

## 23.5.21 pm: An Invitation to Praise God

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[ 0 : 01 ] Well good evening, a warm welcome to the service this evening, those who are in the building and those who are watching online, those also who listen in on the telephone sometime later.

It's good for us to come together again and to worship God and it's good to have some visitors with us here tonight, I think.

I was expecting some visitors, I'm not sure if I'm seeing any. At least we are, yeah. It's good to see some visitors with us tonight and it's good to have some students who've been away for a while back home, so good to see you Kyle and others who may be coming back over the next few weeks. Let's begin this time of worship. I will sing to God's praise, or Farrakhar will sing to God's praise and we'll sing in our own hearts. 1-2-0-9 in Mission Praise.

Mission Praise 1-2-0-9. And this is a hymn that we know well now. My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain, who plumbed the depths of my disgrace and gave me life again, who crushed my curse of sinfulness and clothed me with his light and wrote his law of righteousness with power upon my heart.

[ 1 : 19 ] This hymn that we sing, the whole hymn, or we follow, we praise God with the whole hymn from our hearts and Farrakhar with his lips and Adam as he accompanies on the piano.

My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain.

who plumbed the depths of my disgrace and gave me life again, who crushed my curse of sinfulness and clothed me with his light and wrought his law of righteousness with power upon my heart.

My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who walks beside, who floods my weaknesses with strength and causes fears to fly, whose every promise is enough for every step I do.

take, sustaining me with thankfulness to him who takes, sustaining me with arms of love and crowning me with grace.

[ 3 : 13 ] My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who reigns above, whose wisdom is my perfect peace, whose every thought is love. For every day I have on earth is given by the King. So I will give my life, my all, to love and follow him.

Amen. Let's unite our hearts now in prayer. Let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you once more at the end of this Lord's day that you have taken us to this place, this place where you have promised that you will meet with us.

We thank you, Lord, for the assurance that you give us through your word that where we come together in the name of Jesus, even if it be only a few of us, you will meet with us, presence yourself amongst us.

And we ask, Lord, that we would know that, that we would sense that presence of God in this place. We pray that you would still our hearts. We pray that you would take away from our minds much of the troubles, the cares, the anxieties of this world that sometimes can block us from being able to worship you.

[ 5 : 09 ] We confess, Lord, that these anxieties and struggles in this world, the cares of this world, as Jesus put in, they can come up and they can choke us. They can sometimes, they can sometimes cause us to lose sight of you.

But we thank you, Lord, that we are promised that as we keep our eyes upon Jesus, you will sustain us, you will strengthen us, you will give us all that we need to keep on keeping on.

So enable us, we pray, in this hour to truly be in worship, take away the anxieties, the stray thoughts. We ask, Lord, that you would cleanse us from the sin that we confess.

We look back over past days and we can think of situations, we can think of conversations, we can think of things that we should have done that we haven't and things that we shouldn't have done that we have.

We can think of hours that we may have wasted, priorities which we may have put ahead of you. And we confess, Lord, all that amounts to sin.

[ 6 : 28 ] And we pray that you would cleanse us in the blood of Christ. And we ask, Lord, that in this hour also that you would empty us of self. We are people who are so quick to be turned in on ourselves.

But we pray that you would enable us not to have eyes on self, but to have eyes on Jesus. We pray that you would enable us to say and to say with sincerity what John the Baptist said.

He, Jesus, must increase and I self must decrease. So we pray, Lord, that would be our mindset, that that would be our hearts as we seek to draw near to you this evening in worship.

And we thank you, Lord, that as we seek to draw near to you, you have promised that you will draw near to us. And equally, when we seek to return to you, you have promised that you will return to us.

When we humble ourselves, when we repent of sin, when we cry out to you, whether as individuals or whether as a land. We thank you that you hear our prayers, you hear our cries.

[ 7 : 42 ] And you are able to answer, you are able to heal. And so, Lord, we pray for that. We pray for that for ourselves and our own lives. We pray for that for our nation. We confess, Lord, that we have strayed and we do stray far from you.

And we thank you, Lord, that in this day we still have the freedom to be able to worship you. We listen to those that are in authority over us and we hear so little in the way of respect, in the way of fear of God.

And that grieves us, Lord, as we know it grieves you. We pray, Lord, that you would turn us back to yourself. You have called us to pray for those that you have allowed to be in authority over us.

And we would seek to do that even now. Those in positions of power, in politics, in this country and across different countries in this world.

We acknowledge, Lord, that you are the sovereign God. Nothing happens without your permission. And you have called us to bring those individuals that you have allowed to be in these positions before you in prayer.

[ 8 : 59 ] And so we do that now and we ask, Lord, that you would enable us to know under their government peace and the freedom to be able to worship.

We feel sometimes that that is under threat. But we pray against agendas that would seek to stifle the gospel.

And we ask, Lord, that we would continue to know the freedom that we have to preach, to proclaim Christ and to gather together in worship. We pray for the prime minister.

We pray for the prime minister. We pray for the prime minister. We pray for those who are Christians in government. We pray especially for Kate Forbes, whom we've heard from in the past here. We thank you, Lord, for the encouragement of reading an interview with her this week where she clearly spoke of her faith in Jesus.

Of the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus. And we pray that you would bless her for that clarity of witness. And we pray that you would protect her.

[ 10 : 02 ] As we expect there will be a backlash against that. I give to her courage and wisdom. Enable her to seek first your kingdom.

As we pray that you would enable each of us to seek first your kingdom. We pray for countries where there is no such freedom to worship. We've heard of some of them in past weeks and times of prayer midweek.

We think of Pakistan. We think of India. We think of Iran. We think of Iraq. We think of the DPRK.

And the little that we know of the horrors that your people have to endure in that place grieves us. But we pray that you would strengthen them. We pray that you would encourage them. And we thank you, Lord, that we hear so many testimonies of how in these places where the persecution is most acute.

The gospel goes forth with greatest power. So we continue to pray for those whom we have not met in time. But who are our brothers and sisters in Christ.

[ 11 : 09 ] We pray for those who are struggling this evening. We pray on for those who are grieving. Asking that you would give to them comfort. We pray for those who feel that sense of loss of loved ones having been taken from a time, this time into eternity.

We pray for others who have that sense of grief as relationships in this world can be severed and they can be broken. And as we think of them, Lord, we ask that you would draw near to them also. In this world, there is much in the way of trouble. But we thank you that Jesus has overcome this world. And we thank you that as we call out to Christ ourselves and as we bring others to Jesus in prayer.

Lord God, you are able to bring the comfort and the strength and the grace that is sufficient for all things. We ask, Lord, that you would be with those who are on holiday with us and those who will come into the island in future weeks.

We pray for your blessing upon them and for times of refreshment. We thank you for the students who have come back and who are coming back. We pray also that they would know times of refreshment over the summer months and that they would know a close walk with you.

[ 12 : 29 ] And we thank you, Lord, for your protection of us. We are thankful for the encouragement of being able to meet together in greater numbers than we did at one time.

And yet we remember that we are still only a small gathering compared to days gone by. We thank you, Lord, for your protection over us over this year of pandemic.

We thank you for so much of your guarding of us as we have seen so little in the way of infection and the island here. We thank you for those who have cared for us and those who have guided us through these difficult times.

And, Lord, we thank you that you are the sovereign God. And that even in circumstances that we could never have imagined and circumstances that we would never have chosen, we thank you that you have continued to work and continued to prove that you are faithful and that we are able to trust you.

And we thank you, Lord, above all for the cross of Jesus. As we reflect on the words of the hymn, we thank you for the one who bore our pain, the one who took our disgrace upon himself in order that we could have life that is eternal.

[ 13 : 56 ] And so help us, we pray, to look to, to fix our eyes on Jesus. Help us, we pray, to come to the cross of Christ if we have never come there before, confessing sin and seeking salvation.

And enable us, if we are your people, to never stray any distance from the cross, but each day to come back to Calvary, to be filled with thankfulness to you for all that you have done for us in your grace.

To hear our prayers, cleanse us from sin, fill us with the Holy Spirit, and enable us, we pray, as we open your word to meet with you.

And we pray this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. If you could open your Bibles now, please. That's Psalm 150. Psalm 150. Psalm 150.

And we'll read the whole of this short psalm. Psalm 150. Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary.

[ 15 : 31 ] Praise him in his mighty heavens. Praise him for his acts of power. Praise him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet.

Praise him with the harp and lyre. Praise him with tambourine and dancing. Praise him with the strings and flute. Praise him with the strings and flute.

Praise him with a clash of cymbals. Praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord. We'll pray once more as we come back to the word. Enable us, Lord, we pray, to hear your voice.

Enable us to sense your presence. And enable us from our hearts truly to praise you with the psalmist. As we gather in your presence and as we bow before your throne.

[ 16 : 33 ] And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. It's good to see some boys and girls here tonight. I'm going to give you a wee word of encouragement.

We'll definitely be finished before seven o'clock tonight. I'm sorry I've been a bit late the last few weeks. But we're going to move through this short psalm quite quickly.

And I want to begin this evening by thinking about the fact that all of us get invitations. In fact, boys and girls, maybe you can answer that question for me.

What kind of invitations do we get in this life? Do you know what's an invitation, first of all? Any ideas? Caitlin? Pardon?

Invited to a place. It's when somebody says, do you want to come to a place? So, there's lots of times in this life that we get invitations. What kind of things do we get invited to?

[17:36] Can you think, Lois? Parties, yeah. We get invited to parties. Andrew? Weddings, yes.

I'm going to a wedding on Tuesday. I'm going to do a wedding on Tuesday. Nanny's granddaughter, Sheila's, is getting married on Tuesday in the Harris Hotel. So, I'm looking forward to that wedding on Tuesday.

So, that's a good answer. So, weddings and parties and anything else? Can you think? It doesn't matter if you can't think.

No, that's enough. Well, we all get invitations to different places, don't we? Maybe some people get invited to come to church. I don't know, the first time you came to church, is it because someone invited you?

Probably. And every day we get invitations. We might not always realize it, but every day we're getting invitations. On the day I was beginning preparing this message, it was just before 11 o'clock, and I thought to myself, how many invitations have I had today?

[18:46] So, I looked in my junk mail folder in my email, and I had an invitation to buy shirts from Fatface from 20% off. I had an invitation to buy cashmere from the House of Brewer.

Don't know how on earth I got that. An invitation to buy footwear from Millets. Lightwear fleeces from Outdoor and Country. I had an invitation from Barhead Travel to book a holiday, and TU to make some plans come rain or shine.

And that was all just one morning in my junk mail folder. Lots and lots of invitations. And as the boys and girls have said, we get lots of invitations in life.

We get invitations to go to weddings. We get invitations sometimes to meet up for a coffee. I imagine this week passed, when we've had a bit of freedom, somebody might have said, you want to come to the house?

Let's have a cup of tea together. There's lots of invitations that we get in this life. And this psalm, this short psalm that we've read, it's an invitation that comes from God, through the psalmist.

[20:00] We're not sure who wrote this psalm. And it comes to us. So this evening, as we've read this psalm, we have an invitation from God to us, to praise him.

John Stodd, the commentator, says, every verse, is an invitation to praise, telling us where and why, how and by whom, the praise of God should be expressed.

So let's think just for a few minutes this evening about this invitation. Let's open up this invitation, and consider this invitation, and respond to this invitation that we're given to praise God.

Four points this morning. Don't worry, there's not going to be ten points tonight as well. Four points this morning. The first point, I didn't tell Stuart this, the first point is the focus of our praise.

The second point is the field of praise. The third point is the force of praise. And the final point we have this evening is the fullness of praise.

[21:16] That kind of gives us the structure for the psalm. And it begins with that focus of praise.

Now most of us have phones, don't we? And on our phones, there's lots of different apps that we have, and one thing that young people tend to use more than we tend to use is the cameras.

They're always on the cameras. And if you open up the camera on a phone, and you point it in the direction of something, the camera lens will immediately search for the focus of the picture.

So, if there's individuals, if there's people in the frame, the camera lens will immediately fix onto these people, onto these faces, and try to get focus.

Now what's the focus of the psalmist's praise as the psalm opens? That's the question, and the answer very clearly comes from the beginning of the psalm.

The focus is on God. As we open this psalm, we're not immediately to look at ourselves, although the Bible is like a mirror that shows us ourselves, but the focus of the psalm from the very beginning is God.

[22:33] praise the Lord, praise God. And that's the kind of verse that we might just note very briefly and move on from.

God. And yet, even as we think about these opening words of introduction, even the names of God that the psalmist uses should stir us to praise.

who are we invited to praise? Well, we're invited to praise the Lord, verse 1. And the words that's used there for the Lord is the word Yah, Jehovah, short for Jehovah.

and that's the covenant name for God. We praise the God who hasn't hidden himself from us and pushed us back, but we praise the God who has revealed himself to us and called us forward.

We praise the God who has told us his name. We praise the God who's shared with us the great love that he has for us.

[ 23 : 50 ] We praise the Lord. There's some people that we meet, that we encounter in life and we might want to get to know them.

We meet them and we feel an affinity with them. We want to actually get close to them. But as we try to speak to them, they close us down.

they don't reveal anything of their nature, their personality. They may not even tell us their names. But when we think about the Lord, this is the God who has told us his name.

The God of all creation. The almighty God. He condescends to us. And yet he condescends to us. He tells us his name.

He tells us that he is the Lord who loves us. And we see that love for us in the old covenant.

[ 24 : 55 ] As we look at how God deals with Israel in the old testament, we see such love. We see such patience. We see how slow to anger he is. We see how long-suffering he is.

We see how how gracious he is. We hear how many gracious, rich promises he makes to his people. That he will be with them always. Even though they are so objectionable, untrustworthy, he continues to reach out to them.

He promises never to leave them. He promises to give them a home. promises to give them rest. Promises to save them.

And then if we think about the Lord as we think from the old covenant to the new covenant, we see more and more of the riches of God's love for us and his grace towards us and his mercy shown to us in Christ.

Christ, Jesus is the one who was and is the fulfillment of all the promises of God to his people.

[ 26 : 14 ] So who are we to praise? We praise this God. We praise the Lord. But we also praise God.

Look at the description of the words used in verse 1. Praise the Lord. Praise God. Praise Jehovah. Praise El. It's the second word that's used there in Hebrew.

And that means the strong God, the strong one, the almighty, the all powerful, the holy God, the God who is other than us.

We praise him. Remember when Paul came to Athens in Acts, I can't remember what chapter, is it Acts 16?

And he's looking around Athens. He comes to Mars Hill, isn't it? And he sees this altar. And he says on it, to the unknown God.

[ 27 : 19 ] And Paul speaks to the people and he says, I'm going to proclaim to you the God who is making himself known. Well, we gather this evening and with Psalm 150 open, we are invited to praise not the unknown God, but the God who is reaching out to us, who is speaking to us, the God who is making himself known to us, who has made himself known to us in creation, in his word, and supremely in the word made flesh, Jesus.

And as our focus is drawn to him, as we see the love, the faithfulness, the power, the holiness of the Lord God, we are called, we are invited to praise him.

So that's the first point, the focus of our praise. We see the Lord God, and we are invited as we look to him to praise him.

The second point we come to now is the field of praise. there are experts in all kinds of fields, all kinds of areas of life.

You can have experts in history, ask them about different things that happened in Harris, and they have answers at the tips of their fingers. We can have experts in medicine.

[ 28 : 54 ] If we have ailments and issues, we can go to them and they can give us expert advice.

We can have experts in sport, you can ask them any kind of minutiae about different kinds of sports, and they have answers.

We can say they're experts in their field. But if you ask them a question about another field that may interest someone else, they have no answers to give.

If you ask somebody who's an expert in history a question about geography, they'll say, well, I don't have the answer, I'm not interested in the answer. It's not my field. And when it comes to the things of God, some people would say, as we speak to them about the things of God, well, that's fine for you.

You can get enthusiastic about that. You can read your Bible. You can gather in your building. You can sing praises. That's fine for you. But I'm not interested.

You can have your interest in the things of God. I don't object to you having your faith. I don't object to you, particularly coming into a building to worship.

[ 30 : 11 ] But this has nothing to do with me. I'm disconnecting. This is not my field. But that's not true.

We may not be particularly interested in God at this point in time. Perhaps there may be some even who are listening. Under duress. Saying, well, I'm not very interested in any of this.

Not interested in the things of God. But the thing is, God is interested in you. And you and I will all stand before God. We will meet him.

And what we hear through the psalm is that everyone is invited, everyone is called, everyone is summoned to praise the Lord God.

Praise the Lord, verse 1. Praise God in his sanctuary, in his mighty heavens. So we have two fields of praise that we could say. There are two areas where praise is called for.

[ 31 : 16 ] His sanctuary, first of all, and his mighty heavens. So where is the sanctuary? What does that mean? Well, it could mean the temple in Jerusalem.

That's probably what was in the psalmist's mind as he wrote this. Praise God in his sanctuary, praise God in that temple, in that place that was set aside in Jerusalem.

But it could actually mean much more than that. It could be a much wider description than just the sanctuary, than that little place. Kidna, the commentator, says the call is to God's worshippers on earth, meeting at his holy, at his chosen place, sorry.

So his sanctuary, I think, is actually the whole earth. God is the creator. This is his world.

He has put us in it. And every individual who stands on this earth is called to praise the Lord, to praise God.

[ 32 : 31 ] So there's to be praise in the field of a sanctuary, but there's also to be praise in his mighty heavens. Now, where is that? Well, we don't have to think too long about that.

His mighty heavens is talking about another world. It's talking about heaven. And also there, there is the call, there is the invitation, there is the summons to praise.

John Stott summarizes it this way. He says, this verse is an invitation to both humans and angels to worship God. Humans in earth's sanctuary and angels in heaven.

It reminds us that praise of God is one, the church below, joining angels and archangels and all the company of heaven in his worship.

So when Farrakhar stands there to sing praise to God, he joins together with the angels as he responds with them to this call to praise God.

[ 33 : 41 ] God, when our hearts are moved to join together in that praise, we are responding together with the angels in heaven to praise the Lord, to praise God.

So there are these fields of praise, his sanctuary, this world, his mighty heavens, the world to come. I don't know if any of you watched the football last weekend. I think it was on Monday night, I was catching up, watching some of the games, and I was watching the highlights of the Liverpool versus West Brom game from Monday night.

Now, for those who are following the premiership, Liverpool needed to win that match. If they were to have any chance of having a place in Europe next season, Liverpool had to win that match.

No draw, no loss, had to be a win. And so the game went on and it went on, and it was, I think, five minutes past time. Ninety minutes had passed, it was in overtime.

[ 34 : 57 ] And Liverpool, they had a corner in the dying seconds. So the guy went up to take the corner, and then we saw a strange sight. We saw the Liverpool keeper leaving his goal, coming to the box of the opposing team.

The shot, the corner was taken, Liverpool keeper unmarked, up he is in the air, heads the ball, scores the goal. And it was absolute jubilation on the pitch as he scored this goal.

Final whistle was blown, Liverpool won the match. They're still in the running for Europe. And the keeper, a Brazilian, his name is Alison, he's a Christian.

He was interviewed after by Match of the Day, and when he was asked about the goal, to talk them through the goal, he said, there are some things you can't explain in life. He says, the only explanation I can give is God.

God put the ball in my head. God moved me to score this goal. He gave the glory, he gave the praise to God as he spoke about this amazing goal that he scored.

[ 36 : 12 ] And then the interviewer went on to ask him how he was. His father had recently passed away and he became quite emotional as he spoke about his father's passing.

And he said something along the lines of this. He said, I hope that he is seeing this today with God at his side.

And I kind of listened to that interview and thought about it a little. And we don't know too much about what heaven sees of this earth.

Much of what is experienced in heaven is hidden from us. To be honest, I don't think a football match on planet earth is going to be of great interest to heaven.

But, football aside for a moment, when the Lord God is praised, whether it's in a church building or standing at the side of the pitch answering questions on match of the day, when God is praised, Christ, there's a joining together of those who are below in the sanctuary of this world with those who are in the mighty heavens.

[ 37 : 41 ] There's a joining together of the earth below, the sanctuary below, and the mighty heavens in the one action, the one activity, and that's the praise of God.

And when we think about those that we miss, those who have gone on to be with the Lord, those who are in his mighty heavens, you know, we're never closer to them than we are when we are praising God.

What is heaven doing? very difficult for us to compute any of that. But we know that in the mighty heavens, the angels, the heavenly hosts, are engaged in praising God.

And we are invited, even through this psalm, to join with them, to join with the angels in praising the Lord God.

God. So there's the focus of praise, the Lord God, there's the field of praise, the earth below, the sanctuary below, and his mighty heavens.

[ 39 : 03 ] And thirdly here, we have the fours of praise. If you look at verse two, you'll note in verse two that there's two fours in verse two, two reasons for our praise of God.

First of all, we praise him for his acts of power, and secondly, we praise God for his surpassing greatness. So first of all, thinking about his acts of power, we praise him for his acts of power.

Well, what acts of power are these? To try and answer that question, I mean, how long have we got? Everything that we know of power, everything that requires power, comes from God.

God, think about creation. Everything that we see, everything that we are, comes from the power of God.

He acted, and everything that was not, came into existence, through the power of God, power of his word.

[ 40 : 14 ] God. And everything that continues to be, only continues to be, because of the sustaining power of God.

And as we think about salvation, that too, it comes flowing from that sole source, the power of God. We think back to the context of this, Sam, Israel as a nation could look back on their salvation history, that salvation with a small s.

They could recall victories over enemies that were far greater, far mightier than they were. And they could ask the question, where did we get the power to overcome? The answer was God.

Think about David, the most famous psalmist, standing against Goliath, little David, standing against this mighty giant. how does he overcome him?

Not in his own strength, but through the power of God. Think about the Exodus. The nation of Israel trapped in Egypt, as they try to negotiate a release from Egypt, what do they have to trade with?

[ 41 : 34 ] They have no political power, they have no military power, so how is it that they find a release from Egypt? well, it was an act of God's power. The salvation that Israel knew as a nation, it was all down to his acts of power.

As we think about our salvation, if we are saved here this evening, our salvation comes with a capital X.

salvation, we are not thinking about particular victories in time, we are thinking about an eternal salvation. How is it possible for sinners like us to be saved?

Well, in our strength it was impossible, but through Christ, through his death, through his resurrection, what was impossible for us was made possible by the act of God's power.

And as we think about that, we should praise him. That's the movement that we note in the hymn that we sang.

[ 42 : 58 ] Praising God flows from a thankfulness for God's saving acts of power towards us in Christ.

That's what we sang, isn't it? My heart is filled with thankfulness to him who bore my pain, who plumbed the depths of my disgrace and gave me life again, who crushed my curse of sinfulness and clothed me in his light and wrote his law of righteousness with power upon my heart.

If you can sing these words and if they're true in your experience, we cannot but be moved to praise him.

And if we have no praise for him, I would question if this is the salvation that we've been given. The forest of praise, we praise him for his acts of power.

Secondly, here, we praise him for his surpassing greatness. And this is a really hard thing to even be able to say anything about in terms of a word of exposition.

[ 44 : 19 ] We praise him for his surpassing greatness. How do we explore this? how can we talk about the surpassing greatness of God?

We don't have a vocabulary for it. You know, when we want to communicate how great a thing is, we measure that great thing in comparison to other things.

We use hyperbole to use the technical term to make the point. We might say, you know, she's as fast as a gazelle. We might say, you know, she's as brave as a lion or he's as strong as an ox.

We're using the picture of something stronger or faster or braver to make a point. But when it comes to God, there's nothing and no one equal with or greater than him.

We can't find a measure to speak about the greatness of God. We can't use hyperbole because we have no images to employ.

[ 45 : 39 ] His greatness surpasses everything we know and can conceive of. And so the only fitting response to the surpassing greatness of God, as we think about it for a moment and then find that we can't actually process this, the only thing we can do is praise him.

John Stott again says, God's acts of power are not specified, but will include his works of creation, preservation, providence, and redemption. They are the expression of his surpassing greatness.

This is the perennial theme of worship, the greatness of God displayed in his works. So we see there the fours of praise, the reasons for praise.

There's the focus of praise, as we look to the Lord God, there's the field of praise, the sanctuary below, the heavens above, there's the fours, there's the reasons of praise, for praise.

We praise God for his acts of power, we praise God for the surpassing greatness that's in himself.

And finally, we see here the fullness, or we hear the fullness of praise that comes through this psalm, verses 3 to 5.

[ 47 : 03 ] Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with the tambourine and dancing, praise him with strings and flute, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.

Josh, who often sang for us when we were in lockdown, we weren't able to come into the church at all, the opera singer, he was in France for the last few weeks recording a concert and there was various singers with him and a full orchestra and a conductor that he spoke about a few times.

And that's the picture here. The psalmist is the conductor, we're part of this choir or this orchestra and we are being directed through this psalm to give whole hearted, full praise to God.

Kidner says the answer to the question how we praise God is with everything you have. We have all these instruments that are listed.

the trumpet was an instrument that was used in great national and sacred occasions in Israel where God was praised. The tambourine and dancing were used in joyous celebrations where there was a victory.

[ 48 : 32 ] The tambourine and dancing would be used to celebrate and to praise God. And the strings and the flute were kind of lower key, more everyday instruments that were used in everyday worship.

And the variety of instruments that are listed here are listed to demonstrate the fullness of praise that there should be coming from our lives for the Lord God.

Every occasion, every day, every context, we're to use everything we have. Even our football boots, as the Brazilian keeper showed, to praise God.

And yet fullness of praise, it's not just about the instruments that are listed, it's not just about the things that we use to make a noise. It's about who we are.

it's our whole lives. Why do we have breath? Why do we have breath?

[ 49 : 50 ] We have breath, so that we will use it to praise the Lord. Let everything, verse 6, that has breath, praise the Lord.

one of the lessons that we learned from Psalm 148 was to note that the sea creatures and the wild animals, the cattle, the birds, by their very being, in their intricacy, in their design, in their movements, they praise the Lord.

And we are called, we are invited, to join with them. and every living thing in praising the Lord from our hearts and with our whole lives.

One commentator says, the mere noise of instruments and movements of dancing are not acceptable to God, however beautiful unless they express the devotion of our hearts and minds. This is a praise that comes from deep within our hearts and flows out of our lives, whether through the sung voice, the music that's played, or even the interviews that are given are much of the day.

[ 51 : 29 ] Praise begins at heart level and flows out through our lives until it's seen and heard. I think one of the best illustrations of this is in a passage that I love from Mark 14.

And we have that picture in that passage of this lady who has been forgiven for much. And she comes into this place and she begins to worship Jesus.

She breaks this jar of perfume. She anoints Jesus with it, this expensive gift. The room's filled with the fragrance of this extravagant offering.

And people look on with a critical eye and say, why the fuss? Why the expense? Why is she doing this? And Jesus says, leave her alone.

Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. She did what she could. And you know, that's what we're called to do.

[ 52 : 49 ] We're called to do what we can. The Lord knows us. He knows our hearts. He knows our gifts. He knows our abilities. And you and I are called, not to do what we can't, but we are called to do what we can, to praise the Lord God, from our hearts, with our whole lives, not just our Sundays.

There's to be a fullness of praise to the Lord God. Stott again says, our worship is not to be confined to church services.

On the contrary, while we breathe, we praise. And so the psalm finishes, praise the Lord.

And the psalter finishes, with these words, praise the Lord. And if we fast forward all the way to Revelation, that book that takes us to the end of time, and the beginning of eternity, if that's a phrase I can use, what do we hear?

We hear the same words. Praise the Lord. Revelation 5, then I looked, says John, and I heard the voice of many angels numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, they encircled the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders.

[ 54 : 44 ] In a loud voice they sang, worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power, and wealth, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and praise.

Then I heard every creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the sea, and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing, to him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be praise, and honor, and glory, and power, forever, and ever.

This is how it all ends. This is the song of eternity. Praise the Lord.

But if we are going to sing it in eternity, we must first sing it in time, and respond to the invitation of the psalmist, to praise the Lord.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we pray that you would help us to hear this call, to respond to this invitation, and to know the privilege and joy that begins in time, and knows no end, that privilege of praising your name.

[ 56 : 21 ] Man's chief end is to glorify, to praise God, and there is eternal joy in doing so. so enable us, Lord, we pray, whilst there is time to respond to this call, to look in faith to the Lord Jesus, and to live our lives to the glory and praise of his name.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. we'll conclude by hearing this psalm sung. Psalm 150, and we'll hear the whole of this short psalm sung to finish.

praise ye the Lord, God's praise within his sanctuary raise, and to him in the firmament of his power give ye praise. Because of all his mighty acts with praise him magnify, O praise him as he doth excel in glorious majesty.

Praise him with trumpet sound, as praise with psaltery advance, with timbrel, harps, stringed instruments, with organs in the dance. Praise him on cymbals loud him praise, on cymbals sounding high.

Let each thing breathing praise the Lord, praise to the Lord, give ye. Praise ye the Lord, God's praise within his sanctuary raise, and to him in the firmament of his power give ye praise.

[ 58 : 19 ] Because of all his mighty acts with praise him magnify, O praise him as he doth excel in glorious majesty.

Praise him with trumpets sound, his praise, praise, with soltery advance, with timbrel harp, stringed instruments, and organs in the dance.

Praise him on cymbals round round high.

Let each thing breathe, think, praise the Lord, praise to the Lord, give ye.

thee. Let's stand now for the benediction. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all both now and forever more.

[ 60 : 10 ] Amen. to c