

“Worthy of Praise”
Psalm 146
(Preached at Trinity, January 5, 2014)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. We now come to the final section of the Psalter – **Psalms 146-150**. These psalms share a single theme—Praise! Each of these five psalms begin and end with praise—the Hebrew phrase hallelujah. Literally, “Praise Jehovah.”
Sadly this word has been cheapened today, even being used in common talk and pop music.
 2. This word is a high expression of praise - הלל
It literally means “to shine.” It points to the majesty and splendor of the glory of God. In praise we are magnifying the glory and splendor of God. It is declaring His infinite excellence. It is adoring Him with the fullness of our heart.
 3. Most Christians today believe that praise is something that is done with music. Many churches today have praise bands, praise teams, and praise leaders. Praise *can* accompany music as we will see in **Psalm 150**. Remember, the Psalms were meant to be sung. But music is not the essential element in praise. Adoring God in thanksgiving is the chief element. We must praise God in both word and song.
- I. The Psalmist begins by declaring the great priority of praise – **Verses 1-2**
- A. He opens with a plural imperative exhortation to praise and then immediately turns to personal praise - "Praise the LORD, O my soul."
 1. This expression, “O my soul” is used several times in the psalms
It is an expression of self-talk
Psalm 16:2 KJV - "O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord"
Psalm 42:5 KJV - "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."
 2. But the highest expression of self-talk is girding ourselves up to praise
Psalm 103:1 KJV - "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name."
Psalm 104:1 KJV - "Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty."
Verse 1 - "Praise the LORD, O my soul."
 - B. The psalmist declares praise as one of the great reasons for His being
Psalm 146:2 KJV - "While I live will I praise the LORD"
 1. He recognizes the finite nature of life and the brevity of it. He would not squander the time but spend it to the praise of God.
 2. This must be the priority of our life
Our chief end is to glorify God.

- II. God is worthy of praise because of the weakness of every earthly confidence – Vs. 3-4
- A. By princes we are to understand the great ones of the earth
1. The word literally means noble.
Perhaps it is the mighty or the influential or the wealthy
Where do we put our confidence?
 2. “Nor in the son of man” – this is simply referring to humanity. All of the sons of Adam are sinful. Our plans are filled with folly and vanity
- B. They are all but dust – dying while they live.
1. Their plans and schemes will die with them. Men live their lives and then perish, often with little evidence that they were even here.
James 4:14 KJV - "For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."
Ecclesiastes 1:2-4 KJV - "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity. ³ What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? ⁴ *One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever."
 2. Thomas Watson – “At death a man sees all those thoughts which were not spent upon God to be fruitless. All worldly, vain thoughts, in the day of death perish and come to nothing. Should not the consideration of this fix our minds upon the thoughts of God and glory? All other meditations are fruitless; like a piece of ground which hath much cost laid out upon it, but it yields no crop.”
 3. With all of their weakness and folly why would we put our trust in them? Most would answer, but I would not. I would never.
 - a. But what about our love for attention and recognition; our love for position; our love for the praise of man; our great interest in what others think of us demonstrates we put far more confidence in man than we are often willing to admit.
In these things we place higher value in man than in God.
 - b. It is easier to trust the doctor than trust God. It is easier to trust scientists, politicians. They are all fallible.
 - c. The greatest demonstration of our trust in man is our high view of ourselves. We tend to look to our own devices rather than to God.
 4. The implication is clearly we have but one source of trust—In God our Creator
Psalms 5:11 KJV - "let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee."
Psalms 20:7 KJV - "Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God."

III. God is worthy of praise because of the blessedness of trusting Him – Verse 5

A. There is great blessedness in trusting God. This is the last of the beatitudes in the Psalter.

1. The word for “happy” is אֲשֶׁר -
It is the last of the 25 times it is used in the Psalms.
It is the word often expressed as a beatitude translated “blessed”
Psalm 40:4 KJV - "Blessed *is* that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."
Psalm 144:15 NAS - "blessed are the people whose God is the LORD!"
2. Trusting in God is the greatest of blessings. The source of great happiness. The source of every blessing.
Psalm 34:8 KJV - "O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him."
3. Jeremiah spoke of this blessedness
Jeremiah 17:5-9 KJV - "Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. ⁶ For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land and not inhabited. ⁷ Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. ⁸ For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. ⁹ The heart is deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
We often quote of this last verse. Jeremiah indicates that our hearts quickly pursue other sources of hope and confidence instead of trusting the living God.
4. This is hard for us to believe. Lost humanity looks to everything but God as the source of happiness.

This present age swallows men up. It blinds us from the glory of God.

B. There is no greater happiness than resting in our Creator

Psalm 146:5-6 KJV - "Happy *is* *he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope *is* in the LORD his God: ⁶ Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is"

1. He makes all things—not only calling the light to shine forth but He creates the dreary days as well.
Isaiah 45:7 KJV - "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*."
a. The word for “evil” means “calamity”
b. Our greatest adversity is from the hand of God. Who will we trust in such occasions.
2. Fear is a terrible foe that clouds our judgment and destroys our confidence
Discontent gnaws at our bones, robs us of our joy, and strips away the praise of God.
3. The Christian has found the great source of contentment and confidence.
1 Timothy 6:6 KJV - "godliness with contentment is great gain."

IV. God is worthy of praise because of His eternal faithfulness – **Verses 6-9**

- A. The psalmist then describes God’s great faithfulness
1. **Verse 6** – He speaks of God as Creator and then affirms that His faithfulness is everlasting.
KJV – “truth” - אֱמֻנָה - “firmness, faithfulness”
 2. In the three **Verses 7-9** the name Jehovah is used five times. Our great Creator, Jehovah God reigns in absolute truth and surety
 3. God’s truth abides forever. His promises will never fail.
Jesus is the Truth incarnate – the Way, the Truth, and the Life
- B. The greatest demonstration of God’s truth and faithfulness is in sending Christ
1. Notice the words of **Verses 7-8** echo the Messianic tones of Isa. 61
Isaiah 61:1-2 KJV - "The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn"
 2. These are the works of the Messiah
Matthew 11:4-6 KJV - "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: ⁵
The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. ⁶ And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me."
 3. He brings justice for the oppressed, food for the hungry. He brings deliverance as our great Redeemer.
 4. He opens the eyes of the blind. We must always be careful of missing the literal while looking at the spiritual or missing the spiritual while focusing on the literal.
 - a. Blindness was extremely common in the ancient Far East. Spurgeon records:
“The large number of blind persons to be seen feeling their way along the streets in Cairo and Alexandria has been noticed by Volney. "Walking in the streets of Cairo", he says, "out of a hundred persons whom I met, there were often twenty blind, eighteen one eyed, and twenty others with eyes red, purulent, or spotted. Almost every one wears bandages, indicating that they either have or are recovering from ophthalmia." Ophthalmia is, in fact, one of the scourges of Egypt, as all physicians know. It is not therefore surprising to any one who knows the East to find the blind so often mentioned in the gospel history, and to meet in Scripture with so many allusions to this infirmity.”

- b. While physical blindness was common, spiritual blindness was and is universal.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 KJV - "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

God opens the eyes of those blinded by the ravages of sin.

- 4. **Verses 8-9** - God loves His righteous elect people – those has chosen unto holiness. He takes the aliens and strangers and outcasts and adopts them as His own dear children.
- 5. Praise to the Lord our great Redeemer, our King and blessed Savior.

V. God is worthy of praise because of His eternal reign – **Verse 10**

- A. Zion's King is the King of kings
 - 1. Jesus Christ is this King
 - 2. His Kingdom is forever. His reign is forever.
Every earthly kingdom will come to an end. Every earthly throne will come to an end. But the reign of Christ knows no end.
 - 3. He will reign from generation to generation. And generation upon generation shall praise Him
- B. To Him we owe every hallelujah – Praise Jehovah
 - 1. We owe Him absolute trust
 - 2. We owe Him all allegiance. We owe Him all love.
We owe Him all worship and praise.
Hallelujah