

An abstract graphic featuring a dark background with several horizontal lines in shades of blue and green. The lines are arranged in a way that they appear to be receding into the distance, creating a sense of depth and movement. The word "HIGHER" is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the graphic.

HIGHER

Sermon Growth Guide

May 14, 2023
Praise His Name



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Higher - "Praise His Name"

1 Chronicles 16:7-23

Key Verse: 1 Chronicles 16:8 "Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done."

Big Idea: Praise His Name.

Foundations

This passage in 1 Chronicles challenges us with the importance of praising the Lord. In order to praise the Lord, we have to have something to be thankful for. How can we be thankful if we are not pausing to see the work of God in our life?

In this Psalm of praise, David remembers the Covenant that God promised his forefathers. He remembers the events God saved him and his people from. He remembers the goodness of the Lord and knows He is worthy of praise.

David reminds us of what it means to pause in our day, to examine our life, and to see the intervention that God does through hard times.

David teaches us the importance of praise for the Covenant that God has done for us through his son, Jesus Christ. God's love endures forever. Praise be to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Understanding God's Word

Read 1 Chronicles 16:23, which includes, "Tell of his salvation from day to day." Let's focus on the word "salvation." This word in Hebrew is Yeshu'ah, which means deliverance or helper. David is telling us to share every day how God delivered or helped us from our enemies.

Who are the enemies in your life that the Lord has helped you to be delivered from?

Do you praise Him day to day?

Applying God's Word

One of the blessings of having a God who is worthy to be praised, is we are blessed by remembering the works of God. This passage forces us to take time to remember the work of God in our life. He is our salvation. Let all know the work He has done, do not be afraid, but in a loud voice praise Christ for His great work in you.

Witnessing God's Word

In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells the disciples that they will be witnesses to the work that He has done on earth. That is a command that we are to do. By remembering what the Lord has done in our life, how are we sharing it to others in the church, and outside of the church, to be encouraged and amazed by the sovereign work of God?

Happy Mother's Day! I hope you all got flowers—more flowers than this church has ever seen. What a rude comment the pastor made last week! We celebrate our mothers with gratitude and joy. Happy Mother's Day.

This is also a day we take each year to celebrate, if you will, the motherhood of the church. Cyprian of Carthage said, "No one can have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother." John Calvin agreed. What does that mean? The church is where faith is brought into the world, where it is born and reared. Even if you met Jesus outside the church walls, that was part of the body of Christ, and it wasn't long before you were carried into the local congregation. To be a Christian is, by definition, to be part of the church, a member of the body of Christ. The church is where baby faith is fed on milk and nourished to grow. The church is where young faith is protected and nurtured, and where mature faith is encouraged to be sent out with purpose into the world. The church is where the wounded come for care and restoration, and where the wayward return to a loving embrace. A living church is a mother to faith from generation to generation. So, we celebrate our kids ministry, our youth ministry, our confirmation kids; that's why we celebrate our Fellows today and other graduates. We learn who we are in the arms of the body of Christ where the warm, beating heart in the bosom is joy in the presence

of Christ—worship. The warm beating heart is worship.

David instituted worship in the city of God. "That day David first appointed Asaph and his associates to give praise to the Lord in this manner" (1 Chronicles 16:7). With the ark of the covenant in place and the presence of the Lord palpably felt, the celebrations broke out. The worship broke out, and the Lord said to David's heart, "Now, let's make this a permanent thing." Give praise to the Lord in this manner. Worship well. Worship as God demands is worship in which God delights. He set up the first full-time worship staff right there. He appointed Asaph. He commissioned Levites.

David made worship music a regular part of the life of the people of God. Music was not just for special occasions anymore. From then on, the people of God would be noisy! These lines are all direct quotes from Psalms. David himself wrote half of the Psalms as praise songs to the Lord, worship music, and most of them have tunes in their titles. Sing—and sing it like this. "Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts" (1 Chronicles 16:8-9). Give praise. Bring a sacrifice of praise. That's not coming to see what happens in worship up front; that's bringing praise to God in this place. See that? Our proclamation is dependent on our praise. It follows our praise. That

might sound like something you could do on your own, alone. You could. But all these commands are in the plural. Together, **Praise His Name**. God gave us the institution of regular worship together. Why? Because without it, we would easily forget.

“Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always” (1 Chronicles 16:10-11). Glory is usually a noun. What does it mean as a verb, as a command? It means lift it higher. **Higher**. Lift up His holy name. The name is the reputation of God, the self-revelation of God, who God has revealed Himself to be. Worship is always a reflection of God’s glory. God showers down on us His very character, His face, His name, His person, and we get caught up in it bouncing off our souls and reflecting back up to heaven as incense of praise. That’s why we need to look to the Lord, to face the Lord, so our souls reflect the glory of the Lord right back up to Him. Worship is where those who seek the Lord rejoice. Why? Because those who seek the Lord find Him. Seek His face always. When we don’t do it regularly, we fall out of the habit. We forget how. We neglect this practice, and it atrophies like unused muscle. With regularity, we are able to keep it going. It helps us to not forget the Lord, but to remember.

God is faithful to the worshiping body. From generation to generation, God cares for His children. “Remember the wonders

he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced, you his servants, the descendants of Israel, his chosen ones, the children of Jacob. He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations” (1 Chronicles 16:12-15). That is why we encourage generations to worship together here at First Pres. Other churches take the kids away and let the grown-ups do their thing. It can be a challenge to worship five generations deep, but it is also the best way to raise up faith from generation to generation. I want to encourage parents with two things. First, I hope you always know how happy I am when I hear a kid in worship! Second, this season will fly by and you will be glad you did it.

God is faithful generationally. God is faithful geographically. In ancient times, people worshiped false gods who were geographically located. God is not. “When they were but few in number, few indeed, and strangers in it, they wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another. He allowed no one to oppress them; for their sake he rebuked kings: ‘Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm’” (1 Chronicles 16:19-22). Graduates. Fellows. Confirmands. Wherever you go, the Lord will be with you, all your life.

How important is worship? When Satan came to tempt Jesus in the wilderness, his third temptation was worship. He thought it was

his closing shot. Stop worshiping God. Start worshiping me. Start worshiping anything else. How did Jesus respond? “Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only’” (Matthew 4:10). Worship the Lord your God and every other tempting thing will fade. Look to the face of Jesus. “Turn your eyes upon Jesus,” as the old song says, “look full in his wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.” Magnify the Lord and all other things will get smaller. Lift Jesus higher and everything else will fall into its place.

But we would see Jesus. The last verse today has his name in it: “Sing to the Lord, all the earth; proclaim his salvation day after day” (1 Chronicles 16:23). Underline that word—salvation. In Hebrew it is *YESHUA*. Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Jesus said if he quieted the people of God, if the children of God did not burst out in worship at His presence, the very stones would start singing. “I tell you...if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out” (Luke 19:40). I don’t think He was joking. I don’t think He was exaggerating! Sing, all the earth, all the land, all the soil. Sing and proclaim His salvation. Worship seeks the Lord. Worship finds the Lord. Worship glories in the Lord. Worship proclaims the Lord. Proclaim Yeshua day after day. Proclaim Jesus, all the earth in every generation. **Praise His Name.**

Well, friends, that’s my last message for a little while. Tomorrow (Monday, May 15), I begin a 12-week sabbatical that the elders and I have been planning for almost a year. I have reached the seven-year mark as your pastor, and it is the right time to step away for rest and reflection. In the meantime, if you haven’t seen the video (youtu.be/WKGGXWPlacl), this is a great season for the whole church. I want you to know, I’m not running from you! It’s actually hard to pull away, but it’s healthy. Why? Three reasons: First, it’s a time for all of us to embrace the mission Jesus has for First Pres. It’s not about the pastor. It’s not about Tim. It’s about Jesus. Second, it’s a time for the staff and elders to lean into their roles and stretch and expand in responsibility and leadership. You will see two very special guest preachers this summer, but mostly it is our own very special preaching team! This is part of healthy leadership development. Third, yes, it is a blessing for me and my family to have time to rest and be restored. I’ve been in ordained ministry for 24 years, and I look forward to a season to be with family, travel a bit, but to take time for spiritual reflection, healing, and restoration—a time of refreshing with Jesus. Thank you, church, for supporting the staff in the way you do and for supporting this time away for your pastor. Don’t stop worshiping well! Praise the Lord! Lean in and carry this mission! I expect, when I return on August 7, to find this church even stronger than I left it. God bless you.