

The Psalm of Psalms [Psalm 150]
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INTRODUCTION

Francis Schaeffer said, "if Christianity is really true, then it involves the whole man, including his intellect and creativeness. Christianity is not just 'dogmatically' true or 'doctrinally' true. Rather, it is true to what is there, true in the whole area of the whole man in all of his life."

1. The point behind this statement is that our faith is more than just right facts.
 - a. For too long Christians have made this the "in/out" proposition of belief.
 - b. It's imperative that we give of our all to God.
 - c. That's been the point of this study of the book of Psalms, emphasizing creativity.
 - 1) We took a church core value and immersed ourselves in it.
 - 2) We took surveys and there was a great mix of both affirmation and constructive criticism on what we could have done better.
 - 3) In the end, I hope we drove this into your minds: you need to create
 - d. **Fyodor Dostoyevsky** wrote that "beauty will save the world."
2. So today, we end this focus and our study of the Psalms.
 - a. I don't know of any church that spent a year in the Psalms
 - b. I don't know about you, but the words ministered to me
 - c. We end this year on the last words of the Psalms, in Psalm 150.
 - 1) How do you end such a voluminous book?

VERSES 1,2

¹ Praise the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

² Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

1. The Westminster Catechism, a 17th century document of the Church of England summarizes our lives in the following:

"Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

 - a. Thirteen times in this psalm we're told to "praise God"
 - b. This psalm packs the most possible praise into it of any psalm.
 - 1) In wrapping up this poetic book of praise the message is clear.
 - 2) The purpose of humanity is to give praise to God.
2. V1, Sanctuary is the place of worship on earth where God's people gathered.
 - a. In the psalmist's day, this was the temple; in ours, it is the church.
 - b. Our praise isn't solitary, it's corporate as well. Make it a priority.
3. The first praise is directed to the heavens themselves.
 - a. The praise of the heavens is the celestial bodies.
 - b. This is immediately followed by the "acts of power" and you can't separate
 - 1) These images of nightly beauty that light up our sky are massive items
 - 2) They were created by God to give us a glimpse of his glory

VERSES 3-5

³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre,

⁴ praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe,

⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.

1. The psalms end with an orchestral arrangement

- a. Interestingly, these instruments were not traditionally used in sacred worship.
- b. What's described here is a hootenanny. A huge, beat-thumpin' party.
 - 1) When a movie is trying to cement the closeness of a community, they always show a scene of people singing/dancing together.
 - 2) It's a reflection of who we are collectively (in Cincy, chicken dance)
- 2. I always wonder why music? It makes the message memorable.
 - a. You can memorize music lyrics much easier than the Bible.
 - b. This kind of praise reveals our passion and fervency
 - c. Do you sing/dance with all that's in you?
- 3. Also, instruments were created to make music
 - a. Similarly, you were made to create

VERSES 6

⁶Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.

- 1. The goal of all creation is to praise.
 - a. Even those of us who do not praise are called to give praise to God.
 - b. It's critical then, that we who do know Him give him ceaseless praise.
 - 1) That's our role in this world, in this city: TO PRAISE
 - 2) And maybe they will hear it through our handiwork.

CONCLUSION

- 1. The end of the Psalm is only the beginning of praise.
- 2. The end of the year should only be a beginning for you: keep making stuff.
- 3. Makoto Fujimura, an NYC-based artist who is a Christian, had a studio near Ground Zero of September 11, 2001. He talks of the importance of art and creation in the city.

"We need the creative, the faithful, who would together incarnate their creative gifts in the hearts of urban reality, in today's ground zeroes . . . We need more creative visionaries who would dare even to plant seedlings in stone that will mature into trees whose roots will crack open the rock, as if it were a mere egg, spilling its shalom dirt into the heart of the city."