

Praising God

Like Peter, there are times when we _____ to say, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!” Today, we’re exploring _____ to praise God. We look to God’s Word for the _____ to our chaotic and ever-changing world. He alone can make a _____ in our lives and the lives of those that we love. When I think of my twelve grandchildren, I worry about the _____. I want them to know the Lord and to know the _____ about God’s love for them. I want them to _____ God and bless Him with their lives.

Recently my friend and fellow preacher Gary Hampton, who lives in Jackson, Mississippi, shared some ideas from 1 Peter about reasons to _____ God that got me to thinking about lifting up my voice to bless and praise God. This is not a _____ thing for those who love God. Revelation 4 speaks of the twenty-four elders who fall down before Him who sits on the throne in heaven and they _____ Him. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to _____ glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

We owe everything to God. He _____ us, He sustains us, and He saves us from sin. James 1:17 says, “Every good thing given and every perfect _____ is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.” Our God and Father is _____ of glory, honor, and power. We must never take Him for granted or fail to recognize all that He has _____ for us. Do you praise God regularly or have you forgotten about Him? Many have stopped worshipping or even praying. What about you?

Our reading today comes from the first letter of Peter 1:3-5.

Praising God is all about recognizing God’s sacred _____ in our lives. When we approach God to worship we are entering _____ ground. Hebrews 12:28-29 says, “Let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable _____ with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.” God is holy, and our worship and service must show that we take God seriously. Peter blessed God for all that God has done for us. Let’s also bless or praise God with reverence and awe. Peter makes three reasons known:

First, we are born again of his _____. First Peter 1:3 says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Being born again as a new person in Christ and free from sin is a reason for anyone to give _____. God gives us an opportunity for a _____ start and leaving the past behind. Everyone needs to come to Christ, even the strong leaders of the Jewish faith back in the days of Jesus needed it.

John 3:1-5 tells the _____ of Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who saw that Jesus came from God, and because of His signs or miracles, Jesus was to him someone from God. Jesus answered and said to Nicodemus, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the _____ of God.” Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he’s _____? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you,

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that unless one is born of _____ and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Jesus told Nicodemus , “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You _____ be born again.’” (verse 7).

Some think our new birth is some miraculous change, accomplished by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. They suggest we are so spiritually depraved that we cannot make any _____ on our own to believe or to follow Jesus; but this ignores how God causes this change in our lives. Romans 10:17 reminds us, “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the _____ of Christ.” Paul said , “For I’m not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the _____ of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). Our new birth comes when we hear the words of the gospel and believe it. It is the gospel, not some direct operation of the Holy Spirit, which _____ us to faith and to salvation.

First Peter 1:22-23 explains, “Since you have in _____ to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.” Peter notes that this is the Word of God that was “_____ to you” (verse 25).

Romans 6:16-18 also reveals a _____ that takes place when people obey the message of God. These verses say: “Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, that you are slaves of the one whom you _____, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the _____ to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became the slaves of righteousness.” Clearly, the change took place when they _____ a form or pattern of teaching. This pattern meant that they accurately obeyed that teaching of the _____. These servants of sin were not so depraved they couldn’t understand and obey the teaching. This obedience resulted in God freeing them from _____ and making them servants of righteousness. What did they do?

That change in them was explained earlier in this same chapter. Romans 6:3-7 says, “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His _____? And therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.”

When we are baptized into Christ’s death, God causes us to be crucified with Him, to be buried with Him, and raised up with Him so that we can walk in _____ of life. Just as God raised up Jesus to have a new life, God gives us that new birth, that new life _____ from sin. We must _____ to an old life of sin before we can be born again. We die to sin when we _____ and are crucified with Christ in baptism.

Titus 3:4-7 reminds us that our salvation is God’s _____ on us. Paul wrote, “But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of _____ which we have done in righteousness, but according to His _____, [He does it] by the washing of regeneration and the renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Out of love, God _____ us. He does it through the washing that

regenerates us, or baptism. God causes us to be born again when we listen to His Word and we _____ it. We should praise God for this new life!

Second, our new birth in Christ leads us to have a living _____! (1 Peter 1:3). Our hope is not in our works of righteousness but in God's _____ and _____. Because the Father raised Jesus from the dead we can have a living hope that one day we too will rise from the _____. In Christ we have eternal life! John 20:30-31 says, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may _____ that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." The recorded words found in Scripture lead us to believe in Jesus, and our faith leads us to life in His name. This life is abundant and this life is eternal. John later wrote, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).

The living hope of eternal life is assured to be _____ because God raised Jesus up from the dead. Jesus "was declared to be the Son of God with _____ by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4). His resurrection matters. First Corinthians 6:14 says, "Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will _____ raise us up through His power." Our hope lies in God's _____ to raise us up, just as He did Jesus. We should _____ God for this living hope!

This matters greatly. First Corinthians 15:16-17 says, "For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then your _____ is worthless; you're still in your sins." He notes in verse 19, "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be _____." Because God did raise up the Lord Jesus, we have a _____ hope in the power of God to raise us up. This living hope reminds us that Jesus is coming _____. Paul spoke of on Mars Hill, "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should _____, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

If we're not born again, if we've not repented, we'll face condemnation; but if we have repented and were baptized, that is born again, we have a newness of life that leads to eternal life and an eternal inheritance when we are resurrected. The Lord Jesus promised, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which _____ who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, and those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28-29). Yes, we will _____ life or judgment depending on our faith and our deeds.

Third, since Christians have a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we can "obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:3-4). We'll inherit a _____ in heaven, because of the grace of God. God's grace and kindness does not _____ in this life; it will last forever and ever. I love Ephesians 2:4-7: which says, "But God, being _____ in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us _____ together with Christ (by grace you've been saved), and He raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His _____ in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus."

God's kindness in the heavenly places will _____ even the grace in kindness which we know here and now. Our inheritance in heaven is imperishable; nothing can ever _____ it. Our inheritance in heaven is undefiled; nothing can _____ it physically or morally. Neither moth nor rust can destroy your treasures in _____. There will be no sin, no crime, and no war in heaven. Our inheritance will never _____ away. The blessings of God will _____ bore us or grow dull and wearisome. God's glory and beauty will _____ forever and ever. More than that, God has reserved that inheritance for you personally; it has your _____ on it. If you are God's _____, you will inherit God's blessing and care. God will also _____ you, getting you ready for a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. The Lord Jesus right now is interceding, mediating, and advocating with the Father for every Christian, so that we may _____ to stand right with God.

Why does this matter? When you take notice of all the things that God has done, all that He is doing and all that He will do for us in Christ, you can then appreciate the surpassing _____ of the kindness and grace of God. His grace _____ us, and makes us want to praise and serve Him, with all of our hearts. It makes us want to _____ that old life of sin and to be born again. God's kindness leads us to repent of our sins (Romans 2:4). God's kindness makes us want to be _____ people and to lead others to grow close to God. When you know the _____ of God, you want everyone that you love to know God's love too! We serve and praise the God of love, and we're _____. I hope you're praising and blessing God in your life.

If God the Father and the Lord Jesus are blessed and worthy to receive glory and honor and power, then _____ are you reacting to Him? Do you praise and _____ Him? Do you _____ Him regularly? Has the kindness of God made any difference in your attitudes or your behavior? Are you willing to be born again, so that you might become a child of God, free from _____? Are you ready for the _____ God is making ready to be revealed at the last time?

Every day brings you one day closer to the second _____ of the Lord. The Lord will raise you up from the _____. You will either have a resurrection to eternal life or a resurrection of judgment, and whether you stand in the grace of God or not will determine your eternal destiny. Are you _____ to meet Him? When He comes, will you have great _____ in your heart or will you be afraid? Do you dread the Day of Judgment? God has prepared for you; are you prepared?

To be right with God the Lord Jesus told Nicodemus, "You must be born again!" (John 3:7). "Must" means "must." You too "must" be born of water and the Spirit, and that means demonstrating your faith and love by repenting of your sins and being baptized into Christ Jesus, that is immersed in water, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. After you're born again you must take up your cross daily and follow Jesus from now on. It means praising the Lord and walking in righteousness, attending worship, and serving others. It means treating others kindly and helping other people. It means being devoted to the Lord!