

Praise the Lord
Psalm 150
May 2, 2021

The Psalmist list quite a few instruments in this Psalm. They are all tools to praise the Lord. Yes, tools, used by the people of God to praise the Lord. We are here knowing what the Lord has done for you and continues to do for you.

You may not know, even though I have told many of you that I can play an instrument too. Yes, I can play an instrument. It is an instrument played by many. I may not be the best at it but I do pretty well. What instrument do I play? I can play an instrument called a radio. Yes, a radio.

I know that it doesn't take much God given talent to turn on a radio but the Lord has blessed people differently. Some, He has blessed with talent and ability and desire to praise Him with instruments that require more than the ability to turn a knob or flick a switch.

We had a chance to watch from a distance, a great social distance, about a 70 mile social distance, the talent, the ability of a young man who showed what the Lord had blessed Him with this past week. It was too bad that we couldn't have been there but did the Lord hear? Did He hear His blessing in action on that stage? I believe He did. Yes, it was music in order to complete requirements for graduation, but in that completion, He was praising the Lord with a gift that is not just meant for that requirement but for the praise of His Lord.

We too, have listened to that praise this morning. Yes, we have breathed and let our voices be heard by the Lord but what did the Lord provide so that we could make use of our voices. He provided some other breath, generated by a fan that blows, just blows, like the wind that goes where it will and yet what did God provide? He provided a talent, a ability, not without a lot of guided work, but a gift to be able to direct that wind through various valves that let that wind travel up through designated pipes to praise the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary.

This Psalm is the last of the Psalms, Psalm 150. How does this Psalm end the Psalms? It ends in Praise, Praise of the Lord. Appropriate. Where would the words of the Psalms be without music? Oh, the words of the Psalms are great but too bad we don't have the music to them. Was the music written down? We don't know but maybe we weren't supposed to know the music so that those of today could put the Psalms to the music of our day sometime?

In any case, we have the Psalms. They are great and they have so much to give us. They touch our lives where we are. The Lord speaks to us through His Word, especially through the Psalms. They speak of tough times and good times. They tell of all aspects of our lives, much like the lyrics of songs today. It is when the lyrics are put to music that many can learn easier and then can repeat what they have heard.

We remember the lyrics of much of the Bible but it is the Psalms that speak to us in a way that we want to turn to the Lord, to praise the Lord.

We think of music and how it can be used to tell a story a feeling, so music is used, instruments are used to bring the Word of God to bear on our lives, in our response to the Lord in worship.

When we come here, into His Sanctuary, we come to receive from the Lord and in appreciation for all He gives us we return praises with instruments and our breath. We praise Him because He has given us life, life by sacrificing His life for ours. He had a Psalm before Him. It Was a Psalm that told of His love for His creation, especially the pinnacle of His creation and the need for a Savior because mankind was in a hopeless situation. Mankind had sinned. He had done the one thing that separated him from the perfect world created for him. He had let the devil tempt him to go against the very one who had given him and his wife, life.

He has given us life too, by going to that cross and taking our sin upon Himself. He took that sin and suffered, suffered in agony, knowing it wasn't His sin but YOURS, yours and mine and the whole world's.

Yes, it was the chorus, the repetition of the final coming of a Savior who would take on sin and win for each person who trusted in the promise, the promise of the Son, born of a woman who would make all things new.

He turned the promise into real life or maybe I should say to real death. He died so that we could have life. Life, because He was the first to rise from death to life, eternal life in heaven.

As far as I can tell, all of you aren't in heaven yet. Yes, we have known some who are there but we are still here. So, if we are still here, it must be for a reason, either for ourselves or for others.

What has Christ done for you? Is it worthy of your praise? Sure it is. He has done mighty deeds for you, deeds that no one else could have done. He is the greatest contrary to the proclamations of Muhammad Ali. His is an excellent greatness, greater than any greatness because any greatness in the world could not be had without Him.

He has given ability and talent to many. Some in music others in other ways. If that talent and ability would be just for the individual would it ever be recognized as greatness? No, it would be like a hidden treasure, like a treasure that one person discovered but before it could be utilized, the person dies or has something happen to them that the treasure isn't brought into the light.

If that treasure, that light is hidden under a bushel, or put it in a cellar or under the bed as a couple of writers put it, it really isn't doing what it should. No, it is to be put on a stand so that all can take advantage of that light, that treasure.

What is your light, your treasure, your ability, your talent that is to be a praise of the Lord. Do you normally think of your everyday life to be a praise of the Lord? Luther talked of the everyday being a praise of the Lord. He saw the everyday as a praise to the Lord. He saw in the work, many would say, the mundane, a praise of the Lord.

Yes the Psalmist, one who created music with notes and words, who saw in all the instruments, items to be used in making those words and notes a bursting forth in praise of the Lord. The Musician, the Psalmist saw praise in those instruments. Could that same praise be had with a baking dish or a paving machine or maybe a computer or mechanic's wrenches?

What is it that you have been given to shine your light, to play your instrument? As you praise God in His sanctuary, who is it that is praising Him? It is you but what instruments are you praising Him with? It is not just the time here, in His sanctuary that is coming here. You, you who have been given so much by Him that is coming through the doors, sitting in the pews, breathing air across those vocal cords. Does what happens during the week in your life come with you to His sanctuary? Who you are, with your instruments is also coming along with you here, praising Him for how He has and is working with your hands, feet and voices.

Is what He has given you under a bushel or under the bed or in the cellar though? Is it hidden and not a beacon, a light, shining out from you to your world? You might be thinking, how, how is my light going to shine? What does it look like?

We may need the Lord to provide an eye opening to the how. Have you spent time asking Him to enlighten you? Have you asked others of your desire? Sometimes it is hard to see for yourself but others may see things in you, instruments to be used in praise of the Lord.

The Psalm begins with verse 1. It starts with Praise the Lord, then moves on to Praising God in His sanctuary and finally praising Him in His mighty heavens. Ok, praise Him in His mighty heavens is the ultimate place to praise Him, and leading up to

it is the middle statement, praise Him in His sanctuary. But how does it begin? Praise the Lord! Where is that? Could it be in your everyday life?

In your everyday life is where you normally play your instruments, those abilities, those talents the Lord has given you. It is there that He refines those talents and abilities. It is there that you interact with the world, using those instruments in working with and for others.

Maybe we have just been taking for granted those instruments we have been given. Might our lives be lived following where Jesus is leading us be what He had planned for us? Might what He has given us, that are unique to us, be used in praise of Him?

We are all still breathing. Everything that still has breath is to praise the Lord, the Psalmist sings. The three words that end all these Psalms should be what our lives are all about. What three words should shape our lives, lived using the instrument He has given us to use? The Psalmist writes, sings, "Praise the Lord!"

Have you ever thought of what it is going to be like in heaven? We read of Angels singing and even us singing, Holy, Holy Holy to the Lord. We read that and what comes to mind? THIS IS GOING TO BE BORING, if that is what heaven is like. But what if singing praises is tied to who you are now? What if the praises in heaven is tied to who the Lord has made you in this life, even if it is tainted by our sin now?

How would that be, playing your own instruments in heaven like you do here only better? What if in heaven you will be a more perfect you? Yes, the Lord has put up with our imperfect praise knowing He has sent His Son for our sins but then has planned a day when He will come again to change these bodies to be perfect, perfectly tuned to play the gifts, abilities and talents He has bestowed on us for this world but just maybe for the world to come.

He has come, and continues to come to us in Word and Sacrament to tide us over until He comes again. Until then were praise the Lord with the instruments He has provided to proclaim His greatness and His mighty deeds. Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!