



## ENCOUNTERING GOD THROUGH THE PSALMS

### STUDY 4: PSALM 150 – GOD IS WORTHY OF OUR PRAISE

Start the study by reading the psalm aloud and asking the group for their immediate response to the psalm. What caught their attention? What was their overall impression?

Psalms 145-149 are an example of a psalm of praise that is a public song in which God is praised for who He is and what He does. Psalms of praise tend to follow a very simple format starting with a call to worship, followed by reasons for praise and concluding with a repetition of the opening call to worship. **Psalm 150** follows a group of praise psalms (145-149) and forms the conclusion to the whole of the book of psalms. Notice that the final words of the songbook of the Temple are 'Praise the Lord' which implies that our praise goes on even after we leave the place of worship.

As we look at this psalm today we are reminded about the **where, why, how** and **who** of praise and how that relates to us and knowing God.

#### DISCUSS

*'Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. (Psalm 150:1 NIV)* The **'where'** of praise. Worship involves God's people gathering together.

Read 2 Chronicles 5:12-14. When everyone was worshipping at the dedication of the temple, God's glory filled it.

Share an occasion when you have experienced the presence of God when worshipping, especially in the context with others in your church family.

#### DIGGING DEEPER

*'This psalm is also significant in reminding us that praise is most natural in congregational settings. We can praise God alone, but we should join our voices with others in celebration of God. Such praise moves a person away from self-absorption, first by focusing on God and secondly by fellowship with other worshippers.'* (Tremper Longman III *Tyndale Psalms* p. 479)

Read Hebrews 10:24,25. Why is it so important to gather as the church to worship God?

#### DISCUSS

*'Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.'* (Psalm 150:2 NIV) This verse gives us the **'why'** of praise. God is praised for His deeds but also for His greatness i.e. what He is in Himself

Read Psalm 103:2-6. What are some of God's actions that cause us to praise Him?  
Read Psalm 103:8. What are some of God characteristics that cause us to praise Him?  
What else would you include of either what God has done or who He is in your praises?  
Perhaps list these to remind yourself.



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### DIGGING DEEPER

*'Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God. Worship is the time and place that we assign for deliberate attentiveness to God – not because he's confined to time and place but because our self-importance is so insidiously relentless that if we don't deliberately interrupt ourselves regularly, we have no chance of attending to him at all at other times and in other places.'* (Eugene Peterson 'Leap over a wall')

How can worship help us to become more attentive to God?

### DISCUSS

What do verses 3 to 5 communicate about **how** we should praise?

We praise with everything we have. Notice that every kind of instrument is called to help in praising God. How does the use of music contribute to our praises? What is the place of emotion in worship? What other means do you have that helps you praise?

### DISCUSS

*'Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.'* (Psalm 150:6). **Who** is called to praise?

Read Psalm 148:1-12. No one and nothing in creation is excluded from the call to praise. When have you recognized this in creation?

### DIGGING DEEPER

*'Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: 'To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!''* (Revelation 5:13 NIV)  
C.S. Lewis argued that all praise needs to be shared and that part of our enjoyment of something whether it be a sunset, a book or a person is incomplete until we express it to someone else. He concludes that heaven is the perfect state of sharing our praise of God.

*'...the worthier the object, the more intense this delight would be. If it were possible for a created soul fully...to appreciate, that is to love and delight in, the worthiest object of all, and simultaneously at every moment to give this delight perfect expression, then that soul would be in supreme beatitude.'* C.S. Lewis *Reflections on the Psalms* p.81)  
How does this passage enrich your idea of heaven? (e.g. everyone delighting in a different aspect of God; everyone in unity in their praise) What impact does that have in your life now and your praise?

### ACTIVITY

Write a psalm of praise together. Start and end with 'Praise the LORD' but then each person contributes a reason for praising God. Read it aloud with conviction to God who is worthy of all praise.

### PRAY