

Timeless Praise

Goldstone Church 25th Anniversary – 18-Sep-16 10:30am

Psalms 150:1-6

Introduction

Surely, the most momentous event of 1991 was the founding of Goldstone church! One activity has happened every day: God's people have praised God.

The book of Psalms is a familiar book to many people; it is well-known because it overflows with words of praise to God. What is not so well known, is that the 150 psalms are grouped into 5 main sections:

- **Book 1** (Psalm 1-41), making frequent use of the name "Yahweh".
- **Book 2** (Psalm 42-72), repeating the name "Elohim".
- **Book 3** (Psalm 73-89), further subdivided into 3 smaller groups.
- **Book 4** (Psalm 90-106), the phrase "the Lord reigns" can often be found.
- **Book 5** (Psalm 107-150), includes a frequent "Hallelujah".

However, the book of Psalms has always been considered as a single book, with an Introduction (Psalm 1-2), and a Conclusion (Psalm 146-150).

Psalms 150 is considered to be the final great Hallelujah. Some Bible scholars suggest that it was specifically composed to close the book of Psalms. In effect, this is the very last and greatest exclamation point in a 5-volume collection of exclamation points!

1. THE INVITATION TO PRAISE (PSALM 150:1-2)

"¹ Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. ² Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness." (Ps 150:1-2)

These verses do not sound like an Invitation. When we think of an invite, we imagine something like the invitations that we sent out for this celebration service: *"The Minister and Elders of Goldstone Church invite you to celebrate the church's 25th Anniversary"*.

However, an invitation has various characteristics:

- Participatory.** We invited you to participate in today's celebration. Similarly, the psalmist invites us to participate in praising God.
- Intentional.** We invited you to make deliberate plans to come to today's festivities. Similarly, the psalmist invites us to intentionally come into God's presence, and praise God.
- Freewill.** Our invitation did not compel you to attend today; you were free to come or to stay away. Similarly, the psalmist openly invites us to praise God for who He is. It is a free choice.
- Response.** Our invitation included an RSVP; by being here, you have made an answer. The psalmist invites us to respond in 1 of 2 ways: either respond by praising God, or respond by remaining silent.

- v) **Urgency.** The psalm has an undercurrent of urgency within the invitation. Praising God is a good thing! You've got to be there. You've got to praise God.

Today, we are presented with a fresh invitation to praise God. To praise Him for who He is. To freely and intentionally participate in praising God. How will you respond?

2. THE INSTRUMENTS OF PRAISE (PSALM 150:3-5)

"³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, ⁴ praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and flute, ⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals." (Ps 150:3-5)

Even though these verses were written centuries ago, every method of making music today is mentioned. You make music by...

- a) Blowing air into something – e.g. trumpet
- b) Plucking – harp
- c) Strumming – lyre (a lyre is like a guitar)
- d) Shake/twist – tambourine
- e) Open hand – clapping or dance
- f) Scrape/bow – strings (e.g. violin or cello)
- g) Blow across something – flute or pipe
- h) Hit together – cymbals
- i) Hit with something – resounding cymbals (gong)
- j) Acoustics make music – resounding (echoes)
- k) Breath – voice (v.6)

But who would be playing these instruments?

"David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint their fellow Levites as musicians to make a joyful sound with musical instruments: lyres, harps and cymbals." (1 Chron 15:16)

David gave instructions for there to be full time, professional musicians in the temple. So the list of instruments in Psalm 150 were tools of their trade. They used their everyday equipment to praise God.

Today, God is challenging us to use our everyday equipment to praise God. Use anything and everything to praise God. To praise God for who He is. To use our everyday equipment to praise God. How will you respond?

3. THE INVOLVEMENT IN PRAISE (PSALM 150:6)

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord." (Psalm 150:6)

Even though there is an open invitation to praise God, there are people today who want to praise God, but they are *reluctant* to get involved. There is a hesitancy of getting stuck in, of committing and actually praising God. But the psalmist says, *"let everything that has breath praise the Lord"*.

Praising God is as natural as breathing; if you have air in your lungs, then the psalmist is encouraging us all to: praise the Lord. At first, we may stumble when praising God. But don't stop; keep going. We need to be involved in praising God.

Let *everything* praise the Lord, but also, let *everyone* praise the Lord. Let us all be involved in praising God. Because He is worthy of all our praise. How will you respond?

CONCLUSION

Psalm 150 is the last and greatest exclamation point in a collection of exclamation points - but it is not a full stop. All 150 psalms encourage us to *continue* to magnify God. This doesn't mean that we can make God any bigger. Rather, as we praise God, we grow and enlarge our view and understanding of God.

As we accept the **Invitation** to praise God, as we praise Him with any and all **Instruments** that are available, we engage and get **Involved** in praise. And as we praise God, we grow in our understanding and in the truth of who He is, which inevitably lead us to further praise.

For the last 25 years, Goldstone church has been praising God; the primary focus of this congregation has been on God - magnifying and enlarging our understanding of who God is, and what He does. As Christians, as followers and disciples of Jesus Christ, we have sought to follow Him in loving obedience, and to be His ambassadors in our daily lives.

But we haven't finished yet; we've barely scratched the surface. Goldstone church will continue to focus on magnifying and praising God. Our condensed vision statement indicates the reason why we are here.

- **Grow Up**, to grow and deepen our personal relationship with Jesus.
- **Grow Out**, to share with others what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus.
- **Grow Together**, to encourage one another in our relationship with Jesus.

At the start of this next chapter in the life of Goldstone Church, let us respond afresh to the **Invitation** to praise God, to praise God with any and all **Instruments** that are available in our daily lives, and to be proactively engaged and **Involved** in praising God.

AMEN