

Foundations – Praise & Worship

Identity - "I am a child of God. I am God's treasured possession. I am loved by the Father."

I. Beginning the Study

- Isaiah 43:21 – “The people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my _____.” (ESV)
- Psalm 146:1-2, Psalm 150:6
- What is worship? Romans 12:1
- What or who do we need to worship? John 4:24
- What is the difference between praise and worship?
- Praise Positions (Reference: Chris Tomlin, *The Way I Was Made*):
 - a. Psalm 134:2 — _____ your _____.
 - 1. Symbolism -
 - i.
 - ii.
 - iii.
 - b. Psalm 95:6 – _____ down.
 - c. Ecclesiastes 5:2, Psalm 46:10 – Be _____ before Him.
 - d. Psalm 95:1, Psalm 100:1 – Make a _____ (_____) noise.
 - e. Ecclesiastes 3:4, 2 Samuel 6:14-15 – Even _____.
- Power of Praise – Acts 16:19-26 – Praise breaks _____ and shakes _____.
- Power of Thanks – Luke 9:16 – Thanks ushers in the _____.
- Power of Thanks – Philippians 4:6-7 – Thanks brings in the _____ of God.

- Brother Dan from the Philippines:
 - a. Demon cast out by _____. –
 - b. Demon cast out by _____. –
- Hebrews 5:7 – Why was Jesus heard?

II. New Identities!

- I am a *child of God*. (John 1:12):
- I am *God's treasured possession*. (Deuteronomy 14:2):
- I am *loved by the Father*. (1John 3:1a):

III. Small Group Questions

- 1) Read Amos 5:21-24. What makes our praise acceptable before God?
- 2) What is one of your favorite praise songs? Why are you blessed by it?
- 3) 1 John 4:19 says, "*We love because He first loved us.*" As you grow in understanding that you are a child of God, that you are His treasured possession, and that He loves you, how do you feel your praise and worship will develop?
- 4) List five attributes of God that you are thankful for. If you can, for each attribute try and think of a memory in your life when that attribute of God was revealed clearly to you.
- 5) What are the 10 identities we have covered so far? What does each mean for us?

Memory Verse of the Week –

Foundations – Praise & Worship (Master)

Identity – “I am a child of God. I am God’s treasured possession. I am loved by the Father.”

I. Beginning the Study

- **Isaiah 43:21** – “The people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praises.” (ESV)
- **Psalm 146:1-2** – We are called to praise God as long as we live.
- **Psalm 150:6** – Not only are we called to praise Him, but we are to lead the rest of creation in praising God as well
- **What is worship? Romans 12:1**

Worship is not only singing songs; worship is a lifestyle. It is offering your body as a living sacrifice, being set apart and obedient to God. This is what God considers worship.

- **What do we need to worship? John 4:24**

Worship must be done in Spirit and in Truth. In order to worship we must live our lives according to the Truth of God. A life lived outside of God’s Word offers no acceptable worship to God. Worship must also be done through the Spirit. We might live a life in nearly perfect obedience to the written law of God, but if we ignore the leading of the Holy Spirit and attempt to please God by our flesh, then we are no better than the Pharisees of Jesus’ time.

- **What is the difference between praise and worship?**

Praise is offering thanks or joy to God or proclaiming the goodness of God. Praise is an act of worship, just as reading God’s Word and praying are acts of worship. Worship is a lifestyle.

- **Praise positions (Reference: Chris Tomlin – The Way I Was Made):**

- a. Psalm 134:2 — Lift your hands.

Symbolism -

- i. Joy and exaltation.

When you watch a sport’s event and the home team scores a goal or does something great, how do the fans respond? They lift up their hands in joy! As we grow in our relationship with God, joy should start flowing naturally. Soon you will feel the urge to lift your hands in praise.

- ii. Surrender.

How does a person demonstrate that he is surrendering? He lifts up his hands. There will be times during praise when the Spirit of God stirs and we cannot help but surrender to Him and to His majesty. Raising your hands in surrender can be a way of showing that you give up your life to God and choose to submit to Him. He is worthy!

iii. Desiring His touch.

When a young child happily greets his father who has returned from work, what is the usual position of the child? Usually it's open arms raised up to the father, desiring to be lifted up and hugged. There are times during praise when the Spirit will stir in you and you will want more. By lifting up your hands you can be demonstrating your desire for more from God.

For some people from a conservative background, their church members may have never raised their hands during praise. Despite this, raising your hands is Biblical. Everyone should be encouraged to be active in praise.

b. Psalm 95:6 — Bow down.

This symbolism should be easy, particularly for those brought up in Asian culture. How do you show respect to someone, particularly a king or an elder? You bow down to them. If we are expected to show respect to earthly kings, so much more should we be expected to show respect to the King of kings, God Almighty. While God is a gentle shepherd and a loving father, He still expects reverence from His people.

c. Ecclesiastes 5:2, Psalm 46:10 – Be still before Him.

This is another way to show reverence before God. We must remember that praise is an act of worship. God does not just want praise songs and singing; He wants our lives. When we are still before Him and listen for Him or simply enjoy His presence, the Lord is pleased. We are showing our contentment is fully in Him. Sometimes amidst our busyness to please God, we can miss out on special moments when the Lord wants to speak to us or touch us. Taking time each day to simply listen and be still can help bring you to another level in your relationship with God.

d. Psalm 95:1, Psalm 100:1 – Make a joyful (LOUD) noise.

In the King James Version both of these verses say “LOUD” instead of joyful. Obviously the loud noise is meant to be done in joy. Making a loud noise can involve shouting to God, clapping your hands, or stomping your feet. If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands! At parades and joyous occasions people are not silent or subdued; they are loud and joyful! When we are joyful before the Lord or want to express praise, we should never feel we have to hold back. Be encouraged to sing loud! Express your joy in the Lord!

e. Ecclesiastes 3:4, 2 Samuel 6:14-15 – Even dance.

King David was so happy that he could not help but dance before the Lord, despite the whole nation watching him. He was, “undignified.” As you grow in the Lord, you will feel desires to move a little as you praise God. Don't hold back! Even if you lack rhythm, the Lord still receives your praise. He delights in seeing His children expressing their joy.

i. Power of Praise – Acts 16:19-26 – Praise breaks chains and shakes strongholds.

Despite having been beaten and whipped severely and then thrown into the deepest part of a foul prison, Paul and Silas would not let earthly circumstances steal their joy. They praised God.

It is in our toughest times that our praise becomes extremely powerful worship to God. As Paul and Silas praised God the earthly chains were shattered. Spiritual chains were probably shattered as well. The enemy could not keep his hold on Paul or Silas.

ii. Power of Thanks – Luke 9:16 – Thanks ushers in the miraculous.

When we offer thanks to God we are giving Him glory and pointing others to Him as well. As with nearly any father, our Father in heaven is pleased when we show our gratefulness to Him and He will desire to give us more. While praying for someone, an easy way to allow God's compassion to grow in you is by offering thanks to God for the person and for the work God has already done in the person. You will begin seeing the person from God's spiritual view rather than the physical view.

iii. Power of Thanks – Philippians 4:6-7 – Thanks brings in the peace of God.

Giving thanks to God for what He has done will also help us reflect on His faithfulness and His provision. When we remember what He has done and how He is always present in our lives, we will feel His peace increase in our lives.

▪ Brother Dan from the Philippines:

a. Demon cast out by praise. –

Brother Dan is a humble man of God who is from outside Manila, Philippines. Idol worship and the occult are rampant in the country, so there are many oppressed by demons. One night a friend brought someone to his house for him to pray for. Dan was alone with the person in his study room. As he began to pray for the person, the person suddenly became rigid with eyes glazed over. The room began to shake and books began to fall off the bookshelf. Dan was surprised and shaken and went outside the room to pray. God spoke to Dan to go back into the room and sing praise songs over the person. Dan obeyed the voice of the Lord, returned to the room, and sang soft praise songs over the person. This was similar to how David played his harp for the demon-oppressed King Saul. As Dan sang over the person, the demons left quietly and God's peace filled the room. The person was freed.

b. Demon cast out by obedience. –

Shortly after that experience, another person was brought to him for prayer. Once again, while together in his study, a powerful demon manifested. The room began to shake. Dan acted in wisdom, for he did not just pull out his guitar and begin singing like last time; instead, he again went outside the room and sought the Lord in prayer. This time the Lord told Dan to walk around the house seven times and pray, much like the Israelites and the walls of Jericho. Dan obeyed and walked around the house seven times while praying. When he re-entered his study, he found the person smiling and in peace. While the enemy can not stand praise, he has no chance against people who live in obedience to God.

▪ Hebrews 5:7 – Why was Jesus heard?

Jesus was heard because of His obedience and because of His worship to His Father. We can shout, cry, and do all sorts of things to try and get God's attention, but what will truly please Him is a life lived in reverent obedience for Him.

II. New Identities!

- I am a *child of God*. (John 1:12):

Child of God. Son of God. Daughter of God. Claim whichever applies to you. So now we not only belong to God, we are His family. We have greater value to Him than anything else He created.

- I am *God's treasured possession*. (Deuteronomy 14:2):

I think all of us understand what it is to be a son or a daughter, but not all of us have been told our true value from our parents. God clears that up right here. He calls us His treasured possession. In Zechariah 2 we are called the apple of God's eye. The apple of the eye is the most precious and guarded area.

- I am *loved by the Father*. (1John 3:1a):

It was God's delight to adopt us into His family. He chose us because He loves us. It was because God so loved us that He sent His son to redeem us. There is a special security in knowing that we are beloved children of God. No matter what storms may come to us in this world, we take solace in knowing that we are loved and treasured by our Father. God is good! Please repeat after me, "I am a child of God. I am God's treasured possession. I am loved by the Father!" Amen!

III. Small Group Questions

- 1) Read Amos 5:21-24. What makes our praise acceptable before God? (*a life of obedience to Him... living out justice and righteousness... not just going through the motions*)
- 2) What is one of your favorite praise songs? Why are you blessed by it?
- 3) 1 John 4:19 says, "*We love because He first loved us.*" As you grow in understanding that you are a child of God, that you are His treasured possession, and that He loves you, how do you feel your praise and worship will develop?
- 4) List five attributes of God that you are thankful for. If you can, for each attribute try and think of a memory in your life when that attribute of God was revealed clearly to you. (*some attributes: faithful, strong, just, righteous, compassionate, loving, Father, friend, shepherd, healer, teacher, warrior, Savior, king, creator, Immanuel (God with us), provider, counselor, helper, comforter, guide, consuming fire, living water, bread of life, sovereign, etc.*)
- 5) What are the 10 identities we have covered so far? What does each mean for us?

Memory Verse of the Week – 1John 4:19

Bibliography

Tomlin, Chris. The Way I Was Made. Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 2005.