

Psa 148:1 Praise ye the LORD. **Praise** ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. **5 Let them praise** the name of the LORD: for **he commanded, and they were created.** **6** He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass. We are to praise our God because He is worthy to be praised (**2Sam 22:4; 1Chr. 16:25**). Praise begins and focuses on God. Praise does not start out as something emotional (although it can get emotional), but it is a spiritual activity of the will, something we are obligated to do. Praise is spiritual, and is created by the mind and soul meditating on God before seeking to be moved by the emotions (it neither excludes the emotion nor exalts them but allows them when it is appropriate).

What is Praise?

Heb 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the **sacrifice of praise** to God continually, that is, **the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.** This verse defines **praise as the public confession of God, for whom He is, for what he has done.** Moreover praise is qualified as a spiritual sacrifice which we offer to God (spiritual activity, “we do”).

Deut 10:20-21 Thou shalt fear **the LORD thy God;** him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name. **He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.** Psa 26:7; 9:1-2

Praise is focused on the good character of God as seen in His good deeds.

Moses referred to praise as telling his “great and terrible” works. Praise is a recommendation or commendation of God to others (which is why it should take a form within every service). For example, Absalom was “praised” for his beauty (**2Sam 14:25**). In a way, it is to honor the person by recommending them as noble, good, trustworthy, worthy of others having a relationship and confidence in that person of worthy note.

Isa 12:4 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, **declare his doings**

among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. **6** Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion:

1Chr 16:8 Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, **make known his deeds among the people.** **35** And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, **that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.**

The essence of “praise” is to make known before others the character of God by his good deeds. Without this element being overwhelming in the thing, it cannot be considered “praise”. To raise the hands and move from side to side is not praise. **Praise HAS TO HAVE RECOGNITION OF GOD'S WORKS.** Any person which God has saved should generate a constant flow of praise.

Praise then can be defined as a spiritual activity in which we recognize the works of God before others, recommending God to them.

How are praise and worship different?

Returning to our illustration of the devoted mother, it is one thing to personally know she is good, and it is a different thing for a young mother to see that in another mother and say that she will model her life after the same goodness. This is true praise. Praise then, is **to recognize the good character of God such that you take that same character for the moral pattern of your life.** Praise should actually change our life.

1Pet 2:9 But ye are... a peculiar people; **that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:**

Praise is the declaring the virtues of God **AS SEEN IN HIS WORKS,** and **worship AS SEEN IN HIS CHARACTER.** With worship, we extol these virtues in order to take them internally into our own life, and to recommend them to others. For praise to be biblical, it must focus on God's work, and it must not enter into vain repetitions, the constant (mindless) repetition of the same phrases (**Mat 6:7** when you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do),.. Praise and worship should **focus on mental**

activity, evaluating and elevating God's person. While worship concentrates on the character of God in and of itself, praise focuses on that character in action, in the works of God in relation to men. These qualities of God (and those things elevated in praise and worship) should cause our love and admiration for God to increase. Again, **praise and worship are rooted in facts and acts, not emotion and feelings,** although the facts and acts should cause us to love God more and to trust God more (they produce more faith in God). It is also very important that praise precedes and provokes true worship. Worship should also cause more praise. This is because we focus more and more in the person of God. Mindless repetition, like “Praise him, praise him, praise him,” (repeated 10 times) is not praise. It gives no cause to praise him. Many praise choruses are not praise at all, but border on heathen activity.

True praise begins with the mind and thoughts, meditating on what God has done, and done particularly. That is not crazy emotions, but real things that the individual testifies to in his praise of God before others. The Psalms are good examples of this. Even repeating God's works with Israel is valid praise, even though we are personally distanced from them.

In what form do we praise God?

2Chr 20:19 And the Levites... stood up **to praise** the LORD God of Israel **with a loud voice on high.**

2Chr 29:30 Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites **to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshiped.**

These passages reflect that praise is with a loud voice, “on high” (with focus on them), and the actual words of Scripture were used in these praises. **Praise can be summed up as mental activity which focuses the hearts and souls of the people on considering their God, who is he, how is he.** From this focus flows worship and praise to God's glory. Some deny that musical instruments are proper for the church, but in the Old Testament,

they were a regular part of this worship and praise (**Psa 98:4-6; 150:3-5**) causing the doubt, when and where we they outlawed between the New and Old Testaments? They were not. They are valid.

With Thanksgiving. The birth and manifestation of thankfulness in the heart is a way to praise God. It is to replace ourselves with God as the source and means of all good that happens in our life.

Boasting (H1984 Halal) of our God. The concept here is to demonstrate face to face with others the superiority of what we have. We are not ashamed of our God, and although in many contexts, boasting is a sin, it is not when confessing our God.

Making Melody (zamar H2167). In this case, it is to take the biblical acts of God in Scripture, and in our daily lives, and attribute them to God as a blessing, and put that to music.

Blessing (Baruch H1288). The idea here is that of convoking a blessing (something beneficial or recognized as good, an advantage, or beneficial) on another person, like when Jacob blessed his sons. It has the idea in some contexts of kneeling or bowing before the person giving the blessing.

Raising the hands. To raise the hands is used in the context of supplications (**1Ki 8:54; Psa 28:2; 141:2; 143:6; 1Tim 2:8**) or blessing (**Psa 63:4; 134:2; Luke 24:50**). The idea is to extend the hands to heaven to ask of God help, normally in prayer. In **Neh. 8:6** it is a form of showing agreement with what is happening.

Rules for Services

Paul explains rules of order in the services in 1Corinthians 14, because things were “*out of the range of what pleases God*”. Paul rebuked them because their services were focused on or manifested self edification (a self “feeling good” - “edifieth himself” **1Cor 14:4**) as the central part of things. Then Paul rebukes them for the use of tongues apparently out of a correct context or form. Tongues speaking was a great emotional show, but that missed the point of worship and praise completely. Services are for focusing on and

appreciating God, not a spectator event. Paul adds “*my understanding is unfruitful*” **1Cor 14:14**. Without working on the knowledge-mind-soul level, feelings are useless. **1Cor 14:19** *Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.* **Psa 47:7** “*sing ye praises with understanding*”. These points should cause biblical, obedient Christians to focus praise and worship on thoughts rather than feelings. Paul's view was that 5 words which were on the understanding (intellect) level was better than 10,000 words that communicated no message but just a feeling.

1Cor 14:29 *Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.* **30** *If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.* **33** *For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.* The idea is that any service where there is a lot of confusion, noise, and distractions is not biblical. It is in error. The more confusion there is, the less it pleases God. Therefore, biblical praise is never scandalous, or noisy. Biblical praise always has a order, respect, and reverence for God in it (14:40). This extends to the way ministers preach and teach, and only one person can speak at a time, and never women leading or teaching or preaching. (14:34-35).

Psa. 106:12 *Then believed they his words; they sang his praise.* **13** *They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel:* **14** *But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.* **15** *And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.*

It is very easy, even in praising and worshiping God, to get sidetracked into doing our own desires. Our worship and praise with God is what God says it should be, and our “feeling good” is not that important. We must deal strongly with our desires and feelings, and obey God instead of focusing on “us.”



True Praise

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What is praise? How is it different from worship? (according to the Bible of course). Well praise is to say something good about somebody. If a mother rises at 5:00AM every day to prepare a good breakfast for her kids, does other beneficial things, then her children may “praise her” for the good that she has done them. When they do this publicly, then that is **praise**. So in praise, we publicly recognize the acts of God for humanity which are good, great, and excellent, and in so doing, reflect God's benevolent character.

Psa. 22:3 *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.* In a sense, God dwells in these “**praises of men**”. God is highly pleased when men praise Him. The Psalmist presents God as living or inhabiting in the midst of these praises.