise God without God's presence. That's why we must stay spiritually awake and continually seek

God's presence when we praise our God.

Let me share a story from when I was in high school in New Zealand. I am not sure if they still have the same system. When I was in New Zealand, the New Zealand high school had an interesting graduation system. They did the graduation ceremony first, then they did the final graduation test. After graduation, students spend a month taking final exams. Each student's schedule is different, so vacation begins as soon as they finish their last exam. I wanted to finish quickly and spend my last days in New Zealand with my friends before returning to South Korea, but unfortunately, my exams were scheduled last. While my friends were already celebrating, I was still studying alone in the library. I was so sad because I had to spend my last month of my New Zealand life in the library alone. So, I booked a flight to another island right after my last exam. Then, on my last test day, after I finished my test, I came back home and packed up my travel backpack in 40 minutes, then I ran to the airport. As soon as I arrived at the airport in the Southern island, my best friend called me. Later, I knew that my friends had secretly prepared a surprise farewell party for me. They had prepared food, were ready for a farewell party, and waited for me to finish the final test. But when they came to find me, I was gone. So in the end, they had the farewell party without me.

It is possible to praise without God's presence. But the praise without God's presence has no God, no power, and it does not lead us into God. We can make worship a party without God. Therefore, we should praise God in God's presence.

Secondly, Psalm 150 tells us how we should praise God. Psalm 150 continues by listing many instruments in verses 3-5. These verses 3-5 probably mean that we should use all the tools when we praise God, but those verses also have the meaning that we should praise God in every moment of our lives. Each of these instruments

in verses 3-5 represents a different part of life. The trumpet, or ram's horn, was used for national celebrations. The timbrel was played to celebrate joy, such as victory. The strings and pipes were played in general and common life. The other instruments mentioned in verses 3 to 5 also had their own times, places, and reasons for being played. Considering all of this together, we can understand that it means to praise God in every moment of life—in national festivals or events, when there are joyful things to share, and even in the small, ordinary moments. Psalm 150 tells us to praise God in all these situations.

Lastly, Psalm 150 tells us who should praise God. Verse 6 shows this very clearly: “Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.” Here, “everything that has breath” means that all of God's creatures who have breath should praise God. Among them, we who are made in the image of God and by the Spirit of God are the creatures who must praise God.

From this verse, which means that all creation praises God, we must think of one thing: it is those who have a good relationship with God who must praise God.

I praise my wife very much. I tell her she is beautiful, that the food she cooks is delicious, that when she completes a project, she did really well, and I praise her work and greatness every day. But sometimes when we argue, even if I praise her in the same way, my praise does not make her happy. Sometimes it even makes her feel worse.

Please imagine for a moment. If someone you really dislike comes to you every day, saying that you are great, that you are wonderful, and praising you all the time, would you feel happy? That's not praise—it's closer to stalking. In the same way, if we are to praise God, our relationship with God must fundamentally be good.

Among all creatures that have breath, only humans have the problem of sin.

We were originally created to praise God, but because of human sin and fall, our relationship with God was broken. The reason that humans, who are essentially in a broken relationship with God, can still praise God is because of Jesus Christ. Through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our sinful nature also died on the cross, and through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we were born again into new life. Jesus Christ Himself became the sacrifice and brought reconciliation between God and human beings, and our relationship with God has been fully restored. Therefore, we can praise God within this restored relationship with God.

Praising God leads us into the way of the blessed person, helps us to look toward God in every situation and moment of life, and always lets us know that God is with us. We should praise God within God's presence. We must praise God through everything we can, in every moment of life. And we must praise God as beings who have received new life through Jesus Christ, who have a right relationship with God. When we, by faith, participate in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we can truly praise God.

Today, Jesus has prepared the evidence that confirms we are beings who can praise God. Today's Holy Communion is God's holy invitation that allows us to participate in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we share the body and blood of Jesus today, I pray that the grace of God who has called us to praise will overflow among us. Through this Holy Communion today, I pray that true praise toward God will overflow within us. Amen.