

"How to Glorify God, part 6"

Psalm 50:23

INTRO:

The Westminster Shorter Catechism summarized the Bible's teaching of the ultimate purpose for life. *"The chief end of man is to glorify God and thus enjoy Him forever."* We live in order to bring glory to God. The last several Sundays we launched into a study seeking to learn how we can glorify God. So far we have learned:

- A. We also glorify God in our doing His will at any cost.
- B. We learned that we glorify God in suffering.
- C. Then we learned that we glorify God in confessing our sins.
- D. We discovered that we glorify God in bearing fruit.

Today we will discover we glorify God in praising Him.

I. What It Means To Praise Him

II. How It Works in a Practical Sense

I. What It Means To Praise Him

A. The starting point for our study is **Psalm 50:23**. This Psalm is a song dealing with worship. The last verse of this Psalm is a call to the people of God to worship God properly.

1. The word translated ***"praise"*** in the NKJV has been rendered *"a thank offering"* in the NIV and the NASB. This is one way to translate the Hebrew. However, it can also simply speak of praise and we will choose to take it this way today.

2. The verse simply says that if we will offer praise to God, we glorify Him.

B. The question is, how do we praise God?

1. Praising God is more than running around with our hands in the air saying, *"praise God!"* To answer this question let's look at the words used to express the idea of praise.

2. There are two main Hebrew words that are translated praise. The first word is the word **yada**. *Yada* means to acknowledge, or to confess. Its main uses are in terms of the confession of sin and in the confessing of God's attributes and

works. Praise, then, is the confession or the declaration of Who God is, and what He has done.

3. The second word is the word *halal*. This word being sincerely and deeply thankful for and/or lauding the superior qualities or great deeds of the object. Praise many times involves thankfulness for the wonder of Who God is and what He has done.

C. Therefore, praising God is reciting God's perfections as well as declaring what He has done. Let us look at some examples of this kind of Praise.

1. **Psalm 90:2** *“Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”*

What is Moses doing in this Psalm? He is speaking of God's eternity. With God there is no beginning and no end. Before history was, before time was, God is.

2. **Psalm 96:1-6** *“Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless His name; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.”*

Here God is seen as *“Great,” “Powerful”* (v.4) He is the creator (v.5), *“He has splendor and majesty,”* (v.6).

3. **Psalm 34:1-3** *“I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together.”*

While this example does not cite a single example of how David praised God, it does serve to show us how we should be constantly praising our God!

D. These are just three of countless examples I could cite to show us in praise in the Psalms alone. Then when we expand our survey to the rest of the Old Testament and New, we find praise was always a companion to the people of God. The sad thing is that we in the church of the twentieth-first century have not learned how to praise God. This is why Theology and History need to be taught and learned. Without it we cannot praise as we should.

II. How Praise Works In A Practical Sense

A. How should this work in our lives? Let me show you what I mean in the lives of a couple of Old Testament saints. Let's start with Jehoshaphat (**2 Chronicles 20**).

1. To set the scene, a great army of Moabites and Edomites have amassed themselves and are closing in on Judah. They are out to kill Jehoshaphat and to destroy Judah. Now this invasion force is much larger than the standing army that King Jehoshaphat has at hand to defend Judah. What do you do in an impossible situation like this? Pray!

2. **2 Chronicles 20:5–12** *“Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, and said: ‘O LORD God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, ‘If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.’ And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir—whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them—here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.”*

Look at this prayer. If you were in Jehoshaphat's sandals, what would you do? *"Help LORD!!!!"* But he doesn't do that. You are God in heaven (i.e. not a local god, the god of Ashdod, etc.) You are Sovereign. You are the King over all even those who do not know you and deny that you exist. You are so powerful and mighty that absolutely nobody can stand before you.

3. What is this? This, friend, is confessing and declaring God's attributes. But he is not done. This is praise. If we were there we might say, *“Man the enemy is coming. We don't have time for praise.”* Jehoshaphat would reply, *“Hold it! It is praise that is the most important thing we can do right now.”* Why? Because it brought the people in touch with reality. What was real? Their fears? Did the things they feared happen? NO. Then how real were the things they feared? That which was real then and is still real today. The God they served was real. He is the real Sovereign Lord Who was right there in the midst of the trouble.

B. Briefly, let me point out two more examples.

1. Habakkuk: When he could not understand what God was doing he retreated into reminding himself about what he knew to be true about God. This is praise!

2. David: How do you think that David had the courage to take on 9ft 9in Goliath? It was because this same David had learned years before how to praise. He lived in vital touch with reality. He lives in communion with the God who was much bigger than Goliath. The habit of praise allowed him to see how big his God really was.

How about you and me? Do we have a habit of praise? Is it a great part of our lives?

Do we see the principle? When we praise God, He is glorified and we are reminded again of what reality is. May God help us to glorify Him by praising Him.

Psalm 50:23 *“Who so offers praise, glorifies Me.”*

Hymn #4 *How Great Thou Art*