

Living Stones of Praise

Luke 19:37-40

My Brothers and sisters in Christ! We have come today to praise Go and to worship him in Spirit and in truth. Today is a day of praise to Almighty God. I am glad that we have come to praise the lord. The reading from the Psalm this morning challenges us and confronts us with an admonition from the holy writ to praise the Lord. We find David communing within his own heart. For he is suggesting to us that our religious performances mean nothing if it is not from the heart, for it is out of the heart that flows the issues of life. All that is within us must be engaged in our praise of Almighty God. Can you find something to praise God for today? After all, we were created to praise Him.

Text: And he answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."[40]

Jesus by this time was a popular figure. Many recognized Him as he descended the Mount of Olives on a beast of burden.

Those who walked along with Him began to make known his coming.

We can sense the intensity of the moment as the people thinking and expecting Jesus to reveal Himself fully in power and glory as their Messiah-King, begin to spread their garments before Him in acceptance.

Spontaneously and irresistibly they now give vent to their excitement and greatest expectations by praising God for the mighty deeds which He has done through Jesus in Galilee and elsewhere.

As the voices of praise grew louder the irritation grew larger in the hearts of the Pharisees [those steeped in tradition to the point of hindering their relationship with God]. They demanded of Jesus an immediate silencing of His disciples and the praising crowd. But Jesus' response was filled with the unexpected. TEXT!

Creation does and will cry out to the glory and praise of God. So if creation will praise God why should not we, as His highest act of creation praise Him?

Praise ought to appear on our lips and in our hearts. We who understand His deliverance in the power and the resurrection, we who have tasted Him, how should we be silent?

When we praise God it brings us closer to the tearing down of that stronghold called “self” and the building up of our souls in the Spirit. Praise brings us into intimate fellowship with God. Because we know that when the praises go up the blessings will come down. Our praises create a spiritual charged environment of intimacy with God. Praises to God will change our demeanor, and God gets the glory. Praise will drive away demonic forces that would seek to destroy us and will bring the church in one accord with thanksgiving. When we praise God we will be able to look to the hills from whence cometh our help.

When we look at the stones it teaches us to understand and gain the purpose, point, position and power of the act of praise.

I. Purpose of Praise – God’s Mighty Works

Lk. 19:37b - READ

The peoples praise began as a cheerful gladness as others told the stories of the miracles this man Jesus had done. Most recent and fresh upon their minds were the healing of blind Bartimaeus [Mk. 10:46] and the raising of Lazarus from the dead, bore witness.

His mighty works shows plainly he had come from God above. And the words of their witness turned to words of loud praise of this man and his mighty works.

What have we praised God for recently? For salvation yes. What is he doing in your lives today. He is doing something today. Have we seen the mighty works of God in our lives and in the lives of others?

The purpose of praise is not to be ecstatically excited ... but to have a clear focus on the mighty works of God.

II. Point of Praise ...Jesus Christ.

Lk.19 38a – “Blessed be the King”

The point of the peoples praise was in the fact they were looking for a messiah-King.. one who would conquer and control in their favour. And they gave that recognition to Jesus.

Though many missed the emphasis of His kingship... He did come to conquer sin and control sin in the life of the believer.

Our Point of Praise –JC is to bring about a confession of who He is and the work he has accomplished.

- From darkness to light
- From being far off to being brought near
- From sinful to forgiven
- From stranger to citizens
- From insecurity to security

We the born again have reason to praise the saving work of the son. Let the point of our praise be the son of God –Jesus Christ. When we look at the eternal and marvelous work that he has done in our lives we need to give praise to God.

Ill. Position of praise... God be blessed

Lk. 19:38b – *Blessed be the Kin who come in the name of the Lord.*

Even though the people watching Jesus on that day did not know Him... he was being made known by the praise of those who know him. Their hearts and voices praised and blessed Jesus who came in the name of God the Father.

Ps. 68:19 –*Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation!*

When we lift the Hosanna praise to God, it is an exclamation of adoration for the work of God in Jesus his Son.

1Peter 1:3 – *All honour to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is by his boundless mercy that God has given us the privilege of being born again. Now we live with a wonderful expectation because Jesus Christ rose again from the dead.*

To bless God is a position of the heart. If the heart is not right no amount of jumping and rolling or singing will result in praise to God.

Ps. 9:1 – I will praise you, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will tell of all your marvelous works.

Praise is progressive ... confession brings thanks and thankfulness brings love and love brings about obedience. It is safe to say that if praise does not lead to an obedient life it is nothing more than an act of selfish motives. To praise God is to obey Him. We bless God through a heart filled with obedience to Him.

IV. Power of Praise ... Salvation & Peace

Lk. 19:38c – Peace in Heaven and glory in the highest!

Peace ... Jesus came to bring peace. Some that day were praising God because the peace of heaven had come down to man to bring salvation.

Rejoice and praise God for He has sent the Son to save us! He has come to make us right with God and to bring us into His rest. Be joyful!

Ps.51:12 – Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me by your generous Spirit.

We are called upon to give glory, honour and praise[worship] to God for his saving work through JC.

In doing so, we shift the focus from you and me to Him. When that comes about we experience his power and empowerment.

To give God praise is a calling from on high. All we do and say should be done with direct intent to bring glory, honour and praise to the God who has saved us.

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If you and I as the children of God will not praise Him, the stones will cry out. We need to understand we are the living stones!

1Peter 2:5 – You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ! Living stones of praise are we!

Heb. 13:15 – Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

As living stones let us praise God for

- His mighty works... that's our purpose
- His Son who saves ... that's the point of praise.
- His person... that's our position of praise
- His salvation... that's our power

Ps.150:1-2 – Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

AMEN!

LCM-PUC

Sunday, June 29, 2003