

Rev. Dr. Chris Montovino  
Psalm 150  
May 18, 2025

### Adoration

Pop quiz! What is the answer to the first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism? “What is our chief end?” *To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.*

I remember shortly after arriving at Cascades almost 20 years ago as a very new, green pastor and I first met with elders Colin and Elizabeth Stout. Colin was a devout Presbyterian his entire life. When I arrived at their house and sat down in the recliner across from his, Colin immediately tested to see if I would pass as his pastor. “What is our chief end?” To which I responded, “To glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.”

“Yup. That’s right,” he said.

We could then proceed in our pastoral relationship.

I would add that Colin and Elizabeth were tremendous supporters of this church and their bequests provided the seed money for us to build this wonderful place in which we worship today. And we annually receive money from their gifts through the Community Foundation of SW Washington. We are grateful.

Every time I walk into this sanctuary regardless of the time of day, I lift my eyes up to the cross and give praise to the God who made all of this possible. I cannot be in this space without praising God.

That is the topic of prayer to which we direct our attentions this morning. Praising God. Adoration. Or as Anne Lamont describes prayer in her book, *Help, Thanks, Wow!* This is the “Wow” of prayer.

So as we glorify God this morning and learn how to enjoy Him forever, let’s look at one of the Psalms of Praise. Psalm 150. This is the very last one in the Psalter or Collection of Psalms in the Bible.

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord.

Praise God in his sanctuary;  
praise him in his mighty heavens.

2 Praise him for his acts of power;  
praise him for his surpassing greatness.

3 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,  
praise him with the harp and lyre,

4 praise him with timbrel and dancing,  
praise him with the strings and pipe,

5 praise him with the clash of cymbals,  
praise him with resounding cymbals.

6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.  
Hallelujah! Praise the Lord.

Let us pray. Prayer of Illumination.

We gather at the very summit of the Psalms, Psalm 150 - a crescendo of adoration, a command and invitation to let everything that has breath praise the Lord. This psalm is not merely a conclusion to the book of Psalms, but the high point toward which all the prayers, laments, and songs have been ascending. Here, we find the pure sound of worship, the call to adore God with all that we are.

Through the lens of Psalm 150, this morning, I'd like to explore several questions. What is adoration? Who should we adore? Who or what should adore God? Where should we adore God? Why should we adore God? And finally how can we adore God?

The Lord's Prayer begins... "Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name!" This is adoration. Pastor and author Tyler Staton describes this as defiant adoration. "Hallowed be Your name" is a longing to see God here and now, to know his presence in the midst of this mess. They start to sing as a way of praying, 'Where are you, God? We want to see you. You are the loving Father. You promise to be a shelter in chaos, the calm in the raging storm, freedom for the captive! So be who you say you are. Show yourself here.'

Psalm 150 begins with praise. Praise the Lord. In Hebrew it literally reads, Hallelujah. Broken down into parts. Halla means to rave about, to boast of, or to celebrate. Hu is him. Jah or Yah is a contraction of Yahweh or the sacred name of the Lord. That is how we get Hallelujah, Praise Yahweh, or Praise the Lord.

What is adoration?

Adoration is respect, reverence, strong admiration, and love for a certain person, place, or thing. The term comes from the Latin *adōrātiō*, meaning "to give homage or worship someone or something."

Again, Tyler Staton writes, "Adoration is the place of prayer where we discover that God's love is the defining reality of every square inch of creation, including you and me."<sup>1</sup>

Who do we adore?

The Psalmist is clear. We adore Yahweh or the God of the universe who as been revealed to us through Jesus Christ. Anything else is a lesser god that is not worthy of our praise. Our adoration is not for ourselves, not for any created thing, but for God alone. God is the object and the source of our praise. All glory, and honor, and worship are due to Him, for He alone is worthy.

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<sup>1</sup> Tyler Staton, *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools, An Invitation to the Wonder and Mystery of Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Books, 2022), 59.

Who or what should adore God? Everything that has breath praise the Lord! CS Lewis once answered this with “The humblest, and at the same time most balanced and capacious minds, praised most, while the cranks, misfits, and malcontents praise least. The good critics found something to praise in many imperfect works; the bad ones continually narrowed the list of books we might be allowed to read. The healthy and unaffected [person], even if luxuriously brought up and widely experienced in good cookery, could praise a very modest meal: the dyspeptic and the snob found fault with all. Except where intolerably adverse circumstances interfere, praise almost seems to be inner health made audible.”<sup>2</sup>

Praise is our inner health made audible.

Even inanimate objects praise the Lord.

Jesus in speaking to the Pharisees who asked him to keep his disciples quiet said that if they can’t praise God, that the rocks would literally cry out.<sup>3</sup>

Psalms 148 calls angels, God’s heavenly hosts, the moon, stars, and planets. The sea creatures, ocean depths, lightning, hail, snow and clouds, and stormy winds. The mountains and hills, wild animals and cattle, small creatures and flying birds. The kings of the earth and all nations. The young and old. And everything in-between.

Psalm 150 says, “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”

All of creation praises the Lord.

Where can we adore God? Everywhere and any place, at all times. Psalm 150:1 reads “Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.” From our church here, to the International Space Station in the sky, to the quiet places of our hearts. God is everywhere, so there is no place we could go where we could not praise God.

This means our praise is not confined to a building or a single place. We are to praise God in the church, in our homes, in creation, and in the very heavens themselves. The psalmist envisions a world filled with worship...a foretaste of the day when heaven and earth are united in the adoration of God.

In Revelation 21, as John was describing his vision of heaven, he said, “I did not see a temple in the [new] city [of God], because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are it’s temple.”<sup>4</sup> So in heaven, we just worship God forever and ever, non stop as our act of praise, wherever we are, whatever we are doing.

Why should we adore God?

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<sup>2</sup> CS Lewis quoted in Timothy Keller, *Prayer, Experiencing the Awe and Intimacy of God* (NY, NY: Penguin Books, 2016), 192.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 19:40

<sup>4</sup> Revelation 21:22

Our adoration is rooted in who God is...His character, His holiness, His love- and in what He has done. He is the Creator, the Redeemer, the Sustainer. Every act of salvation, every moment of mercy, every display of power is a reason to adore Him.

Pete Greig in, *How to Pray, A Simple Guide for Normal People*, writes, “No one stares up at the northern lights thinking, Wow, I’m incredible. We are hardwired to wonder and therefore to worship. The Lord’s Prayer begins with an invitation to adoration: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name.” Having paused to be still at the start of a prayer time, the most natural and appropriate response to God’s presence is reverence. Try not to skip this bit. Hallowing the Father’s name is the most important and enjoyable dimension of prayer. Linger here, rejoicing in God’s blessings before asking for any more. Like an eagle soaring, a horse galloping, or a salmon leaping, worship is the thing God designed you to do.”<sup>5</sup>

When should we adore God? Just as the psalm is bookended by Hallelujah, so our lives too should be bookended with praise. From our first cries at birth. To the last breaths we take. From the moment we wake up each day. To the moment we drift off to sleep. And everything in between should be acts of praise.

How can we adore God?

Our worship is to be enthusiastic, creative, and all-encompassing. Instruments, voices, bodies...all are invited to join the symphony of praise. There is no room for half-heartedness; our adoration should be as passionate and joyful as the God we worship.

We can adore God by remembering His many qualities and attributes. God is holy. God is eternal and everlasting. God is just. God is mighty. God is awesome. God is loving. God is kind. God is forgiving. God is saving. God is wise. God is powerful. God is everywhere at all times. God is all knowing. God is creative. God is father, shepherd, or friend. And so on. And so on!

We can adore God through a psalm. Last week, we learned how to pray the psalms. So then let’s do the same with Psalms 146 through 150. These are known as the psalms of praise. They begin and end with Praise the Lord. Hallelujah!

We can adore God through our music. Psalm 149 says, “Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints.”<sup>6</sup> For how many of us is music vital to our praising the Lord?

Psalm 150 lists seven different instruments. Trumpet. Harp and lyre. Tambourine. Strings, flute, and cymbals. In the Bible, seven is the number of

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<sup>5</sup> Pete Greig, *How to Pray, A Simple Guide for Normal People* ( Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2019), 49.

<sup>6</sup> Psalm 149:1

perfection. So whatever instrument you have at your disposal, that can be used to praise the Lord.

We can adore God through our gifts. Psalm 150 mentions dancing. We already said music. The Bible also lists administration, being an apostle, discernment, evangelism, exhortation, faith, giving, healing, helps, hospitality, knowledge, leadership, mercy, prophecy, serving, speaking in tongues, teaching or shepherding, and wisdom as special gifts of the Holy Spirit. And I would add whenever we display the fruit of God's Holy Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, faithfulness, kindness, and self control that we are praising God.

We can adore God through our love for each other.

We can adore God through appreciating and caring for creation.

We can adore God by simply breathing. I once heard it said that breathing itself is an act of praising the name of the Lord. Breathe in Yah. Breathe out veh. Yah-veh. Yah-veh. Yah-veh.

We can adore God through our lives.

We can adore God by turning every pleasure into a channel of adoration. CS Lewis said, "One's mind runs back up the sunbeam to the sun." The smallest wonder can turn into a reason to praise God.<sup>7</sup>

We can adore God by following a particular structure for our prayers. Pete Greig offers the acronym, ACTS. Adoration. Confession. Thanksgiving. Supplication.

As we follow this format, our prayers will naturally start with adoration of the character of God.

What adoration is not? Tyler Staton who is a cancer survivor emphatically states, "Adoration is not always the overflow of our hearts. In fact, it rarely is. It is an act of rebellion against the empty promises of this world and of defiance in the face of circumstances."<sup>8</sup>

Learning to praise, changes us.

Indeed, adoration forces us to lift our eyes to the hills and to the Lord, so we know where we find where our help comes from.<sup>9</sup>

What is our chief end? "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Then let us do so through our praises this morning. Hallelujah!! Praise the Lord!

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<sup>7</sup> CS Lewis quoted in Keller, *Prayer*, 197.

<sup>8</sup> Staton, *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools*, 63.

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 121