



## Group Discussion Guide

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# From the Heart (Psalms of Joy)

## Discussion Guide

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### Series Overview

In our From the Heart series, we study the psalms that bring us joy and prompt us to praise God. We explore who we praise, what praise is, when and where to praise, and why we praise.

### Purpose of This Guide

The primary purpose of this group guide is to reinforce and deepen the lessons of the Grace Church message series: **From the Heart**.

You may choose to use this guide:

- with your Grace Group.
- with any group of people interested in learning what the Bible says about these topics.

# 1-Who Are We Praising? Psalm 145

## Icebreaker: 3-Minute Challenge

As a group, see how many qualities or characteristics of God you can list in three minutes.

## Discussion Questions: Let's Talk about God

- When you praise His name, you celebrate His perfections ([Psa 145:1](#) and [Psa 5:11](#)). What are some of His perfections?
- We cannot fathom the absolute extent of His majesty ([Psa 145:3](#) and [Isa 40:28](#)). Where can we look for a partial understanding of His greatness?
- When could you declare God's glorious acts to your physical or spiritual children ([Psa 145:3-7](#))?
- Consider the illustrations of God's grace and mercy in [Psalm 145:8-10](#). List examples of God's grace and mercy in your life.
- What does [Psalm 145:11-16](#) suggest about the importance of prayer?
- Compare David's experience with prayer to your experience with prayer ([Psa 145:17-21](#)). How often is praise a component of your prayer?

## Dig a Little Deeper: Who Is He?

Here are a few of God's names:

- The LORD (Yahweh) ([Gen 12:8](#))
- God Most High ([Gen 14:18-20](#))
- Almighty God ([Gen 17:1](#))
- Everlasting God ([Gen 21:33](#))
- The Great I AM ([Exo 3:14](#), [John 8:58](#))
- LORD of hosts ([1Sam 1:3](#))
- Mighty One, Redeemer ([Isa 49:26](#))
- Living God ([Mat 16:16](#))
- True God ([John 17:3](#))
- Jesus Christ, the Lord ([Acts 2:34-36](#))
- King of kings, Lord of lords ([1Tim 6:15](#))

### Application Exercise: Acknowledge Him

Tell God what you know, love, and respect about Him.

You can accomplish this through a prayer, letter to Him, poem, song, or work of art.

## 2-What is Praise? Psalm 150

### Icebreaker: Collage of Praise

On a piece of paper, create a word or picture collage of things for which you are grateful.

### Discussion Questions: Let's Define Praise

- How many times do you see the word "praise" in [Psalm 150](#)?
- Where does praise take place ([Psa 150:1](#), [Heb 10:25](#))?
- In what way should we praise the Lord ([Psa 150:3-5](#))? How does this kind of worship compare to your own? Besides playing a musical instrument, what are ways to praise Him ([Eph 5:19-20](#))?
- Who should praise the Lord ([Psa 150:6](#))?
- How can praise be a sacrifice ([Heb 13:15](#))?
- What things or circumstances make you more likely to praise God?

## Dig a Little Deeper: Prepare Your Heart to Praise

- There are no shortcuts to sincere praise. The psalms leading up to **Psalm 150** abound with tears, anger, doubt, and pain. All these are the groundwork to prepare your heart for praise.
  
- Read the last psalm in each book of psalms.
  - ▶ Book 1 = **Psalm 41**
  - ▶ Book 2 = **Psalm 72**
  - ▶ Book 3 = **Psalm 89**
  - ▶ Book 4 = **Psalm 106**
  - ▶ Book 5 = **Psalm 150**
  
- Meditate on these verses:
  - ▶ **Psalm 41:13**
  - ▶ **Psalm 72:18-19**
  - ▶ **Psalm 89:52**
  - ▶ **Psalm 106:48**
  - ▶ **Psalm 150:6**

### Application Exercise: My Praise

- Pray your praise to God using **Psalm 150** and your own life for inspiration.
  
- Write a psalm of praise celebrating what you have learned from **Psalm 150**.

# 3-When and Where Should I Praise?

## Psalm 142

### Icebreaker: Worry Less, Praise More

In what way do you agree or disagree with this quote?

We would worry less if we praised more. Thanksgiving is the enemy of discontent and dissatisfaction.  
-Harry Ironside

### Discussion Questions: Let's Talk about When and Where

- When have you felt like you were “in a cave” like David was ([Psa 142:1-2](#))? In these dark circumstances, what can you praise?
- How can dangerous, narrow places lead to wider places of opportunity ([Psa 18:18-22](#), [Psa 4:1](#))?
- How difficult is it to trust that God will be your defender ([Psa 142:3-5](#), [1Pet 5:7](#))?
- When you ask God to help you, how often do you ask for only your physical benefit ([Eph 1:3](#))?
- What does David say the outcome will be for himself and others if God delivers him ([Psa 142:6-7](#))?

## Dig a Little Deeper: God Meets Our Needs

As a Christ-follower, you can depend on God to meet your needs in many ways. Here a few.

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| He is your inheritance.         | <a href="#">Psa 16:5</a> , <a href="#">Heb 10:34</a>     |
| He guides you.                  | <a href="#">Psa 16:7</a> , <a href="#">Pro 3:5-6</a>     |
| He is your refuge and fortress. | <a href="#">Psa 91:1-2</a> , <a href="#">Rom 8:38-39</a> |
| He replaces anxiety with peace. | <a href="#">Php 4:6-7</a> , <a href="#">John 14:27</a>   |

### Application Exercise: Praise Self Assessment

How true are the following statements for you?

|   | not true ←→completely true |
|---|----------------------------|
| I praise God even during times of trouble.                            | 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5          |
| I trust God to be my defender and I praise Him for it.                | 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5          |
| I praise God for His victories in my life and in the lives of others. | 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5          |

Based on this self-assessment, ask God where He wants you to make some changes.

# 4-Why Do We Praise? Psalm 147

## Icebreaker: Behold Our God

Use this [video: Behold Our God](#), or a song of your choice to praise God.

## Discussion Questions: Let's Talk about Why

- God heals and restores those who repent and return to Him ([Psa 147:2-3](#))? Why does this motivate us to praise God ([John 10:27-28](#))?
- How does God taking care of baby ravens illustrate the way He cares for us ([Psa 147:7-9](#))? Why is this a reason for praise?
- Based on [Psalm 147:10-11](#), what pleases God ([Mat 6:33](#))?
- God has the power to force us, yet He chooses to plead and encourage ([Psa 147:15-20](#)). Why is this a reason to praise Him?
- What is it about God's Word that is praiseworthy ([1Pet 1:23-25](#))?
- What is the relationship between fear of the Lord and hope in the Lord ([Isa 8:12-14](#))?

## Dig a Little Deeper: Benefits of Fearing God

The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him and hope in Him [**Psalm 147:11**]. We don't think of fear and hope as companions. How can we resolve this apparent conflict? Consider the following:

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| God delivers those who fear Him [ <b>Psa 34:7</b> ].         | Fear → Safety     |
| God befriends those who fear Him [ <b>Psa 25:14</b> ].       | Fear → Friendship |
| God is merciful to those who fear Him [ <b>Psa 103:11</b> ]. | Fear → Mercy      |

Safety + Friendship + Mercy = Hope

When we have His safety, friendship, and mercy, we have hope.

### Application Exercise: Why Do You Praise God?

Tell God why you praise Him.

Pick one or more of these methods to praise Him:

- Read **Psalm 147** aloud. As you do, stop whenever you see something you can praise about God. Tell Him about it.
- Write a letter, poem, or song to God telling Him why you praise Him.
- Pray a prayer of praise to God. Praise Him for who He is and what He has done.
- Create a work of art that depicts why you praise God.



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