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July 29 & 30, 2017
Week 8 – The Art of Praise

The Diverse Genres of the Psalms...

"Love Songs" expressing deep, abiding love exchanged with God

"The Blues" written from a place of pain in a more melancholy tone

"Country Psalms" telling stories with creativity and imagination

"Hip Hop Psalms" written in rhythmic, rhyming patterns of ancient Hebrew

"Rock-N-Roll Psalms" with anthems and loud instrumentation

Psalm 150 – A Lesson in the Art of Praise...

- 1) The _____ (vs. 1a – Praise the Lord)
- 2) The _____ (vs. 1b – in His sanctuary & His mighty heavens)
- 3) The _____ (vs. 2 – for His power and greatness)
- 4) The _____ (vs. 3-5 – with diverse instrumentation and expression)
- 5) The _____ (vs. 6 – everything with breath in its lungs)

The Big Idea:

Praising God (ascribing value and honor to Him) is a command for everyone. And because we are worshipers by nature, we are always ascribing value and honor to someone or something with our lips and our lives. The question is: To whom or to what are we ascribing our praise?

SMALL GROUP Q'S

Personal Life:

1. At the heart of the word "praise" is the idea of "calling attention to God's glory" (Dr. Walter Elwell, from Baker Theological Dictionary of the Bible, p. 620).

Psalm 150 focuses mostly on praising God in singing, music and dancing. What are some of the other ways in your life that you call attention to God's glory?

Ponderings:

2. In Psalm 150, we uncovered the *who*, *what*, *where*, *why* and *how* of praising God. The only thing that wasn't specifically mentioned in the Psalm was the "when." Besides singing at church, *when* are the other times in life that you find yourself most likely to praise Him?
3. Have you ever considered that praising God can be a great act of faith? When you are in the midst of pain, for example, verbalizing praise can feel like a "sacrifice" (Hebrews 13:15) because you're trusting and declaring that God is still good when life feels bad.

Have you recently found yourself in a moment or season like this? If so, are you willing to share briefly with your group about it? How did praising God in that circumstance affect you?

4. Toward the end of the weekend message, the point was made that we are all expert worshipers, the only question being *who* or *what* are we worshiping at any given time. Do you agree with this idea that all humans are worshipers? If so, what are some examples of how praise and worship get misdirected from God toward other things?

Promptings:

5. Biblically, praise flows from a heart-felt recognition of God's power and greatness in relation to our comparative weakness and smallness. Take a moment to write down five specific, tangible things for which God is worthy of your praise. Then share them with your group – and close in corporate prayer focusing on offering specific praises to God...