

## PRIZING GOD

"In his pride the wicked does not seek him ; in all his thoughts there is no room for God." - Psalm 10:4

"The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become and that every inclination of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain." - Genesis 6: 5-6

The kingdom of self predominates. Ephesians 2:1-3 describes the situation. Sin is from the evil supernatural above us (satan in 2nd heaven). Sin is personal inside us (also Gal. 5:16-21). Sin is from outside us in the world (1 John 2:15-17). The world, the flesh and the devil are intertwined.

God sees all of this and yet has reason for hope. He sees you! You know that God is the only answer for this sin sick world and for yourself. You are humbling yourself in God's presence. You are praying. God takes notice. Prayer touches the heart of God who will change the world directly and also through you.

Dick Eastman is a world-changer. He wrote the helpful book re: devotional praying called: The Hour That Changes the World. I was so impressed with it that when I went to Kenya on a mission I took a whole suitcase full of that book to give to the pastors. In the book Dick lays out 12 different aspects of prayer. He begins with PRAISE..... the act of divine adoration. He closes his prayer time with PRAISE .....the act of divine magnification.

Several years ago I was asked by a London Bible School to write some correspondence courses. One was on Praise and Worship. I gathered information from the Bible and also 3 other books: The Church on the Way by Jack Hayford, The Power of Praise and Worship by Terry Law, and The Hallelujah Factor by Jack Taylor. God had already turned me into a praiser but that only increased my desire to do more.

Jesus taught us how to pray. It begins with praise and worship. "Our Father, who is in heaven, holy be your name." We do not begin with confession. God does not want us to focus on self as we begin to pray. Self is our problem! God wants us to get preoccupied with Him! In upcoming messages we will look at the names of God. "Those who know your name will trust in you." - Psalm 9:10

In his book, Jack Taylor tells of the transformation of his church when he taught on Praise and Worship for four straight months:

"No exercise will result in more healing physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually than that of studying and practicing praise. In our laboratory of praise within the local church we discovered that long-standing hangups disappeared as folks began to praise the Lord on a continuing basis."

Paul Billheimer lost his voice for several years. God then spoke through his writing of the classic book: Destined For the Throne. In it he says:

"Here is one of the greatest values of praise: it decentralizes self. The worship and praise of God demands a shift of center from self to God. One cannot praise God without relinquishing occupation with self. Praise produces forgetfulness of self - and forgetfulness of self is health."

Psalm 67 was dear to my heart when I began serving the Lord. Two of the seven verses say:  
**"May the people's praise you, O God, may all the people's praise you."**  
God honors that.....**"Then the land will yield its harvest....."**  
God will bless the physical crops but I believe this also applies to a spiritual harvest.

**PRAISE** comes from the French word preiser, which means **to prize**. To prize means to value, esteem and cherish something. **Man centered sermons and worship must stop.** God has to be magnified above all else. When we pray: Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven - that must include how we worship.

**Heaven's worship** is best seen in its purest form and focus in the book of Revelation.

***You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being. - Revelation 4:11 NIV***

God is honored as creator and sustainer of all things. He is worthy and deserving of worship and praise.

chapter 4, chapter 5, chap.15:3,4 chap. 19. The focus in Heaven is on God and the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ!

One church had planned a special closing benediction to be sung instead of read. The song to be sung was: Our God Reigns. Unfortunately, the bulletin said: Our God Resigns.

There are no mistakes in God's Word! Our God reigns! Let us Praise Him! Let us Prize Him!

**"Almighty God, loving Father, we prize you, we cherish you, we esteem you above all others! Amen.**

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