

PRAISING

Message 2

Perfected Praise

Scripture Reading: Rev. 14:1-4; Matt. 21:16; Psa. 8; 45

I. Praise is the “cream” of our Christian experience—Rev. 14:1-4, note 3:

- A. Without experiencing Christ, we cannot release the proper praises as the cream of our experience—1 Cor. 14:26a; cf. S. S. 5:10-16:
 - 1. Most people are silent in their Christian gatherings because they do not have the “cream”; that is, they are short of the experiences of Christ and the genuine appreciation for Christ; thus, it is difficult for them to open their mouths to praise the Lord.
 - 2. Although we do not hire pastors, we do have some brothers and sisters to be our “experts”; these experts may be the “performers,” and most of the brothers and sisters who attend the meetings may be the audience.
 - 3. We need a daily walk in which we experience Christ in a rich way so that we may have the “milk” to produce the “cream” as our praise to Him—Col. 2:6; 3:16.
- B. Our praises are limited by our experiences of Christ:
 - 1. We all can praise the Lord in a general way; but if we would praise Him in a special and deeper way, we need some experience of Him—Rev. 14:1-4.
 - 2. How much, how deeply, or how highly we have experienced Christ will be the measure of our praise; our praises can never exceed our experiences of Christ.
- C. We need to praise God in a new way with new utterances, which are the expressions of our new experiences of Christ—Psa. 45:1:
 - 1. Our experience of Christ becomes the vocabulary for our praise to God.
 - 2. Our praises to God should be composed of utterances and expressions produced through our experiences of Christ—Rev. 14:3.

II. The enjoyment of Christ will make us strong to utter a complete and perfected praise to the Lord; this is the highest consummation that God has completed in His redemption through Christ—Psa. 8:2; Matt. 21:16:

- A. Psalm 8:2 says, “Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to stop the enemy and the avenger”:
 - 1. When the Lord quoted this verse in Matthew 21:16, He used the word praise instead of strength:
 - a. To praise requires strength; without strength we cannot praise the Lord.
 - b. Some praises may come out of our mouth, but they cannot be considered as perfected praises, because they are not so full of strength.
 - c. God can work in His redemption to such an extent that the weakest ones and the smallest ones can have the strength to praise Him.
 - 2. In the Lord’s quotation in Matthew 21:16, it says that He has “perfected” praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings:
 - a. We Christians may praise the Lord, but our praise needs to be perfected.
 - b. When we praise the Lord for all the matters in Psalm 8, then our praises will be perfected, completed; this praise is the strength out of the mouths of the babes and sucklings.

- B. God establishes praise out of the mouths of the weak ones by five steps: Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, glorification, and enthronement—Psa. 8:2-8:
1. By His incarnation Christ was made one with us (John 1:14); by His crucifixion all our problems have been solved (1:29; Rom. 6:6; Heb. 2:14); by His resurrection we have become sons of God (1 Pet. 1:3); and in His glorification we all have been glorified (Rom. 8:30).
 2. By these five steps Christ has been made one with us, and we have been made one with Him—1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; *Hymns* #157.
 3. The more we know and participate in these five steps of Christ, the more praises we will have to offer Him; we need all these steps so that the Lord's praises may be fully and richly established out of our mouths—Lev. 2:1-3; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5-6; 2 Cor. 3:18; Isa. 6:1; *Hymns* #475.
 4. Our perfected praise is the ultimate consummation of the Lord's work of incarnation, human living, death, resurrection, ascension, and coming back to rule the earth.

III. Psalm 45 gives us one of the best examples and patterns related to the matter of praising:

- A. This Psalm presents a complete view, a full picture, of Christ's beauty, which is in Christ Himself (vv. 1-8), as unveiled in the four Gospels; in the church, His wife (vv. 9-15), as revealed in the Epistles; and in all His sons, the overcomers as the princes (vv. 16-17), as seen in Revelation.
- B. Psalm 45:1 says, "My heart overflows with a good matter; I speak what I have composed concerning the King. My tongue is the pen of a ready writer":
1. We should learn and practice praising the Lord in our homes in a new way with new utterances from the new experiences of Christ that we have throughout the day; then when we come to the meetings, our heart will bubble up with what we have composed concerning our King.
 2. To compose a praise, we need the experience of Christ, and we also need the skill, the technique, to put our experience of Christ into words with a certain amount of expression.
- C. According to this Psalm, our praising of Christ should concern the following matters:
1. Christ's person, that is, what Christ is, and God's blessing of Him—v. 2; *Hymns* #187-202, 1103.
 2. His spreading, fighting, and victory—vv. 3-5; *Hymns* #124, 1101.
 3. His kingdom with His authority—v. 6; *Hymns* #146-148.
 4. His being the One who pleases God and is anointed by Him—v. 7; *Hymns* #204.
 5. The fragrance of His death and resurrection in all His doings and His virtues—v. 8; *Hymns* #169.
 6. The church with all the believers and the overcoming saints—vv. 9-17; *Hymns* #1099.
 7. These should be the main points in our praises concerning Christ:
 - a. It is not adequate for us to simply shout or cry out, nor should we praise with something concerning ourselves.
 - b. In the meetings of the church we need to praise with the things of Christ and the church with the overcomers.
 - c. Furthermore, our praise should be based not on doctrine but on our apprehension, our appreciation, and our realization of Christ and His church.