

A Legacy of Praise

“One generation shall praise Your works to another.” Psalm 145:4

The legacy of each generation to the next generation is **praise!** But such praise is not an upbeat, energetic musical song. Rather, it is the adoration expressed from our lips toward God. **Psalm 145** is a psalm of **praise** to God as the Lord and King. It opens with the recognition of God’s might and majesty and moves to tribute God’s mercy and His faithfulness, focusing between the poles of God’s holiness and God’s great love.

In today’s times, we tend to emphasise the attribute of God’s power rather than God’s love. The baby boomer generation, in particular, places their concern on “what religion can do for me!” In fact, many people today have adopted a consumer attitude toward their faith – they “shop around” for that which gives them the most, usually at the least cost. These “consumer” attitudes need to be addressed when presenting ideas about God’s holiness, God’s majesty, and God’s authority and rule. Especially when the next generation is watching!

Yet, it is our recognition of God as Lord and King, or God as holy, which leads us to **praise**. And praise grows only out of a faith that has fallen to its knees in total surrender. When God becomes nothing more than a “heavenly pal,” or “my co-pilot,” there is little ground for **praise**. In religion, as in the rest of life, familiarity breeds contempt; consequently religion becomes more like a relationship between two equals. A well known preacher once said, *“The proper outline for prayer is not ‘Please do for me what I want.’ It is, ‘Please do with me what You want.”*

Praise leads to action

In our opening verse, the psalmist indicates that **praise** is to be inter-generational - passed on from one generation to the next. Martin Luther said that it is strange that every twenty years or so God builds a new church out of little children. Which is another way of saying that the Church is always just one generation away from extinction. Therefore, our faith must be transmitted (passed on) or it will die. The whole thrust of Bible education is to ensure the continuation of our faith. God’s word says, *“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15)*. The next generation must be taught the Word of God in the context of us being a “living example” of what we teach. True disciples!

But sometimes we only pay lip service to this idea. Many scholars have identified what they call the “grandmother” syndrome in the Church. We want to have a lot of children around, yet are relieved that the responsibility for their care belongs to someone else. Yet, unless one generation **praises God’s mighty works to another**, faith may be lost forever.

Transmit faith by action and words

2 Timothy 1:5, *“I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother*

Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.” Of particular importance is the idea that we can pass our faith on to the next generation (as with Timothy’s mother and grandmother). This we can do not only by our teaching, but by our lifestyle and the good use of our resources.

We cannot teach the next generation after our death, however, we can teach them by example or make the means available for others to continue teaching them. This is a very crucial moment in time, so we all need to leave a true **legacy**. Consider the old cartoon which showed two men discussing a third man who had just died. One asked, “How much did he leave?” And the other replied, “Everything.” Well, are you going to leave everything? You probably are! The question is – where? It is your personal responsibility to pass on your faith to the next generation. Therefore, you need to consciously give “praise” to God for His mighty works and deeds of power, in the midst of the next generation!

In his will, an American patriot wrote, *“I have now disposed of all my property to my family; there is one thing more I wish I could give them, and that is my Christian faith. If they had this, and I had not given them one shilling, they would be rich; but if they had not that, and I have given them all the world, they would be poor.”* We can pass on our faith to our children. One generation can **praise** God’s works to the next. Therefore, the legacy we must leave is “PRAISE”. Our God is so great, so strong, so mighty! That is why King David had to tell everyone about God. That’s why David continually **praised** Him. In fact, **Psalm 145** is an alphabet of praise and celebration to the Lord. It is not obvious in the English, but in the Hebrew each of the verses begins with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

Our God is so great, so awesome and so mighty! This is why David calls us to **praise** and celebrate Him to the next generation: *“I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever.” “Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever...” “They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.”*

Like David, we have to tell everyone about our great and awesome God. Like David, we must desire to bring to God a complete alphabet of **praise** and celebration. Like David, this should be conspicuous to those around us! Praise leads to action, and action ends with praise! It’s the circle of life! As Christians we can’t deny it. We have been created to abide in an atmosphere of **praise**. For God inhabits the praises of His people. What’s more, we are a great army of praisers. *“And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the Lord, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: “Praise the Lord, For His mercy endures forever” (2 Chronicles 20:21).*

So remember this... **The legacy of each generation to the next generation is praise!**