

Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b
"The Basis for Our Praise"

How much of that which has been good in your life do you credit solely to your good decision making? How much of that that has been bad in your life do you credit simply to misfortune or bad decision making? Why do I ask these questions? Well, your response will give great insight into your understanding and/or belief of God's hand at work in your life. The point is this, **there is little to praise God for if you believe it has all been dependent upon you, dependent upon chance.** When you study the story of Israel you will note that they are constantly and obsessively reminded to remember what God had said and done.

Deut 6:11-12 ¹"The houses will be richly stocked with goods you did not produce. You will draw water from cisterns you did not dig, and you will eat from vineyards and olive trees you did not plant. When you have eaten your fill in this land,¹² be careful not to forget the Lord, who rescued you from slavery in the land of Egypt."

Psalm 77:10-11 "And I said, "This is my fate; the Most High has turned his hand against me."¹¹ But then I recall all you have done, O Lord; I remember your wonderful deeds of long ago."

Isaiah 46:8-9 ""Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, your transgressors, ⁹remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me."

Somebody say remember. **The basis for our praise of God is linked to our remembering what God has said and done in our lives.** But if we believe life is nothing more than a game of chance. That is, the summation of a series of fortunate and unfortunate events; the culmination of our good and bad

decisions then what good would remembering do us. None. With this said I want to give two observations from the text on the matter of praise and remembering.

As it concerns the praise of God by God's people it is not optional, and it requires the use of our faculties. Especially, our voices. This call to praise God by the psalmist is not a matter of style of worship or denominational preferences. The psalmist states forcefully in verses **1-4** "Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! ²Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works!³ Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord! ⁴Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face evermore!" Considering this text and so many others like it I can't help but wonder how we, Presbyterians, ever earned the nickname "Frozen Chosen". And before anyone tells him or herself that the praise of God can be done quietly, introspectively the Hebrew word is haw-lal' and it means to shout both in joy and terror, especially in worship. As God's people we could never be frozen. God has been too good to us. To merciful and gracious that we could not at least say Amen.

Psalm 100:1-5 "Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! ²Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy. ³Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. ⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. ⁵For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation."

Psalm 150 “Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heaven! ²Praise him for his mighty works; praise his unequalled greatness! ³Praise him with a blast of the ram’s horn; praise him with the lyre and harp! ⁴Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with strings and flutes! ⁵Praise him with a clash of cymbals; praise him with loud clanging cymbals. ⁶Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord!

Heb 13:15 “¹⁵Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.”

Now, on the matter of remembering, the psalmist couches his call to the people to praise God in their remembering. V5-6

“Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, ⁶O seed of Abraham His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!” I wonder if the psalmist thought to himself, “just in case you believe you have nothing to praise God for let me remind you of his faithfulness”. And so, to remind them he takes them through a litany of their history with God. Our text of focus includes the story of Joseph. Joseph, whose life could be summed up as the culmination of a series of unfortunate events. But the psalmist reminds us that what Joseph experienced was not only the hand of God at work in his life but also for the good of God’s people. I declare to you today that there is nothing we experience in life as God’s people that God is not using for our good, and the good of those attached to us. Church! Sisters and brothers remember what God has said and done, and I dare say you just might have reason to praise him. Maybe as Presbyterians we will never run

around the church. Maybe we will never pass out in elation. Maybe we will never dance in the pews, but we certainly have reason to smile and say Amen. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.