

# American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org  
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart April 2024

## Praise Is Always Beautiful

By Steve Huston



Oh, what times we live in! They are perilous times (2 Tim. 3) and will cause our natural man to fear...BUT GOD! God is greater than our natural man and by His grace we can follow the instruction of Jesus to His disciples as they were to enter their own set of personal, spiritual, and civil turmoil: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." (Jn. 14:1) Here, Christ told them this world was not their home, to focus on love and obedience, told them of a Comforter to help them and bring them peace, and to glorify the Father. (Jn. 14-16)

I'm not ignorant of the numerous troubles within our nation or the international powder kegs aimed at us that could have devastating impacts upon our personal lives. Neither am I unaware that

we each have family, health, financial, emotional, and other relational issues that weigh heavily upon us. There are many believers who feel the disappointment and eternal horror of some prodigal (child, sibling, parent, etc.) which is not yet to be found in the ark of safety, Jesus Christ.

No, we're not unaware of the many troubles, particularly our personal woes. What too many seem to be unaware (or forgetful) of, during those trying times, is that God is still good; He is always worthy of praise in the midst of affliction, tribulation, trials, and even in death. Praise is always appropriate. The psalmist continually cries, "Praise ye the LORD!" In the 147<sup>th</sup> psalm he says praise is good, pleasant, and beautiful, then speaks at length of the many reasons God is worthy of such praise. Herein he teaches us, in small measure, the goodness and the greatness of God.

May we never forget that

praising God is both a privilege and a proof, a testimony to others of the delightful enjoyments that belong to God's peculiar people – affirming that He is our treasure in good times and bad.

Psalm 33 exhorts us: "Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous!" stating it's beautiful; it makes sense for the upright to do so. The psalmist points to God's worthiness of praise in His righteousness, creation, sovereignty, judgment, faithfulness, and mercy.

We are exhorted to perpetual praise for our God is worthy; there is none like Him. In good times or bad David says he will fix his heart to praise God. Why is it so difficult to praise in the midst of our storm?

**Do we practice meditating on the majesty, power, and goodness of our God?** David, presumably from his youth, had made this his practice. No wonder the Psalms are replete with constant reminders of

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God's awesome goodness, greatness, holiness, love, justice, mercy, etc. Those whose minds are stayed on Him, whose hearts fear Him, and whose mouths are full of His praise are invited to call out to God and rest in His mercy. If it isn't your daily practice, I would urge you to spend some time in the quiet of your waking hours to meditate on our saving God – remembering His works, His character, and praising Him. With Bible in hand and eye toward Heaven, consider your Creator, Redeemer, and Refuge. With the Spirit's help, day by day, praise will become natural and more constant.

**Where is your focus when enemies arise or you find yourself in the midst of a storm?** Twelve men went to spy on Canaan; will you be like the ten who saw giant troubles or will you be like Joshua and Caleb who saw a giant God. David did not see the size of Goliath; he saw the

hugeness of his God. Job's wife would have him curse God for his many troubles. Job rightly put things in perspective: should we accept good at God's hand but not evil? Will we only praise God during good times and not during times of duress? In the midst of afflictions, attacks, and sufferings, David would turn his mind toward his God and set his lips to praise. It's then that those troubles became small as he focused on the grandeur of his God.

While God is the object and recipient of our praise, we are certainly benefactors when we obediently praise Him. In Psalm 33, the call to rejoice is readily seen in verse one. This Hebrew word means to shout aloud for joy. It's that "Old Faithful" geyser-like praise that can't be hidden. After proclaiming God's worthiness of praise, verse twenty-one again uses the word "rejoice," but with a different meaning, coming from a different Hebrew word. This "rejoice," in context, refers to a brightened heart that has been made cheerful because it

has hoped in God's mercy (v. 18) to be saved from death and kept alive in famine (v. 19). Such a one is waiting on the Lord as their help and shield (v. 20). His heart can rest joyfully in the Lord "because we have trusted in his holy name." (v. 21). In verse 22 the psalmist closes with a prayer which lays before us God's sovereign ability and man's responsibility to place his hope – his trust – in God: "Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee."

In such days as lie before us, may our hearts be at peace because we've hoped in God, praising Him regardless our circumstance, because He is good and holy. Don't forget, praise is always appropriate and beautiful.

*"O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee ... To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name."* ~Psalm 63:1-4



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