

“A Psalm of Praise”
Psalm 33
(Preached at Trinity, July 4, 2010)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Many of the psalms were meant to be sung. The Psalter has been called “Israel’s Hymnbook.” We read from the NT that they are to be a part of the church’s music.
Colossians 3:16 – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
 2. In **Verse 1** the word translated “rejoice” refers to loud joyous expressions of praise.
ESV - Shout for joy in the LORD
NAS - Sing for joy in the LORD
 3. It follows **Psalm 32** naturally –
Psalm 32:11 – “Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are upright in heart.*”
 4. All of God’s people naturally worship Him. All sing unto Him with joy. This psalm speaks of some of the things that draw this joy out of us.
 5. Psalm 33 is one of the few psalms without a title – only one of four in the first book of the Psalter – 1, 2, 10, 33. We aren’t sure who the author is. It could be David but we can’t say for certain. It is safer just to say this is an anonymous psalm of praise.
 6. Psalm 33 is divided into three sections:
The first three verses are a call to worship and the last three serve as a conclusion in which the true worshippers declare their intention of waiting upon God. Everything in between describes why God is worthy to be praised.
 - I. **Verses 1-3** are a call to worship the Lord
 - II. **Verses 4-19** contain meditations upon why God is worthy of praise
 - III. **Verses 20-22** give us the response: wait upon the Lord and trust Him
- I. The call to worship the Lord – **Verses 1-3**
 - A. The opening call to worship contains six imperatives – in the NAS they read
 1. Sing for joy, praise, sing praises (esv – make melody), sing a new song, play skillfully, shout of joy
 2. They all call our attention to singing praises
 3. Music was vital to Israel’s worship. We read in Nehemiah Israel’s use of music in the dedication of the wall.
^{NAS} **Nehemiah 12:27** – “Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with hymns of thanksgiving and with songs *to the accompaniment* of cymbals, harps, and lyres.”

- B. God demands praise from all of His creation
Luke 19:37-40 – “And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”
Psalm 150:1-6 – “Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.”
- C. The psalmist is speaking particularly of praise that comes forth from the redeemed – the upright.
1. Thomas Watson – “Wicked men are bound to praise God, but they are not fit to praise him. None but a living Christian can tune God’s praise. The godly alone are fit to be choristers in God’s praises.”
 2. The psalmist describes it as is is a new song - new as opposed to the old
 “Sing unto him a new song”
 Always fresh and full of life
 3. Regeneration makes all things new – our music is also transformed
 Spurgeon – “Let us not present old worn-out praise, but put life and soul and heart into every song, since we have new mercies every day and see new beauties in the work and word of our Lord.”
 4. The Christian should sing from the heart
Ephesians 5:19 – “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”
Colossians 3:16 – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
 5. Christian worship is Christ centered, heart filled, passionate, heavenly
 6. Christian worship is giving God our best – “Play skillfully with a shout of joy”
 Spurgeon – “God deserves the best that we have. Every Christian should endeavour to sing according to the rules of the art, so that he may keep time and tune with the congregation. The sweetest tunes and the sweetest voices, with the sweetest words, are all too little for the Lord our God

II. Meditations upon why God is worthy of praise – **Verses 4-19**

- A. The psalmist enumerates some of the things that draw out the praise of of God's people
1. **Verse 4** – the Word of God
 “For the word of the LORD *is* right; and all his works *are done* in truth. – The Word of God is right and true.
 - a. God speaks with power and authority. His Word is sufficient, it is pure, it is infallible, it is sharp and powerful
 - b. We receive God's Word with great thanksgiving praising God for giving us such a great treasure
Psalm 119:162 – “I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.”
 2. **Verse 5** – the love of God
 - a. God loves righteousness and justice and He manifests it upon the earth through His elect people.
 - b. He has poured His love out upon them
 - c. This is from the Hebrew **אֱהָבָה** - God's covenant love
ESV the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.
NAS The earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD.
NIV the earth is full of his unfailing love.
 - d. As you consider God's wondrous love for you it should fill your lips with praise
 3. **Verses 6-9** – God's mighty work of creation
 - a. By His mighty power God spoke and all things came into existence
Psalm 33:9 – “For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”
 - b. Let all of creation stand in awe of Him.
 - c. As we consider this God it should cause us to fall down and worship. It should cause us to shout forth His praise to the ends of the earth.
 4. **Verses 10-12** – God's mighty reign over the nations
 - a. God rules this earth. Nothing happens except by His Divine decree. His eternal purposes stand.
Isaiah 46:10 – “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:”
 - b. No one can oppose Him. No one can call Him into question. He is accountable to none
Daniel 4:35 – “And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”
 - c. Every heart is in God's hand
Proverbs 21:1 – “The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.”

- d. This should cause us to shout forth in awe of God’s mighty power to rule the nations. As things seem to be out of control God is unfolding His perfect plan
 - 5. **Verse 13-15** – God’s watchful eye over the works of men
 - a. God looks down from heaven – He sees the works of men
 - b. Nothing can be hid from God.
Christ tells the church – “I know thy works”
 - c. And He sees our worship. He hears our songs of praise. And He knows our heart
 - 6. **Verses 16-19** – God’s mighty hand of protection to all who look to Him
 - a. It isn’t a great army or powerful political party that we rest upon
 - b. Mighty weapons are a false hope.
 - c. Our hope is in God and God alone – **Verses 18-19**
 - B. God is worthy to be praised
 - 1. He is the Mighty Creator who rules over all of His creation
 - 2. He cares for His people with an everlasting love. Those who align themselves with God and His purposes find a gracious and loving God who cares for them with unfailing love
 - 3. God is worthy to be praised. We must praise Him.
- III. The response to wait upon the Lord and trust Him – **Verses 20-22**
- A. The people responded in faith to this call to worship
 - 1. We are not sure of the exact context of this psalm but apparently Israel was being threatened by some powerful nation.
 - 2. They are reminded that God created this world. He rules this world. No army is too powerful for Him.
They are reminded that their confidence isn’t in horses or weapons. Their confidence is in God.
 - 3. Therefore . . . “Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he *is* our help and our shield.”
 - a. To wait upon God is a great virtue. It demands faith. It demands patience.
 - b. It reminds us of the old battlefield command, “Don’t shoot until you see the whites of their eyes.” Imagine the infantry charging with swords drawn. You only get one shot. Wait. Wait. The weak get their shot off and then retreat.
 - B. As the people of God we can live with confidence and praise
 - 1. Things may seem hopeless, but be patient, wait – And Rejoice!
Rejoice even before you see the victory. Rejoice because you serve a mighty God.
 - 2. We serve the God of creation who orders all things. There is nothing that happens upon the earth that hasn’t first been decreed in heaven.
We can wait upon Him with confidence and expectation.
Psalms 33:21 – “For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.”

3. The psalm ends with a great shout of confidence
Psalm 33:22 – “Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.”
- a. Again, the word is **יָסֵד**
^{ESV} **Psalm 33:22** – “Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.”
^{NASB} **Psalm 33:22** – “Let your lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, According as we have hoped in you.”
- b. God is with us through every crisis. He defends us from every enemy.
 But notice the qualifying statement.
 “according as we hope in thee.”

Conclusion:

1. God is worthy of praise. He is worthy of our trust. He is worthy of our love.
2. Is your heart filled with awe over Him? Is your life filled with joy? Praise is the proper response of the one who knows this God. Do you praise Him? Do you love to worship Him? When we sing do you shout for joy?