

THEOLOGY OF SONG – “PRAISE TO THE LORD”

The **transcendence** of God is a marvelous attribute to be praised. He is magnificent and He is “otherly”. He is above His creation and He is greater than His creation. He is beyond all margins that man can understand. He is perfectly distinct. There is no one like Him. Paul describes this so well.

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” (Romans 11:33-34)

He is infinite. He is holy. He is pure. He is good. He is perfectly and altogether unique. And yet, He is also **immanent**. He is intimately involved and near His creation. The perfect and complete display of God’s nearness is Jesus Christ. God came to man, walked with man, and died for man. God’s immanence tells of His nearness to man. This is what we are singing of when we sing “Praise to the Lord”.

I remember the first time I heard this song. I was sitting in one of the chairs of a worship service and Aaron and the band were singing it during sound check. I can’t remember another time where a song created such a response in me. I froze in my seat. I found myself singing this confession to God with my mind, my heart and my emotions being absolutely captivated.

For the rest of the night, I repeated the lyrics over and over again. I realized why I was so struck by the song. From the first line to the last, there is an overt perspective of emotion and spiritual affection being communicated. Look at the first line.

We praise You Our Savior and Friend

We are drawn The chorus One of the words that we are drawn to is “Friend”. A friend being someone who is intimately aware and involved in one’s life. A friend is someone who is so deeply connected to the seemingly ordinary moments of another, as well as the blatantly significant. We continue to see this in the lyrics.

I’ll walk with You through the fire and the rain

Walking with someone brings to mind the one(s) that a person trusts the most, and a person that has proved their trustworthiness to another.

The chorus is striking.

*Praise to the Lord oh my soul, Praise to the Lord for all that You are
You are the hope of my soul, Praise to the Lord for all that You are, For all that You are*

The word “soul” puts the emphasis on the hope of this song. It’s an emphasis that we are to be a people who **feel deeply** toward God. To speak of the soul is to speak of the affection of man’s heart. This reminds us that we are emotional beings, and that we are created to be emotionally affected by God’s great gospel.

The great psalmist, David, says it this way:

Let them ever sing for joy, and spread your salvation ever there, that those who love your name may praise in you.

David tells us that a person who has tasted the grace of God should **feel** and **express** joy. Joy invigorates the entire being of a man. Nothing in one's life is untouched by joy. When God spreads His protection and care over a His people, His people are filled with delight! Why? Because the habitual imperfection and stumbling of man does not have the final say. Instead, it is the Gospel that has the final say.

The song crescendos with chorus.

Perfect Jesus oh you won't let me go, Gracious Jesus no you won't let me go

God came to man and lavished kindness on the unkind. He breathed life into the dead. He showed mercy on the merciless. God came to man and called home the wander.

Praise to the Lord, for He has come to man! Praise to the Lord, for His hope will never come undone!