



December 4, 2005

Praising God

We talk about praising God, and sometimes hear others who are religious speaking of this, but what is meant when we say that we are praising God? In general we understand that to praise someone, we are commending them highly. This denotes approval and acceptance for accomplishments or contributions that have great merit. It is a form of recognition and acknowledgment of the integrity and quality of another. When we speak of praising God all of these things apply, but there is the added dimension of worship, or reverence. In other words we offer to God the highest form of respect for all that He has done. Are we truly praising God as he would have us do so? There are many ways in which God can be praised in truth.

The first, and most obvious, is through adherence to a pattern of worship toward the Lord. Christ stated that those who truly worship the Lord must do so in spirit and in truth (**John 4.23**). In doing this we acknowledge God by doing things in the way that he has instructed us. Paul instructed Timothy, “***Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.***” (**2 Tim 1.13**). An act of praise toward God then is to adhere to what we find in the scriptures without deviating from them. Many believe that they are praising God in their worship but close comparison with the scriptures reveals many alterations which have their origin in the thinking of mankind. Christ refuted this when he told the scribes and Pharisees, “***Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.***” (**Matt 15.7-9**).

Another way that we praise God is through prayer. Praying to God is an affirmation that He is Lord, that He loves us, and that we have a relationship such that we may approach Him. This privilege should not be abused and the proper attitude should be demonstrated whenever we speak to the Lord. Solomon stated, “***Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.***” (**Eccl 5.2**). An attitude of respect and thankfulness is an aspect of praising God for all that He has done for us. Paul states, “***Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.***” (**Phil 4.6**). In our prayers we remind ourselves of those things, seen and unseen, that we have been blessed with, the greatest of which is salvation through Christ Jesus. It is an acknowledgment that we are blessed and that God is with us as we remain faithful to Him. Peter reminds us of this when he states, “***Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.***” (**1 Pet 5.6-7**).

In these things we maintain within our minds the knowledge of our dependence on God. When we do this daily we remind ourselves of the great and precious gifts that we have been given. This helps to put life in perspective as we think on those things that the scriptures reveal. Peter states, “***Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.***” (**2 Pet 1.4**).

Keeping these things foremost in our minds we find that the cares of life can be faced with contentment, knowing that we have a better home prepared for those who will seek God and praise him through the way that we live. “***...for the Father seeketh such to worship him.***” (**Matt 15.23**). There is joy, peace and comfort in this when we truly praise God in faithfulness to Him and adherence to what He has told us. TLC