Series: Gifts that Keep on Giving

December 2, 2018

Message 2:

**The Profit of Praise**

Psalm 92:1

**Intro:**

Psalm 92:1 - It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

to sing praises to the Most High.

How much praise is too much praise?

How much giving is too much giving?

Life is full of praise.

* Manufacturers praise their products …
* Parents praise their children …
* Grandparents …
* Men praise the cars … bikes … sports teams …
* Women praise Pinterest … (sexist?) Forgive me … if you are a follower of Christ you have to forgive me … I know girls love sports and guys have stuff on Pinterest too …

Praise is not alien to our way of life. Everyone is always praising someone or something!

We praise artwork, music, musicians, actors, movies, homes, food, restaurants …

Praise is as much for our benefit as it is for the one or the thing we are praising!

Giving is as much for our benefit as it is for the cause we are giving to -

Acts 20:35 - …You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

What we praise is not always deserving of the amount of praise we give - but there is something in us that has to give praise - it is created in us - it completes us - we have to give expression to our feelings.

A crowd at a football game would go crazy if they were told that no matter what happened, they were to sit on their hands and be quiet …

Think of when the touchdown is scored …

Did the athlete need the praise? No! The work was already done! The crowd needed the release!

C.S. Lewis, in *Reflections on the Psalms* - “I had not noticed how the humblest, and at the same time most balanced and capacious [generous] minds, praise most, while the cranks, misfits and malcontents, praised least. The good critics found something to praise in many imperfect works; the bad ones continually narrowed the list of books we might be allowed to read. The healthy and unaffected man, even if luxuriously brought up and widely experienced in good cookery, could praise a very modest meal; the dyspeptic and the snob found fault with all. Except where intolerably adverse circumstances interfere,

**“…praise almost seems to be inner health made audible.” - C.S. Lewis**

**Big Idea: Our investment of praise yields a healthy profit!**

T.S.: 5 bottom line benefits of entering actively into praise and worship of the Lord:

**> Spiritual health.**

Praise is spiritual health made audible. Those who have spiritual health find praise to be quite natural to their inner nature.

There are those who have had their praise repressed by religious training. They have been told that we are to be always “respectful” in the presence of the Lord!

Respectful, yes - quiet, no!

Praise is LOUD! Worship can be quiet - but you can’t worship until you praise.

Psalm 100:4 - Enter his gates with thanksgiving;

go into his courts with praise.

Psalm 150 - Praise him with a blast of the ram’s horn; praise him with the lyre and harp!Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with strings and flutes! Praise him with a clash of cymbals; praise him with loud clanging cymbals. Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord! Praise the Lord!

Psalm 68:4 - Sing praises to God and to his name! Sing *loud* praises to him who rides the clouds. His name is the Lord— rejoice in his presence!

Psalm 57:9 MSG - I’m thanking you, God, out *loud* in the streets, singing your praises in town and country. The deeper your love, the higher it goes; every cloud is a flag to your faithfulness.

Think of Jesus and all He has done for us … shouldn’t that excited us more than anything else in this world? The more we know of Jesus, the more we love Him and the more we should want to praise Him!

One of the keys to a great relationship is communication.

If you love someone, you are going to communicate it - you are going to communicate it boldly and without shame!

We have to express our love! That expression increases our spiritual health! We can’t keep it in!

“I’m worried about what people will think of me!”

Then you are self-centered! More concerned about yourself than the praise Jesus deserves.

We’re not talking about distracting others … but praising Him together.

It’s not healthy to let our worries, anxieties and concerns inhibit us from praising the Lord.

Enter into open praise for increased spiritual health!

**> We become God’s house.**

1st Corinthians 3:16 - Don’t you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?

Holy of Holies … Most Holy Place … Tent in desert … Temple …

Veil torn in two at Jesus’ death … Not only can we get in - HE CAME OUT!

Fire in that place- tongues of fire when the Holy Spirit came …

When you praise the Lord, you are recognizing that there is no longer any barrier between you and God - He is not only with you, He is in you! You are the house God lives in! And He never takes vacations!

When we all come together - He is with us in greater magnitude -in greater intensity!

Let’s praise Him! Let’s praise without reserve and without shame! He is here! God is here! Jesus is here! The Holy Spirit is here!

**> Personal improvement.**

Psalm 92:1 - It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

to sing praises to the Most High.

* The more time you spend praising God, the more honest you are going to be!

How? You are going to be aware of His presence! You gonna lie and be dishonest in God’s presence? I don’t think so!

The greater and more consistent our praise, the more aware we are of His presence, which keeps us wanting to live lives pleasing to Him - which makes us happier people - more to be trusted - more integrity -

MORE GENEROSITY!

If God is with us in power and presence, why should we not be generous?

* Great faith - faith is increased when we praise Him more!
* Your marriage and relationships will be better - again, because of a greater awareness of His presence with us!

Communion with Jesus makes communion with those we love even better!

We become like the people we hang around with! We are products of our environment.

When we are praising Jesus, we are hanging around Him and that makes us more like Him! BETTER!

* Positive attitude- you will feel better about yourself!
* Increased love!

Increased praise to God gives us increased love and patience for one another!

**> God is pleased.**

Psalm 149:1-4 - Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing his praises in the assembly of the faithful… Praise his name with dancing,

accompanied by tambourine and harp. For the Lord delights in his people…

Do you want to make God happy? (or mad …)

Those who worship false gods are often filled with fear of those gods.

We fear God in the sense of healthy respect, but we can also have joy and delight in His presence!

We don’t have to appease God with strange rituals -

We give worship - and gifts of finances, not because we have to do this to please Him - but in grateful response for all He has done for us.

This is why I give ….

So many people have a wrong concept of God. When we praise God and give to God for His goodness our understanding of Him changes - we understand that He is good - He is not causing us to live with constant threats over our heads - rather blessings …

When you have a great concept of God, it gets even better the more you praise Him!

Psalm 103:1-6 - Let all that I am praise the Lord; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle’s!

The Lord gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly.

Psalm 104:1 - Let all that I am praise the Lord. O Lord my God, how great you are!

These verses are not just about what God does for us -

“I will praise the Lord with my whole heart - with all that I am!”

When I praise the Lord, I am not constantly focused on what I need - what I want - but I am thankful for all He has already done for me - which makes me want to give more to Him!

More praise - more singing - more worship - more of my life - more of my time - more of my talents …. More of my finances …

I want to give Him everything I have - without reservation - without fear -nothing held back!

“Jesus - you have it all! Take it all! Ask anything of me - in love and praise I want to give it to you!”

This is the life and attitude that pleases God! When He is pleased, He blesses us even more!

Revelation 4:11 - You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.

Psalm 16:11 - You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.

Us praising Him - giving to Him - results in His pleasure - which results in our pleasure!

Want more pleasure? Praise - Give - God will be pleased - and that gives our lives pleasure!

**> God speaks.**

Psalm 29:2-4,11 - Honor the Lord for the glory of his name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness. The voice of the Lord echoes above the sea. The God of glory thunders. The Lord thunders over the mighty sea. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic… The Lord gives his people strength. The Lord blesses them with peace.

Psalm 68:32-33 - Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth. Sing praises to the Lord. Sing to the one who rides across the ancient heavens, his mighty voice thundering from the sky.

Do you want to hear the voice of God? Know His direction?

Be an open praiser - Be a generous giver -

All of this goes hand in hand!

Your praise isn’t full without giving it - Your gifts aren’t full if they are not given in praise - and we aren’t going to have the full life and blessings Jesus wants us to have if we hold anything back!

THERE IS PROFIT IN PRAISE!

* Spiritual health
* We become God’s house
* Personal Improvement
* God is pleased
* God speaks

Invitation