

You Better Praise

May 15, 2022 at First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC

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Text: Psalms 148

Spoken Word

The heavens and the earth praise our God of all creation, saluting to a creator as the one who holds all authority, all power, who knows and loves every single entity.

There's a bird who sits outside my window and sings a song of joy every sunrise, and every sunrise I am left mesmerized by this creation from God who never fails to send up its praise.

All created creatures are ordered and commanded to send praises to our God, creator of all, friend to all, protector of all, the list extends out way too far and tall.

Creator of all things exotic and impossible, the one who is far too capable of turning the impossible into the possible, I mean he did put me, a Black woman in a uniform such as this, after all. And because I too, am God's creation I shall send up praises to the Creator such as the bird that sings every sunrise as I look to clear and sometimes cloudy skies.

Then I realize that even these skies, whether blue or gray, another creation of God sends up their praises whether it is night or day. Whether the world is crumbling away, or peace is still, God's creation will and shall shout in a burst of praise.

Praise God, because even though I could not be here with you all in person, I thank God for allowing me to be in Spirit with you. What you all have heard is a spoken word that signifies what Psalms 148 beholds. A time of reflection to candidly hear and feel who are called to praise our most High and Holy Creator. But we are not just told who praises our God, it is explained why we need to praise.

Transition to first move: I love how this scripture is written through and through. A poetic language of all God's creation. The first half of this Psalm lists those who praise God from the highest to above the skies.

First move: In this category, we have the Creator angels, the heavenly hosts, the sun, and moon, followed by the shining stars. God Creator of all, creator of all these entities just named, sits high, and praised by them. And when I first read these words, when I think of the shining stars and the sun and the moon, I think of how incredibly hot the sun is. I think of how detailed the moon is with its many craters, and I picture each star to be unique. And I return from these thoughts knowing that God made each of them. So, when it says Praise God, sun, and moon; Praise God all you shining stars; Praise God you highest heavens, I know they are praising God by just merely existing. Proof that not only is God creator of all, but controls all as well. For it says in versus 5 and 6 “Let them praise the name of the Love, for God commanded and they were created.” They praise the Holy name of our God because they were commanded to. And in the midst of chaos, in the midst of destruction that is done to this earth, the amount of darkness and sin that occurs, these creations still remain, and they continue to praise God.

Transition to second move: So, what does that say about us? Aren't we too supposed to praise God in the midst of darkness and iniquity? Are we not called to do the same? thing as the moon and the sun? The heavenly hosts and shining stars?

Second move: It's a good thing in the second half of this Psalm it indeed addresses us. It addresses all created on earth, the winds, the animals, mountains, and trees. And these creations too praise the Name of God by existing and representing the wholesomeness and divine nature of our Creator. I know I keep giving you all homework, but there is a song called So Will I, by Cross Worship. There's a verse that says if the stars were made to worship You so will I; if the mountains bow in reverence so, will I. Because that is what we are called to do. That is what all creation is called to do! In versus 11 and 12 it finally calls us humans to the roll call: Rulers of the earth and all peoples! Young of all genders alike, old and young together! I absolutely love this way the text is written as it says the rulers of the earth and all peoples. From the president of the United States to a small-town teacher. From the board of Supreme Court judges to the officers leading our Army. We are all commanded to praise God. And it says here in our text we are to do it because God's name is exalted! Because God's glory is higher than that of heaven and earth. And because we are God's creation, that means we are on God's team ...and last time I checked, God never loses.

Celebration: Despite what's happening in our country with Roe vs. Wade, it is our commandment, as well as everyone else to praise God in the midst of chaos. Even though our country is going through a complex set of issues emerging from this act, we as children of God have the victory and freedom to praise our Creator through this situation. To remain on God's side, who never loses. In the midst of covid numbers trying to rise once again, in the midst of our confusion and anger, it is written right here that we are commanded to praise, for if the stars are able to praise God, the mountains, the hail and the snow over and over again during the world's most troublesome times, then so are we. For we serve a God of such divine power with no limits. Who has never loss a battle. This book of Psalms begins with Praise the Eternal One, as well as it ends with Praise the Eternal One, as it should always be.

Let this all be done in the name of Jesus, Amen.

