

## Worthy of Praise

### Hook :

Question: Is it ok (acceptable in the sight of God) for us as Christians to complain?

Expressing dissatisfaction or annoyance about unfavorable circumstances or events is something that every person can relate with. This is because everyone experiences those moments when things don't turn out as planned. Whether it be getting a bad grade on a test that you studied hard for, falling out with a friend or coworker, or losing something precious, unfavorable circumstances arise. Being the emotional creatures that we are we can get irritated, annoyed, and downright peeved. The question is, Is God happy to hear our complaints? Or would He rather that we not express our dissatisfactions?

Like many things in life the answer isn't simply black and white. There are examples in the bible where God has both heard the complaints of his servants ([Ps. 142](#)) and where the complaints of his people have angered Him ([Num. 14:26-35](#)). The clear distinction between the two is the condition of the heart. What God desires is that we come into an ever-deepening communion with Him, and like any relationship there are times when one party sits and listens to the other as they vent and express their hearts desires and frustrations; a healthy relationship is one where the ones involved feel free to speak their innermost thoughts and feelings. This is what we encounter in Psalms 142, as David expresses to God his innermost feelings of loneliness (v.4), desperation (v.6), and bondage (v.7) while at the same time appealing to God for deliverance. This psalm serves as an example of the type of complaint that God is willing to hear: **the complaint to God**. However, in Numbers 14: 26-35 we encounter the other type of complaint, one that displeases God, **the complaint against God** (Num. 14:35). The difference between the two is that one seeks to find satisfaction in God and from God. Honoring God this way in difficult seasons serves as praise to Him.

**Main Lesson:** God is worthy of praise because of his glory. ([Exodus 14: 1-14](#))

Recall that last week we defined **praise** as *"the celebration, honoring, and adoration of God, in the power of the Holy Spirit, whether by individual believers or by a community of believers."* Also recall that, in the Exodus story, we examined Gods guidance as being evidence of why He is worthy to be praised. God not only calls mankind into deliverance, but also guides us there. **Glory** can be defined as,

1. *Honor, renown, exultation*

Or....

2. *"The distinctive feature of the presence of God, often compared to power, weight or brightness. Scripture affirms that God's glory is made known through his work of creation, his acts of intervention in history and supremely in the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/dictionary-of-bible-themes/1190-glory>

Pastor John Piper, in one of his sermons used [Isaiah 6:3](#) to describe the glory of God in relation to the holiness God:

And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

He states, God is holy, meaning that He is unique and set apart and that there is no one like Him in all of creation. The holiness of God describes God’s infinite perfection, infinite greatness and infinite worth, his glory is the manifestation of the beauty of his holiness. In other words, the glory of God is the unrivaled nature of Gods’ person (his essence, his being, his character) put on display for all to see. When we praise God, we are elevating His name above all else and in doing so we glorify(honor) Him by making known his glory (the beauty of his holiness).

*(the full sermon, “To Him be the Glory Forevermore”, can be found below)*

In this session we examine the glory of God as revealed in the scriptures through Exodus narrative. In the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Exodus we encounter the Israelites in an unfavorable situation. God had brought them on a route that placed them in between the natural barrier of the Red Sea, and a pursuing Egyptian army. When Israel realized their situation they “cried out to the LORD for help” (v.10), then immediately began grumbling at Moses all their dissatisfactions. To which Moses simply replies:

“Don’t be afraid. Stand firm and see the LORD’s salvation He will provide for you today; for the Egyptians you see today you will never see again. *The Lord will fight for you; you must be quite.*”(v.13-14)

An impending fight against an army of the most elite fighters in Egypt at the time, armed with the most sophisticated weapons of war, against former slaves who had no chance of escape and their strategy was to be silent and wait on the LORD! If God weren’t in charge, this strategy would have been downright senseless. Pharaoh was probably singing victory songs before the fight began! However, that was not the case, because God was in charge and if we learn anything from the scriptures it’s that ***God’s strategies for victory have always been implemented in the most unusual of ways***. For instance, recall

- The account of Gideon ([Judges 7](#))
  - Where God took 300 hundred men to battle the much larger Midianite ([Judges 7:12](#)) army and brought them victory with trumpets, torches, and a shout.
- The account of David vs. Goliath ([1 Samuel 17](#))
  - Where David, after being prepared in the wilderness, was led to take down the Philistine army by defeating Goliath with nothing but a sling shot and a few stones, bringing victory to Israel.
- The wall of Jericho ([Joshua 6](#))
  - Which crumbled to the sound of trumpets

By choosing the unusual route to victory God displays his glory. In some instances, such as with the story of Gideon, He places his people in situations and circumstances that seem insurmountable so that when victory came there would be no doubt that it was by His mighty hand. This was the case with the

Israelites here in chapter 14, backed up against that wall with the threat of defeat looming over their hearts. God commanded them to be still, trust in His love, and witness His glory revealed. A wall of fire, strong gust of wind, a parted sea, and a defeated army. Victory! All without the Israelites having to lift a finger. Since God would give the victory only God would get the glory(honor).

### Christ Connection

God Parted the Red Sea in order to make a way of salvation for His people. In a Similar manner, God made a way of salvation for us by sending His Son.

#### Some things to reflect on till next:

Read [2 Chronicles 20: 1-30](#)

- The account of Jehoshaphat king of Judah.

Sermon highlights:

- On the glory of God: “To Him be the Glory Forevermore”
  - <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/to-him-be-glory-forevermore> (Original version; 50 mins)
    - <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-is-gods-glory--2> (Short version; 9mins)
- “Princes and Pitfalls” – a sermon reflecting on the struggles Joseph faced in his youth.
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqvWIUY5G2E>

*Finally [...] whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. (Philippians 4:8)*