

Psalm 150 - A Psalm of Praise

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[0 : 0 0] Well, thank you all for joining us, that little family moment here. So yeah, so we're actually finishing up a series we've been going through. If you're new to One Harbor, I know a bunch of you are. Typically what we do is go through books of the Bible.

Sometimes every now and again we'll go through like a topical series or something. But we've been going through a series in the book of Psalms. And if you want to play catch up on that, you can watch all the videos, listen to all of it online or on the app.

But we are wrapping it up today. Now the goal for the book of Psalms, the series, was kind of multifaceted. We wanted to help you learn how to feel more deeply.

We live in a world where we don't like to feel things. So we numb ourselves with busyness like crazy. We're super distracted. Some of you guys are having withdrawals because your phone is not like in front of you right now.

That sort of addiction to staying busy, to staying distracted, is our way of avoiding our feelings a lot of times. It's our way of avoiding kind of a way to say that's going below the line and actually engaging our heart and engaging our soul.

[0 : 5 9] And so we try very hard to stay busy and distracted. Sometimes we use substances like alcohol or drug addiction to do that. Sometimes we use other things. We buy things or we use pleasure or whatever.

We're always trying to numb our feelings. And so the Psalms, the series, is there to help us engage our feelings, to feel more deeply. And the second goal was to not just feel deeply but to pray more honestly.

Because for some reason, especially us church folk, we're terrible at bringing the real us to the real God. We are so good at putting on a facade that we do it naturally when we come into a room like this.

In fact, if you ask someone how they're doing, I bet you like \$1,000. They said, I'm fine. I'm good. Statistically, it's impossible that we're all fine and good. But we say we're fine and good when we come into rooms like this because we fall into this sort of like church folk habit of pretending that everything's good and everything's fine.

And then we carry that into our relationship with the Lord. We go to him and we act like everything's fine, everything's good. And so the Psalms, again, it helps us feel more deeply, but then hopefully pray more honestly.

[2 : 0 7] We've seen, I mean, the psalmist has held nothing back. One of the Psalms, he was praying that God would go and dig up his, this guy, his enemies, dig up his parents and kill them all over again.

I mean, that's some hectic feelings, right? So he's feeling deeply, concerning, like needs therapy, but he's feeling deeply. He's praying more honestly. And then the third goal of the series was that we learn how to lead our feelings.

And so there's a value right now in our cultural moment just to be authentic and be yourself. But not all that stuff is good. And so it's like, it's one thing to feel deeply and to acknowledge our feelings.

But man, we actually have to lead them. My friend Alan Frau says that feelings are a wonderful friend, but a horrible master. And I can tell you, I'm 40. Look over my shoulder.

A lot of my regret in life is I let feelings lead me instead of me lead them. And so the Psalms help us with these three things. Help us feel deeply. Help us pray honestly and help us lead our feelings.

[3 : 12] Help us actually, like we're in control of them. And so we've done all kinds of things like feelings of thanksgiving or sadness or anger or shame, like personal shame.

All that stuff we've talked about in more. And I really hope that this series has helped you for those of you who've been with us. And if you want to go catch up, you can, like I said. So we're wrapping up this week with Psalm 150.

It's six little short verses. And sometimes when we hear that, we sort of check out thinking, oh, it can't be that good. No, it's really that good. So let's dive in. Verse one. Praise the Lord.

Praise God in his sanctuary. Praise him in his mighty heavens. Praise him for his mighty deeds. Praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with trumpet sound. Praise him with lute and harp.

Praise him with tambourine and dance. Praise him with strings and pipe. Praise him with sounding cymbals. Praise him with loud clashing cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Okay.

[4 : 07] You don't have to be a theologian to take a stab at what this one's about. It's about this word praise. And we'll get there in just a second. The psalmist has walked through the full range of human emotions from being in the valley of the shadow of death to being on mountains to begging for your, you know, your enemy's children to starve to death to wrestling with personal deep shame.

All these things. And this is how he closes up the Psalter, the Psalms. He says 13 times he says the word praise in six verses. We've kind of used this analogy with this series.

The Psalms is kind of like a Spotify playlist. It's what the people of God sung. These were their songs. And this is how he closes it out with this really comprehensive view of the word praise.

Now, we're not going to be able to fully impact everything, but we're going to see a lot here, like what it is and how do we do it and why do we do it and when do we do it and all that stuff. So with that, let's dive into this first little phrase, praise the Lord.

It's not a suggestion. Praising God is actually a command. That's the first thing we see. What is it? It's a command. It's an order. Praise the Lord. It's not up for debate. He doesn't say praise him if you feel like it, take a vote on it.

[5 : 22] He just says praise the Lord. Now, the word praise means to brag or to boast. And so that might help you a little bit. It's not just about singing songs. This is a command to brag on God, to boast on God, right?

Bragging and boasting is something that we do all the time as human beings. We brag about ourselves. We brag about our successes. We brag about our kids. We brag about our job.

We brag about our favorite sport team. We brag about products that we like. We're all the time bragging and boasting about things that we believe in. And Christians, we see in the scripture, are commanded to boast in the Lord.

Here's a great verse, Jeremiah 9, verse 23. It says, So he says, look, if you're wise, don't boast in that.

If you're strong, don't boast in that. If you're rich, don't boast in that. That's a lot of what gets boasted in, right? That's what we do. If you add beauty to it, that's pretty much everything, right? We boast about our wisdom, our wealth, our strength, and our beauty.

[6 : 38] God says, if you really want to boast, why don't you boast that you know me? That you know who I am and you understand me. I was telling, we were in California a couple weeks back.

It's where my wife's family's from. We were visiting them. And we rode past a restaurant where I had one time seen Dennis Rodman, the basketball player. I'd seen him in this restaurant. And I was like feeling pretty proud.

And I was like, I told my kids, hey, I saw Dennis Rodman in that restaurant. They don't even know who Dennis Rodman is. But like, I told him. I was like, you know, yeah. And so Jed, our oldest son, he said, oh, so you know Dennis Rodman?

I was like, I wouldn't say I know him. But like, you know, he probably remembers me, you know. Like, he's like, so you guys like talked and stuff? I was like, no, no. He's like, did y'all take a picture together?

I was like, no. He's like, so you just saw him? I was like, yeah. And you could see it. He didn't say it, but you could see it in his like 10-year-old mind. It was like, good story, Dad. Yeah, that's great.

[7 : 36] That's great. Yeah. Tell that one again, you know. We love to name drop, you know. And God's saying, hey, you want to brag about something? Why don't you name drop this?

But he's not saying you saw me at a restaurant. He said, why don't you tell people you know and understand me who I am? I am the God who practices steadfast love and justice and righteousness in the earth.

You want to brag about something? Brag about that, right? And so God tells us to do this. And we see that actually it's helpful when we do it because when we brag about that, it actually puts everything else in perspective.

It puts our wisdom. It puts our strength. It puts our wealth. It puts our beauty into perspective. Because, guys, no matter which one of those things you would say, oh, yeah, that's the thing I'm kind of proud of in my life.

If there is one of those or whatever else it would be, those things are shaky places to boast because they're really fragile. Right? Here's the thing about wisdom. There's always someone smarter than you.

[8 : 33] And if you live long enough, your mind will get old and you won't be as smart as you once were. What about strength? There's always someone stronger than you. And if you live long enough, your body will start to break down.

Wealth. There's always someone more wealthy than you. And, man, in a moment, you can lose it all. Beauty is the same way. These are not eternal things. Therefore, they're shaky places to put our ultimate boast because they're easy things to lose.

But his glory is eternal. Nothing's ever going to change who he is. And so when we boast in him, when we brag on him, it puts everything else in our life in perspective. That way, when your wealth takes a wobble or your beauty or your strength or your wisdom, you're not totally shaken because actually your ultimate brag, your ultimate boast is that you know him.

And nothing is worth boasting and compared to him. That's the first thing. It's a command, right? But why should we do it? Well, verse 2 tells us. Praise him for his mighty deeds.

Praise him according to his excellent greatness. We praise God because of his mighty works and because of his character. What he's done and who he is, right? He's worthy to be praised.

- [9 : 43] We were already saying that this morning. This is not like praising some dictator that's really evil. You know, but we all secretly hate him, but we're scared of him. So we're like, oh, yeah, good job. Yeah, we love you. You're great. You're the best.
- That's not what this is. He is amazing. The Bible is full of thousands of miracles all pointed to this. All of history is full. And this room is full of hundreds of miracles.
- Thousands of miracles. Things we're not even aware of that God's done. People in this room, I'm sure there's folks in the room who you should have been dead, but God rescued you. There's all kinds of reasons, right?
- His mighty works and his character. What he's done and who he is. I love how Psalm 145 puts it. It's another song of praise. He says, He says, Here he is.
- Here's what is so great. He said, The Lord is gracious. Our God is gracious and merciful. Look, I don't know all of you. I know a bunch of you are visiting.
- [11 : 03] I know that I'm from Moorhead, born and raised. All I know is we don't have a lot of people in our area who are like, oh, I've never heard of Jesus before. You tell me who that is. Sometimes, but not a lot.
- Mostly what we have is people have been really hurt by church. And they're like walking with a limp. And so you're in here, even like going through the motions, singing the songs kind of thing. And like, he's holy.
- Okay. But is he good? Is he safe? Am I going to get hurt? The Lord is gracious and merciful. He is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
- The Lord is good to all. And his mercy is over all that he has made. All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord. All your saints shall bless you. Speak of the glory of your kingdom.
- Tell of your power. Make known to the children of man your mighty deeds and your glorious splendor of your kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Your dominion endures throughout all generations. We are so fixated on news in our moment.
- [12 : 01] We're like, oh, we're always panicking all the time. No, no, no. Our ultimate faith is not in any political structure on this earth. It is in his everlasting kingdom. His dominion endures throughout all generations.
- The Lord, I love this, is faithful in all of his words. If he says it to you, he's going to fulfill it. He is kind in all his works. That's who he is. Listen to this.
- It's beautiful. The Lord upholds all those who are falling. You feel this morning like you got it on the outside. You've got the whole I'm doing fine church thing. But on the inside, I'm falling apart. The Lord upholds you.
- He raises up all who are bowed down. That's this like I can't even lift my head. I'm so overwhelmed. I feel so depressed. I feel so beat down.
- It says he raises up those who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you. You give them their food in due season. You open your hand and you satisfy the desire of every living thing.
- [13 : 01] The Lord is righteous in all his ways. He's kind in all his works. The Lord is near to all who call on him. All who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desire of those who fear him.
- He also hears their cry. And he saves them. That's who this Lord. Some of you may just be checking this whole Christianity thing out. That's who this God is.
- He hears your cry and he saves you. He's near to you when you call. He preserves all who love him, but the wicked he will destroy. He concludes with my mouth.
- That's why we do this. So it's a command. And here's why we do it. Because of who he is and what he's done.

When and where are we supposed to do it? Well, in verse 1 it says again, Praise God in his sanctuary. Praise him in his mighty heavens. Now on first glance, that feels like, it checks out, it feels like two holy sort of, you know, places.

[14 : 04] So there's a sanctuary, Old Testament, the sanctuary, New Testament. We typically, in our day, we think of a sanctuary like this. And this feels pretty holy. I mean, this thing's amazing, right?

It's beautiful. So it's got that kind of vibe, right? So in our head we read sanctuary heavens. It's in between. It's earth and heaven and everywhere in between.

That's where God should get praised. Praising God can and should happen everywhere and all the time. Abraham Kuyper said this, There's not a square inch of the whole creation over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine.

He owns it all. Everything's his. Everywhere you and I go. School, work, play, wherever you're at, every square inch of it is his. And so the psalmist is saying, Everywhere between heaven and earth, everywhere you go, God deserves praise there.

Back in the Old Testament, when they would surger, when they would travel through the wilderness, they knew this, and they would be singing these songs along the way. And as they walk through creation, they would be reminded that everything actually points to him.

[15 : 10] He gets the glory for everything. He gets praise for everything. In our day and age, we're slower to understand that. And we kind of get into this little mindset of we should praise him when we walk into a room like this, you know, or occasionally other moments, but pretty much it's just Sunday mornings.

And we got to work to break that because it's actually an everywhere, all the time kind of thing. I read this little book years ago by, I got him Brother Lawrence. He was a very poor man who worked as a dishwasher and a line cook.

And he talked about how while he worked, he would praise God. And his job was washing dishes and serving on a line cook. So it's not like this like glorious job in the world's eyes, but it's really beautiful how he approached it.

Listen to this little quote. It says, he says, we can do little things for God. I turn the cake that is frying on the pan for the love of him. And that done, there's nothing else to call me.

I prostrate myself and worship before him who has given me the grace to work. And afterwards I rise happier than a king. That is a pretty, a beautiful perspective.

[16 : 20] This guy is essentially, it's like, he's like saying, look, it's like he's like working at Bojangles, dropping chicken in the fryer. And as he does it, he says, I do it for the love of him. And he's so aware of God's goodness and God's grace.

He said, God, you've given me the grace to do this work. And he feels just, when he gets in this position, he goes, I feel like I'm happier than a king. He's a poor dishwasher, line cook.

And he's like, I actually feel happier than a king. He's so aware of God's goodness. So it's an everywhere kind of thing. And it's an all the time kind of thing. 1 Thessalonians 5, Ephesians 5, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Like I said, we were on vacation a couple of weeks back and one of the places we were at, there were these mountains that came right down into the water. Like no beach, just mountains, boom, water. And I was taking pictures like, oh, this is so beautiful.

And I found myself just effortlessly transitioning to like praising God. I was like, this is incredible. Like looking at all the different sedimentary lines and the colors, I was like, this is seriously incredible that God did this.

[17 : 33] Like I just effortlessly happened. It's everywhere, it's all the time. And that's kind of a bit understandable when it's beautiful, happy things. But the scripture here says in all circumstances, the famous hymn, if you've heard it, It Is Well With My Soul, was a praise written out of grief.

It was a dad who had just received the news that his four daughters had died in a shipwreck. And he sits down and he writes this, When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll, whatever my lot, thou has taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.

This dad says, God, it feels like, I don't feel like I'm sitting by some little, you know, quiet little stream, like some Thomas Kinkade painting. Like I feel like I am drowning in waves of sorrow.

But you are with me. You are near to me. You've heard my cry. You're holding me up. I'm falling apart. You are carrying me. You've got me.

This happens all the time, everywhere. That's what, when, why, or where and why for praise. How are we supposed to do it? Verse three through five.

[19 : 00] Praise him with trumpet sound. Praise him with lute and harp. Praise him with tambourine and dance. Praise him with strings and pipe. Praise him with sounding cymbals. Praise him with loud, clashing cymbals. What is this getting at?

It's getting at this. We're to praise God with everything we have. The psalmist here is describing a bit of a loud party. The one that you call the cops on for the neighbors in the garage, just like wearing the cymbals out.

Like if they would just lay off the cymbals, that's the party, right? And the psalmist is saying here, essentially, this God is worth getting worked up about.

He's worth getting a little loud about. And I want to just try to help us here for a few minutes. This does not have anything to do with your personality type or my personality type.

It's got everything to do with who he is as a person, not who you are as a person, right? But sadly enough, we typically play it a little cool when it comes to praying God.

[19 : 58] Like trying to like, you know, just keep it cool. Keep it together. We don't want people to see us getting worked up. Last Saturday night, do we have any Duke fans in the room?

Just raise your hand. Are you too ashamed to raise your hand? A few of you. There's more of you. There's more of you. There's more of you.

Okay. That's all right. You've got a week to recover. You're going to need more time, but that's all right. So I don't know anything about sports. Don't like it. But I did grow up watching Carolina basketball.

And I did grow up hating Duke. And I can still fellowship with all of you because we're going to be in heaven together. But there's that we've got, right? I'm going to be honest with you guys.

Last Saturday night, I got a little worked up. Like I almost pulled muscles, got worked up. Like shouting, screaming, high-fiving, like losing it worked up.

[20 : 59] And then I watched this game, Carolina Duke. You know, I watched some 70,000 people in the room. I mean, it was crazy. This dude's in the nosebleeds. Like they're in the nosebleeds of nosebleeds.

They couldn't even know there was a sporting event happening. They were so far away. And everyone's losing their mind. And then millions of people watching this. I mean, everyone. It would have been great to see like what our blood pressure was through that game, right?

It was intense. We were going for it. We were screaming like crazy. And in the middle of it all, I took a step back and I just jumped online. And I read this quote by a guy named Dane Ortlin, who wrote a brilliant book called Gentle and Lowly.

A bunch of us have read. He said this in the middle of this game. He said, Now, I'm not saying we should all look a certain way.

Like everyone's doing like the same like dance moves. That's weird too. All right. We're not trying to outdo each other. This isn't like Soul Train or whatever. That's not what this is. But our praise should be full of passion.

[22 : 15] And that might mean it gets a little expressive every now and again. David, King David was famously looked down upon by his wife for praising God out in the streets, essentially in his underwear. Don't do it yet.

I know. I have been at one harbor long enough. Some of you are like, Preacher, I've been waiting. That's not the point of this. But 2 Samuel 6, verse 16.

The ark of the Lord came into the city of David. This is the presence of God in this ark. And they've been without it for a long time. And people had died trying to get this ark back in the city. They wanted God's presence again.

It comes back in. Michael, the David of Saul, looked down out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord. And she despised him in her heart. Well, that led to a good old-fashioned marriage confrontation when David got home.

Verse 20. He returned to bless his household. But instead of that, this is what he got. Michael, the daughter of Saul, came down to meet David and said, How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants, female servants, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself.

[23 : 26] He comes home to bless his house, and here's what he gets. You danced like a drunk fool in the streets. What does that tell us?

Well, apparently David wasn't holding nothing back. All right? Drunk people are not famous for their awesome dance moves. They're famous for their really foolish dance moves, right? They forget. They have no inhibition.

They just lose it, right? That's the image that she's seen. She's like, you look like some drunk old fool in the street. David won't let her think that's what it was about.

He says in verse 21, It was before the Lord, not the ladies, it was before the Lord who chose me above your father and above all his house to appoint me as prince of Israel to the people of the Lord.

That's who I was doing this for, by the way. And I will celebrate before the Lord. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this. David's like, you ain't seen nothing yet, right? She's saying, you're not dancing like a king should dance, full of pomp and pride.

[24 : 28] You're supposed to honor yourself. And he said, no, you're right. I'm not dancing. I'm not dancing as a king. I'm dancing before the king. Michael was more worried about what people thought.

David was more worried about what God deserved. Now, if David, king of Israel, could check his title at the door, so can we.

Now, some of us, I don't know all of you, but some of us do come from really conservative church backgrounds. I think that is a strength. It's a good thing. I've always, through the years now, 13 years of leading One Harbor, I've loved the church diversity that we've got because it makes us better.

It makes us stronger. And a lot of times, those more conservative churches, folks come from those with a deep well of theology. Those churches tend to be better at really studying robust theology and knowing the things of God.

It's ironic, however, that sometimes, this isn't picking on anyone. I don't, you know, again, but sometimes what can happen, I've noticed this culturally. So I come from the other side.

[25 : 32] I come from like a very excited, let's dance, let's moonwalk for Jesus kind of thing, right? But we were all excited not knowing what we were even excited about. We were just sweating for Jesus, you know? Like, it was just, it was like, yeah, it was aerobics.

So that's the side I come from. It's interesting, however, coming from that side and seeing, like sometimes I have friends who come from really deep, theological, robust, they've studied to know it, they know the deep things of God.

And what that translates to them is a real passivity when it comes to praising him. Like the more you know about God, it seems like the more reserved you are at worshiping him.

And I just don't think that dog will hunt. I don't think that math adds up. Something's wrong with that equation. If we look at David, he's going, are you seeing what I'm seeing?

Because the ark is back. Like, am I supposed to stand around and act like this party's about me? This party is about him. The more we know about him, the more we encounter his goodness and his mercy, what he's done and who he is, the more the passion should go up.

[26 : 39] And so my encouragement to you is that you don't let a sense of self-dignity keep you from passionate worship. One of our pastors in the Moorhead site, he told me I could pick on him, so that's why I'm doing it.

His name's Andrew Midgett. He was actually in a recent magazine, Magnolia Magazine. They covered him. So he's that guy. He looks like a cross between the Dos Equis man and like an L.L. Bean catalog, like they came together.

I just thought of that in this moment. And it's hitting me how true it is. But when Andrew came from a very, very, very conservative church background, he'd been there for like 18 or 20 years.

And when he came to One Harbor, he told his family, in the third person, he said this, Andrew Midgett will never raise his hands and worship. Why he talks like that to his family, I don't know. Then he said this, Andrew Midgett will never cry and worship.

Like he's making these declarations to his family. It's so funny to me. And he's one of my best friends. But, you know, it was about a week. Oh, Andrew Midgett. Hands raised, eyes are bawling.

[27 : 46] And he's been like that pretty much every Sunday since. And so it's been this fun thing we'd love to pick on. What happened with Andrew Midgett? He got hit with how good this God is.

The mercy of God, the goodness of God, the kindness of God. He felt God near to him. It wasn't just about what God does for others. He started to realize what God has done for him. And his little rules went out the window.

So that's my encouragement. Don't worry about what people think. Worry about what God deserves. Now, something that should be obvious is that praising on his how-to, praising God can and should involve music.

I mean, they list a bunch of instruments here, right? He's pretty much listing every instrument he's ever heard. If there was a five-gallon bucket around, that would have made the list. Like that's what's happening. He just, in fact, five times in the Psalms, is make a joyful noise.

There is this thing in which like, and this again is not about our personality. There is a thing in which music does play a part. God loves it when we praise him with our voices and with instruments. He loves that.

[28 : 49] Whether we're good at it or not doesn't matter. This is not about any of that. It's not about us all trying out for some American singing competition. This is about us getting in line with the people of God who for thousands of years, good voice or not, have used their voice to say, God, you are good.

You are worth it. So we're commanded to praise God and these are the ways and what else? Verse six, let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. So it's a command, but guess what?

It's also an invitation. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. This is an invitation. I'm assuming we're all breathing. That would be scary if you're not.

If you're not, let us know. This is an invitation for all creatures with breath to praise him. You might be here like, oh man, I am so far from God.

I'm filthy. You don't know what I, it's not what I did last night. It's what I did this morning. I'm sure I'm disgusting to him. I'm sure he doesn't want anything to do with me. He's probably fed up with me, but everything that has breath, praise the Lord.

[29 : 48] This is an invitation. In Psalm 100, we hear it spelled out like this, enter into his gates. What thanksgiving is, coming to his yard, his courts with praise, come all the way in to his courts.

Coming through the gates, coming to the courts. This is an invitation to come close to him. We are told we get to come right up into the throne room of our God to draw close to him.

We're invited. And therein lied the challenge for the people of God. In the Old Testament, people of God now. What about our sin? Because it's God's holy. I mean, that ark that entered into the city that David got so worked up about, there was a guy who when they were trying to transport it at one point, the thing started to fall.

The guy put his hands on it to stop it. But God had said, you can't touch it because I'm holy and you're not. The guy dropped dead. Like, that was a thing for them. They were like, wow, so we're supposed to draw near to him, but we're sinful?

He's holy? That feels really dangerous? There were all these rules in the Old Testament about like being careful because of how holy God was? Man, we know the whole story now.

[31 : 00] And it's because of Jesus we get to praise God out of joy, not fear. There's this moment that happened, and we're going to talk about the cross on Friday night, but this moment that happened when Jesus died in Matthew 27, it said, behold, the curtain of the temple.

This is what separated God from the people, a holy God from sinful people. It was torn into from top to bottom. This was not the disciples going, yeah, let's tear down the curtain. You get on that side, you get on that side, somebody get some scissors.

No, this insanely thick, huge curtain, it wasn't the people that were done with it, it was God that was done with it. God tore it from top to bottom. And in this picture, we see that because of the death of Jesus, God made a way for us to enter into his presence, to draw close to him.

If you're here, you're not yet a follower of Jesus, first of all, I just want to say it's amazing that you're here. It takes a lot of courage to come to church, and especially if you don't think you believe all this or aren't sure, I love that you're here.

Man, I hope that what you're hearing this morning is not an invitation to do better and try harder and fingers crossed, you know, you won't burn, you'll see light. That, that, I hope what you're seeing first and foremost before you change anything in your life is an invitation to come to him.

[32 : 17] It doesn't start with what we do for him, it starts with what he's done for us. This invitation is to you, let everything that has breath, I don't know what your sins are, I know what mine are, and I shouldn't be allowed to come close, but because of Jesus, he's made a way.

So wherever you're at, this is an invitation. You, you don't have to like keep all the rules, go to church every Sunday for 365 days straight, okay, now I can come. No, no, because of what Jesus did back then, you get to right now, just come and say, all right, Jesus, I'm a train wreck, I'm a mess, but I need you.

There's this, there's this great passage, Jesus tells us the story, he says there were two guys who go to church, one of them was a really religious kind of self-righteous guy, and his prayer to God was, I'm thankful I'm not like that guy, he points at this other guy who's just a disgusting person culturally, and that guy, Jesus said, wouldn't even lift his head, but just beat his chest and said, God have mercy on me, a sinner, and Jesus said, that's the guy, that guy, he got it, his prayer got answered.

So that's you this morning, this is an invitation to you, to join the people of God so that this God becomes your God, and if you'd like to talk with us about that, we'd love to talk with you and pray with you here in just a moment.

As the band comes up, for those of us who are already followers of Jesus, you know, I think the first thing we should always do is actually just focus our attention on him, not on us, on him, right, you've got your little list, and that's good, it's good, but this is not a first chance to evaluate yourself, yourself, it's first a chance to focus on him.

[33 : 56] We have these cups around, there's a little cracker on the top, and you can just peel it open and peel that back. When Jesus was drawing near to the cross, Luke 19, 37, he was on his way down the Mount of Olives, and the whole multitude of his disciples caught up in this moment, they didn't know what was happening, they thought Jesus was going to roll in and wipe out all their earthly enemies, and they were all going to get to, you know, hoop and holler, and they didn't understand the gravity of what was happening, but they began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they'd seen, and looking at Jesus, they said, blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord.

Again, in their heads, it was like, he was going to politically come, they didn't, they couldn't even comprehend what the words they were saying, like how true it was. Peace in heaven, glory in the highest. Some of the Pharisees in the crowd shouted, teacher, rebuke your disciples, and he said, well, yeah, but if they're quiet, the very stones would cry out.

Now, what's going to happen in a matter of moments is this praise from this crowd is going to get changed from blessed is the Lord to crucify him and abandon, Jesus will hang on that cross until his last breath is gone.

And a lot of times we take praising God for granted, but Jesus, it cost him everything for us to have the right to enter into the presence of God. And so my friends, those of you who are already followers of Jesus, eat and drink.

A brag is also, it's also, a praise is, a brag, it's a boast, and sometimes we do that as a toast. It's where they're like, man, I want to toast this guy. This is a chance, actually, it's a moment to toast him. I say, Jesus, you are worth bragging on.

[35 : 50] You're worth boasting in. Not my might, not my wealth, not my beauty, not my strength, not anything about me. You, Jesus, you're worth celebrating.

My friends, eat and drink. Amen. A couple other things we do. We give.

Again, if you're just visiting, there's no pressure for you to give, but why we give? We don't give so that God will do something for us. I hope I get a Bentley. Here's five bucks. No, we give because of what he's already done for us, because of what he always does for us.

It's an act of praise. And we sing, which is what we're going to do now. And I've talked a lot this morning. It's like a little less conversation, a little more action, right?

It's a chance to actually praise him. And I'm not encouraging you to like try to swing from the rafters. I'm just encouraging you to take a little step forward in the passion department if you've been a little reserved.

[36 : 51] Again, it's not about your personality. It's about him as a person, what he deserves. Jesus, we thank you. For who you are, and we thank you. You're incredible character.

You are worth praising. You are kind. You're gracious. You're slow to anger. Thank God you're slow to anger. You're merciful. You draw near.

You save us. You hear us. We love you, Jesus. Amen.