

## Psalms of Praise

Intro: What is the purpose of life?

### I. Praise and Worship as the Highest Goal

#### A. The Goal of Creation

- As the glorious Lord, all of God's actions are for his own glory
- Thus, the act of creation is for his own glory and praise
- Psalm 148:3-5: "Praise him sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters about the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Lord! For he commanded and they were created."

#### B. The Goal of Humanity

- LC #1: "What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy him forever."
- As God's image bearers, humans are designed to give glory and praise to their creator. \*It's what we were made to do\*
  - In the book of Revelation, the new heavens and new earth is filled with praise (Rev 19:6-7)
  - Everyone worships something. It's just a matter of whether we worship the one true God

#### C. The Goal of Mission

- "Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him all the earth! **Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns!'**" Psalm 96:9-10
- John Piper: "Missions exists because worship doesn't."
- C.S. Lewis: "I had not noticed either that just as men spontaneously praise whatever the value, so they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it: 'Isn't she lovely? Wasn't it glorious? Don't you think that magnificent?'" (Reflections, 95).

### II. Praise and Worship as the Main Theme of Psalms

#### A. Praise is the Title of the Psalms

- In Hebrew, the title (*tehillam*) literally means "Praises" or "Book of Praises"

## B. Praise is What the Psalms Do

- What is praise/worship? To acknowledge who God is and What he has done (Mark Futato)
- The Psalms are largely occupied with this very thing:
  - Example Psalm 103:1-14
  - Notice the Psalmist's ability to articulate WHY God is worthy of praise
    - \*\*Praise both requires and builds our theological knowledge!
    - Also, praise requires real \*affection\*--you have to really believe that something is beautiful and wonderful
- Example: Praise is similar to the how we tell our spouses WHY we love them
  - It's not enough to just say "I love you"
  - Real impact is made when we can specifically recount why we love our spouse

## C. Praise is embedded in the very structure of the Psalms

- Entire book moves from Lament to Praise (compare Ps 3:1-3 to Psalm 150)
- Individual Psalms often move from Lament to Praise (see Psalm 22)
- Practical Thoughts:
  - Psalms reflect the pattern of Jesus' life: suffering first, then glory
  - Psalm reflect the pattern of our lives: suffering first, then glory
  - \*\*Even in the current situation of our nation, filled with lament, it is appropriate to praise God. Lament and praise are not mutually exclusive!

## III. A Closer Look at Psalm 66

### A. A Call to Praise (v. 1-4)

- Notice the imperatives related to praise: "Shout," "sing," "give," "say"

### B. Reasons for Praise (v. 5-12)

- Psalmist recounts the great history of what God has done for his people (including crossing of Red Sea and Jordan river)
- Psalmist recounts God's character: shows mercy (v. 9), preserved his people in trials (v. 10-12)

### C. Specific Ways to Praise (v. 13-15)

- Praise is always mediated through a blood sacrifice, which under the new covenant is Christ
- Praise is on our lips, through vows and declarations and song

### C. Personal Testimony of Praise (v. 16-20)

- Psalmist recounts how God has personally shown him grace and mercy: "I will tell you what he has done for my soul" (v. 16)
- There is an evangelist thrust to praise: it is for others to join!