



Growth Group Curriculum Winter 2021
The Songs We Sing - Psalms in the New Year
Week 6 – February 14, 2021 - Psalm 145

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. In this time of the virus and social distancing, please meet safely outside or online. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at connect@ljpres.org. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Setting the Context

Psalm 145 belongs to a group of psalms (139-145) that are identified as psalms of David. It is placed right before the final five psalms (146-150) which serve as a sort of doxology to close out the book of Psalms. One scholar has suggested that Psalm 145 is an “overture” to the final movement of the Psalms because the final five psalms contain images and concepts that are found in Psalm 145. It is the only Davidic psalm whose superscription labels it as “praise.”

The psalm begins with praise. We are to praise God’s name forever and ever. The Hebrew verbs that are used for blessing revolve around the idea of exalt (verse 1) and praise (verse 1&2). Exalt has to do with lifting up the divine name of God, and bless has to do with bowing the knee and acknowledging the all-powerful God who made the heavens and earth.

It has been said that acclamation leads to proclamation and this is now what happens in verses 4-7. The older generation is to praise the works of God to the younger generation. It should also probably be understood that the younger generation can also praise God to the older generation. We move from meditating on God’s works, at the end of verse 5, to proclaiming and declaring those works in verse 6. Then in verse 7, there is a movement to loud celebration of what has been declared.

There is very much a sense, in Psalm 145, that we need to keep telling the story. We are to share the story with others. We are to teach the next generation about the glory and wonder of God. In Deuteronomy 6:6-9, God reminds us about this as well. *“These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”*

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The praise continues in verses 8-9. God's compassion is for all of creation. God will provide fullness of life for all because he is king of creation. Verses 10-13 remind us that all people and all of creation will sing praise to God.

Verses 14–21 focus on God's care and concern for the persecuted and the liberation of the oppressed. The psalm connects God's presence to those who pray in truth. God hears the petitions of the faithful and cares for them.

Exploring the Text

Read Psalm 145

¹ I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. ² Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. ³ Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. ⁴ One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. ⁵ They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty— and I will meditate on your wonderful works. ⁶ They tell of the power of your awesome works— and I will proclaim your great deeds. ⁷ They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness. ⁸ The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. ⁹ The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. ¹⁰ All your works praise you, LORD; your faithful people extol you. ¹¹ They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, ¹² so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does. ¹⁴ The LORD upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. ¹⁶ You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. ¹⁷ The LORD is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does. ¹⁸ The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹ He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰ The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. ²¹ My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) Was there someone in your life who helped to “commend” God’s work to you? If so, what did they tell you?
- 2) What does Psalm 145 teach us about the character of God?
- 3) It has been said, that faith is caught not taught. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
- 4) LJPC is a multigenerational congregation. Once we are able to return to church, what are some ways that the different generations of LJPC could tell their stories and the stories of God to one another?
- 5) Does Psalm 145 teach us anything about “how” we can talk about God, or share our faith, with family members, co-workers, friends, etc?
- 6) Notice the description of God in 145:8. This description comes out of an experience of Moses and Israel in Exodus 34:4-7a where we read, “*So Moses chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning, as the Lord had commanded him; and he carried the two stone tablets in his hands. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious*



God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Why do you think David makes this connection?

- 7) In verse 16, we read that God satisfies the desires of every living thing, and in verse 19, we are told that God fulfills the desires of those who fear him. Does that mean that God gives us everything we want? What does it mean to have our desires satisfied by God?
- 8) We conclude our look at the Psalms this week. Share one takeaway you have had from the Psalms over the past six weeks. As a reminder we read Psalm 2, 8, 15, 27, 29 and 145.

