

October 9, 2018

The Perspective of Praise:

Praise is the result of proper perspective.

A recap and foreword concerning worship

The human soul is the combination of our mind, will and emotions. Our soul is made of events and how we responded to those events. Who we are today is the sum of what we have encountered in life and our subsequent reactions. Abuses and afflictions hammer us one way, encouragement and praise inflate us another. Our reaction to each event, whether that event was positive or negative, is poured into the creative area of our personality, where it is blended into the nature of our character.

Our soul, its strengths and weaknesses, has been shaped by how well or poorly we handled our past experiences. When Scripture commands us to not look back and to “forget . . . what lies behind” (Philippians 3:13; see Luke 9:62), it is saying we must undo the consequences that have come from our unchristlike reactions. With God, this is not impossible, *for although the events of our lives are irreversible, our reactions to those events can still be changed*. As our wrong reactions to the past change, we change. In other words, although we cannot alter the past, we can put our past upon the “altar” as an act of worship. A worshiping heart truly allows God to restore the soul.

All of us receive a portion of both good and evil in this world. But for life to be good, God, who is the essence of life, must reach into our experiences and redeem us from our negative reactions. The channel, through which the Lord extends Himself, even into our past, is our love and worship of Him.

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God” (Romans 8:28). The key for the fulfillment of this verse is that we become lovers of God in our spirits. Bad things become good for “those who love God.” When we are given to loving Him, all that we have passed through in life is washed and redeemed in that love. Bad becomes good by the power of God.

Therefore, it is essential to both the salvation of our souls and protection of our hearts (desire toward God) that we be worshipers. The ship which safely carries us through the storms of adversity is worship.

Psalms 84 expresses in praise to God the wonderful effect worship has upon the soul. “How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, in whose heart are the highways to Zion! Passing through the valley of Baca [weeping] they make it a spring; the early rain also covers it with blessings” (v. 5–6).

October 9, 2018

If you are “ever praising” God (Psalm 84:4), your worship of God will transform the negative assault of the enemy into “a spring” of sweet refreshing waters. No matter what befalls a worshiper, their “valley of weeping” always becomes a spring covered “with blessings.” You cannot successfully pass safely through the wilderness of this life, without first becoming a worshiper of God.

1. Psalm 29:1-2 - Worship means to: esteem with worth. To honor. To place the highest value on. To bow down. To throw kisses. To acknowledge in all things. Perpetual gratitude. Praise describes God. Worship surrenders to God.

2. An earthly perspective...of John’s experience on Patmos. He had been exiled there for his faith in Jesus. His life was winding down and he was alone. He seemingly was not making a difference for the Kingdom of God. He was stuck on a prison island. His friends were either dead or far away. Christians were being persecuted and it looked like it might meet a fatal end. John had every reason to be depressed, but Jesus shows up and surprises John.

3. Rev.1:10-17. This was not the Jesus he knew. He knew a Teacher and Miracle Worker and the Resurrected One. He did not know Jesus the Glorified One; reigning King-Priest of the Universe. It was a shocking revelation. He was broken by it – Rev 1:17.

Rev. 1:10- Apostles and the prophets of old were transported into another dimension. Out of the time/space world as we know it, out of the three dimensional world to see things in God's World. John was given such a vision. It is not a dream. It is not an imaginary experience. It is the reality of another dimension. It isn't physical, three-dimensional reality as we know it, but it is reality in the spiritual world.

Rev. 1:13 - The Son of Man, a gospel name for Jesus Christ. He sees Christ in the middle of the lampstands. The vision is a depiction of Christ in His church. This is a vision of the present ministry of Christ in His church.

The high priest here described as having a robe to his feet and a golden sash across his chest (Exodus 28; 38; 39). This is the apparel of the high priest, whose responsibility it was to intercede for the people, to go before God on their behalf. A priest under the old covenant terms was an intermediary. A priest lifted up the prayers of the people, brought the sins of the people before God that they might be forgiven. He had the responsibility to gather up the people and bring them before the Lord. He alone could go into God's presence on behalf of the people, he had special access, into the Holy of Holies into the very presence of God.

October 9, 2018

Rev. 1:14 - "His head and His hair were white, like white wool, like snow." That's the symbol not only of age and, therefore, wisdom, but primarily in the Bible a symbol of purity. Isaiah 1:18 says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow." White snow and wool was the symbol of purity, the symbol of holiness. As Christ moves in His church, John sees one who is pure, one who is absolutely holy, without spot, with blemish. "And His eyes," he says, "Were like a flame of fire." His omniscience penetrates into every single life. He knows. He sees every inequity.

Rev. 1:15 - His voice indicates to us that the Lord is not only interceding in His church, He's not only purifying His church, but He's commanding His church. He moves in His church with authority and He brings to bear commands in His church. He's not making quiet suggestions. He's not any longer speaking in a still, small voice.

Rev. 1:16 - The blazing glory of Christ's face permeating the whole environment where the church, as the seven lampstands were, indicates that Christ reflects His glory through His church.

4. John is given a mission to record the vision and send it out. Paul wrote down inspired instruction for the churches; the gospel writers recorded the words and actions of the historical Jesus; John has a vision of what is happening currently in the invisible Kingdom. *The invisible is the real.* The other writers are rooted in history, but John's experience is rooted in eternity. The Heavenly Sanctuary is the current reality that has no end (Hebrews 8:1-5; 9:1-15; Rev. 11:19; 15:5-8).

5. Rev 4:1-2: He sees a throne (Psalm 11:4; 103:19; Isaiah 66:1) and someone sitting on it (1 Kings 22:19; Psalm 47:8). What does a "throne" convey? Authority, power and control. It is the God of the universe who reigns over all. The throne is not located in a palace. Some may assume because it is a royal throne, a regal throne, a sovereign throne, a majestic throne. Throughout the book of Revelation we learn that the throne is in a temple (Rev. 7:15; 11:19). It is associated, therefore, with worship, not just with kingly sovereignty but with godly holiness. It is the dwelling place of holy God who is not only to be obeyed, who is not also only sovereign but is to be worshiped and adored (Dan 7:13).

God reigns...today...for all eternity. This is the foundation of praise. Praise is acknowledging with all creation both seen and unseen is that our God reigns over everything and everyone. When we see God as he is, we will praise God as we ought! The absence of praise simply means that someone has an inadequate view of God.