

Posture of Praise

Introduction

I. God's steadfast posture

A. He Stands

1. Everlasting Dominion

Over all His works

Creation - *"The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that he has made."* (v.9)

His people – *"The Lord preserves all who love Him."* (v. 20)

The wicked - destined for destruction (v. 20) but they're extended the blessings of His common grace.
"For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends His rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. 5:45)

Over kings and kingdoms

David - *"I will extol you, my God and king."* (v.1)

Israel - *"They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom."* (v. 11)

Pagan rulers –Nebuchadnezzar; after God humbled him, he came to his senses and quoted vs. 13: *"[God's] kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation."* (Dan 4:3)

The nations – *"The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed... [The Rock] shall break in pieces all kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever."*(Dan 2:44)

Over All generations

For all time -*"One generation shall commend your works to another. They shall declare your mighty acts. Your dominion endures throughout all generations."* (vv.4, 13)

"Each generation of believers will add to that old story the account of what God also has done with them. God continues to act for us and in us." (Boice, 1252)

2. Unsearchable Greatness

Wondrous works

Creation- *"There is something about every creature which [exists] to the honor of God. The skill, kindness and power manifested in the formation of each living thing is in itself to the praise of God."*(Spurgeon)

Awesome deeds (terrible)

This includes God's greatness displayed in events such as the Flood, the Exodus, and the crossing of the Red Sea, resulting in rescue for the children of God and judgment for the wicked.

"Certainly God is almighty and all-wise and all-knowing. The unexpected thing is that God should be gracious to those who have spurned His rightful authority." (Boice, 1252)

B. He Stoops

"He raises up all who are bowed down."(v.14)

He comes down

1. The Exodus

Pre-eminent OT wondrous work – when God redeemed His people *"by signs and wonders, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."* (Deut. 4:34)

"I have surely seen the affliction of my people...and have heard their cry...I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them." (Ex. 3:7-8)

2. In Christ

"The LORD is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His works." (v. 17)

Jesus –came down and lived out God's *"abundant goodness and righteousness."*(v. 7)

Abundant goodness – it was His kind intention to rescue sinners

"But God being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."(Eph. 2:4-6)

Righteousness – God's righteousness encompasses more than His own moral uprightness and Holiness. It means He is and upright and just. To set things right, God's rescue must deal with our unrighteousness.

"For Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous that He might bring us to God." (1 Pet. 3:18)

C. He Stays

"The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." (v. 8)

1. Provides for the dependent

"The eyes of all look to you and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing." (v. 15)

Creatures – God is generous and faithfully provides for those who must wait for his help.

God is faithful to his promise to Noah

"Never again will I destroy all living creatures as I have done. As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, will never cease." (Gen 8:21-22)

His people – how much greater is his care for His people.

Physical *"The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows." (Luke 12:7)*

Spiritual – our greatest need is God Himself

“Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in Thee.” (Augustine)

“My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:19)

2. Helps the inadequate

“The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.” (v. 14)

Falling - *“When he falls, he shall not be hurled headlong for the Lord is the One who holds his hand.”(Ps. 37:24)*

Jesus revealed God’s heart for the lost as He hung out with the tax collectors, prostitutes and sinners.

“God’s choice of the fallen, and the falling, as the subjects of His gracious help, is specially to be noted. The Lord loves to reverse things -He puts down the lofty, and lifts up the lowly, raising those who have no means to lift themselves.” (Spurgeon)

Bowed down – *“In their affliction, He was afflicted...He lifted them and carried them...” (Is 63:9)*

God lifts those bowed down with sickness, sorrow, depression, shame and guilt.

“God [has the] power to revive lost hope and failed abilities ‘and straightens backs which are bent.’” (Kidner, 519)

3. Answers prayers

“He is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. He fulfills the desire of those who fear Him; He also hears their cry and saves them.” (v. 18-19)

Near - *“The symbolism of the word near is not confined to the thought of being within earshot, but may include that of the closeness of friends and the [benefit] of help that is ready and waiting.” (Kidner, 519)*

In truth – A heart that fears the Lord comes to *“desire what a Holy God can give, and so its desire is filled full out of the fullness of the Lord.”(Spurgeon)*

Ongoing – *“With good will He keeps acting for those who fear him: He keeps hearing their cry for help and saves them.” (Motyer, 412)*

“We are not rubbing a lamp, making a wish, we are children crying out to the sovereign God who cares for us and answers our feeble, half hearted and even intemperate rants with love, wisdom and compassion.” (Horton,

II. Our posture of praise

A. Is Responsive

Extol Him

Bless His name

Meditate on His works

Speak of His deeds

Declare His greatness

Pour forth His fame

Sing of His righteousness

Give thanks

Tell of His power

Make Him known to the children

B. What if my heart can't feel it?

Remember His posture of love towards you:

"We have come to know and have believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him." (1 John 4:16)

He doesn't change:

"Making God's love contingent on our action is a sad but common misunderstanding in the church. Remember, a believer's union in never in jeopardy. For God's love is an eternal love, that had no beginning, that shall have no ending; that cannot be heightened by any act of ours, that cannot be lessened by any thing in us. While our sense of communion with God may fluctuate, His love does not grow and diminish. The wrath of God against the sin of saints was exhausted on the cross." (Jerry Bridges)

Questions for Discussion

1. This psalm begins with praise from the individual, widens the scope to the community of believers and concludes with all flesh blessing God's holy name forever. Does being in the community of believers help you to praise God? How or why?
2. Given culture the generations following us are facing, how can we encourage them?
3. Pastor John Piper says, *"The reason God seeks our praise isn't because He won't be fully God until He gets it, but that we won't be happy until we give it."* Would believing this make a difference? Why or why not?

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Untitled Hymn

Weak and wounded sinner
Lost and left to die
O, raise your head, for love is passing by
Come to Jesus
Come to Jesus
Come to Jesus and live!

Now your burden's lifted
And carried far away
And precious blood has washed away the stain, so
Sing to Jesus
Sing to Jesus
Sing to Jesus and live!

And like a newborn baby
Don't be afraid to crawl
And remember when you walk
Sometimes we fall, so
Fall on Jesus
Fall on Jesus
Fall on Jesus and live!

Sometimes the way is lonely
And steep and filled with pain
So if your sky is dark and pours the rain, then
Cry to Jesus
Cry to Jesus
Cry to Jesus and live!

O, and when the love spills over
And music fills the night
And when you can't contain your joy inside, then
Dance for Jesus
Dance for Jesus
Dance for Jesus and live!

And with your final heartbeat
Kiss the world goodbye
Then go in peace, and laugh on Glory's side, and
Fly to Jesus
Fly to Jesus
Fly to Jesus and live!
Fly to Jesus
Fly to Jesus
Fly to Jesus and live!

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