

Henry Ow  
 HCC Sermon  
 Psalm 145:1-9

### Sermon Outline

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Image: My friend's experience at Orobae caused him to praise.
2. Need: We are wired to praise things that we find good.
3. Subject:
  - a. If God is good, then we should praise him all the time. (Why should we praise God always?)
  - b. The goodness of God gives us a reason always to praise him.
4. Series Introduction:
  - a. If we should praise God always, then why do praise him so infrequently? One reason might be time.
  - b. For the next eight weeks, we'll spend time meditating on different attributes of God. I hope that this will give you sufficient resources to direct your praise toward God.
5. Text: Psalm 145:1-9
6. Preview: 3 Reasons to praise God's goodness.

#### BODY

- I. Praise God's goodness because he is the great king.
  - A. David praises God as the great king (145:1-3)
    1. David promises to praise God regularly (145:1-2)
    2. David, the king of Israel, acknowledges the king of creation (145:1)
    3. David praises the greatness of God (145:3)
  - B. God the great king rules every situation of your life.
    1. God ordains every situation you experience.
    2. God alone
- II. Praise God's goodness because he has done great works.
  - A. David states that generations will praise God's works (145:4-7)
    1. David emphasizes God's works using restatement (145:4-7)
    2. David emphasizes how God's works must be shared from generation to generation (145:4).
  - B. God's great works bring good out of bad situations throughout generations.
    1. God brought good out of bad situations in Israel's history.
    2. God brought good out of the death of Christ.
    3. God brings good out of my personal bad situations.
- III. Praise God's goodness because he keeps his covenant promises.
  - A. David praises God for keeping his covenant promises (145:8-9)
    1. David uses God's covenant name from Exodus 34:6.
    2. God remains committed to his people.
  - B. God keeps his covenant promises when he forgives us of sin.
    1. Although we the power of sin over us is broken, we find ourselves returning occasionally to our fleshly ways.

2. God's commitment to his covenant promise to us through Christ means that he will forgive us when we return to him.

#### CONCLUSION

1. Summary: Praise God for his goodness.
2. Closing Image: Blessed Be your Name.

MANUSCRIPT

**Jo and I took a trip with some friends to southern California in September.** During the trip we stopped at a boba shop called Orobae in Irvine. Unlike Houston, southern California has all these specialty boba shops. Orobae is known for its oolong milk tea. It's a unique tea shop. You do not go into Orobae, sit down, and chat. People wait outside the storefront to order. You order your drink. Pick up your order. Leave.

When we arrived the tea shop, we saw a fair number of people lined up. My friend and I stood in line. Ordered our drinks. Picked them up. We sat down at a nearby bench to see what the fuss is about. He took a long sip. His eyes brightened. After he swallowed his boba, he said: "This is amazing! I can drink this all week." Throughout the week, no boba drink we had compared to Orobae. He spoke the praises of Orobae's milk tea.

My friend's accolade of Orobae's milk tea demonstrates our innate nature to praise good things. We are wired to sing the praise of things that we find good. Parents might praise the wonders of their baby stroller. Lightweight. Easy to maneuver. Adequate shade for baby. People might praise a good film. The movie Oppenheimer is so good. I saw it twice. Others might praise a place to travel. Hawaii was divine. Cool weather. Clear water. Soft sand. Good food. People might praise food. I found a great steak place. Affordable price. High quality cut. We do that even with sermons. That sermon was amazing! Life-changing! Spirit-moving! **We are wired to praise things that we find good.**

Now if we know that God is ultimate good, then why do we find ourselves praising God sporadically? If there is no one as compassionate as God, then why do we not praise him? If

there is no one as loving as God, then we do we not sing his accolades? If there is no one as just, then why do we not revel in his ability to dispense justice?

**We may not praise God for many reasons.** Let me give you two. First, **we do not praise God because we do not know him.** Our lack of knowing who God is leads to a lack of praise. After all, we need to know the attributes of God to exalt him. God through the Bible shares with us what we should know about him. This next 8-week sermon series focuses on the attributes of God. It will help us to know God, so that we can praise him. First reason we don't praise God is that we have a deficient knowledge of his character. Second reason. **We're too busy.** Some might say distracted. Every time our phone buzzes, our mind thinks: who messaged me? When we wait to pick up our kids at school, we whip out our phones to check the latest sport scores. Instead of enjoying your dinner, you think about how I might photograph this meal for my Instagram followers. Distractions. Busyness. They prevent us from having time to think about who God is. Again, this 8-week series will set aside time each Sunday morning for us to meditate on an attribute of God. You'll then spend time in your community group or cell group thinking about this attribute in your sermon-based study. We'll set aside time together to think about who God is. My prayer is that this will fuel your praise of God through this series.

This morning's message will focus on God's goodness. God is good. **The goodness of God gives us reason to always praise him.** But why is God good? What makes God good? How is he good?

To meditate on God's goodness. We'll turn our attention to the Psalm that Akhil read for us. Psalm 145. Please turn there if you're not there already. Psalm 145.

Before we go into the Psalm, let me give you some background about it. As you know, Psalm 145 exists within the book of Psalms. The book of Psalms also known as the Psalter has been organized to describe the establishment of God's rule through a king. There are five books within the Psalms. Books one and two describe the struggle between God's king and the nations. Book three depicts the failure of the Davidic king. Book four describes a recommitment to the Torah and to God. Book five anticipates God establishing a future Davidic king through whom God will rule creation. Note Psalm 145 occurs within Book five.

There's another feature of Psalm 145. It's not apparent in English. It's an acrostic. That means each doublet begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. If I were to create an acrostic about God on the spot, then I might say: Almighty, Beautiful, Compassionate, Devoted, Eternal, and so forth. Why is that important? Hebrew poets would use acrostics to convey completeness. One might say that Psalm 145 gives you the A to Z of praise. This is the last acrostic found in the Psalter. Another thing to note, this is the last Psalm written by David before the Psalter ends with Psalm 150. Since David wrote many of Psalms, we should pay attention to this one because it's the last.

Within this Psalm, **we'll see three reasons to praise God for God's goodness.** Three explanations. Three rationales. Three things that explain God's goodness, so that we might exalt him.

Let's look at reason one. **Praise God's goodness because he is the great king.** God is the great head of state. He is the one of kind sovereign. He is the eminent monarch. God is marvelous because he is the great ruler. Praise him. **Praise God's goodness because he is the great king.**

Let's turn our attention to David's words. **David promises to praise God regularly.** Listen to verse one and two. *I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.* Did you hear the verbs? Will Extol. Bless. Praise. They all express a similar idea. Praise. This is a feature of Hebrew poetry. Hebrew poets use restatement and synonyms for emphasis. To extol God is to place him on a high place. For instance, you extol a favorite ice cream parlor by putting it at the top of your recommendations. To bless describes a person with much giving to one in need. But when the object of blessing is God, it refers to the spreading of God's reputation. For example, to bless your favorite ice cream parlor would be to tell others about it. Praise refers to a spontaneous expression of joy. You just can't hold it in. I have to say something. In this case, you need to say something about God's goodness. If someone asks on a GroupMe: I'm thinking of taking my girlfriend out for dessert. Any recommendations? Once, you see the notification. You reply quickly with your favorite ice cream parlor. You can't hold it in.

Note when David will praise. Every day. Forever and ever. He repeats it twice. **David pledges to praise God as frequently as possible.** It's a regular habit of David.

David promises to praise God regularly. Now, what does David praise God for? **David praises God for being his king.** Look at verse one again. *I will extol you, my God and king.* David may be the king of Israel, but he has a sovereign. God. And God is a unique ruler. He created all of creation, so he rules over it. No one is like him. No one can say I rule over the seas and the land because I made them. God's rule lasts forever. Kings will rise and die. Pharaohs build their empires and die. Nebuchadnezzar led the Babylonians to become an empire. But eventually he died. Alexander died. Caesars died. Napoleon died. British monarchs die. Presidents die. No one

rules forever. But God does. **David, the king of Israel, acknowledges the king of creation.** It causes him to praise.

Not only is God the king, but he is also the great king. **David praises God's greatness.** Look at verse 3. *Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.* The word great is repeated in different ways in English. Great. Greatly. Greatness. Now to be great means to stand out. They are one of kind. Hence, we use the term GOAT. Greatest of All Time. And we apply the title to different athletes. Michael Jordan. LeBron James. Tom Brady. Roger Federer. Novak Djokovic. When we apply the adjective greatness to God, we invite others to recognize it as well. Note that David doesn't just huddle in his room to extol the greatness of God. He invites others to think about it and express it by writing this Psalm.

Now if God is the great king, then let's think about how it should result in our praise of God. First, **God created everything you enjoy.** It might be your favorite piece of sushi. It might be your favorite piece of music. It might be your favorite hike.

For instance, I enjoy a cup of tea every morning. It's amazing that God would have created a tree from which the leaves could be plucked and roasted. When combined with the flavor of Bergamot, I have Earl Grey Tea leaves. The addition of hot water creates a cup of Earl Grey tea. I can enjoy my Earl Grey black. I could add steamed oat milk to enjoy a London Fog. God is so marvelous that he created tea! Think about something you might enjoy. For it points to how great our God is.

Second, **God the great king ordains every circumstance of your life.** He authored your story. He directed you through life. For those you who are married, think about how God ordained the events leading up to meeting your spouse. God designed it so that you heart

would flutter when you saw that person enter your field of vision. God caused you to smile when you receive a notification that your special someone texted. God ordained these moments. When you received your admission letter from your college. A positive pregnancy test. A job offer. A promotion. All these things God directed to happen.

Now you might think. If God ordains everything in my life, then how do you explain the bad situations. Trials. Suffering. Difficulty. Hold on to that question, we'll address it in our next point.

Praise God's goodness because he is the great king. Reason number two for why we should praise God. **Praise God's goodness because he has done great works.** God has done great things. He has accomplished great tasks. He does things that are wonderful. He completes great deeds. **Praise God's goodness because he has done great works.**

David does this. He praises God for his good works. Not only he will praise, but other generations. **David states that generations will praise God's works.** Future children of Israel will exalt God. We see this in verse 4 through seven. Let me read them to you. *One generation shall commend your works to another and shall declare your might acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and sing aloud of your righteousness.*

**David emphasizes God's works using restatement.** He says it in different ways. Look at the verses. *Your works* (145:4). *Your mighty acts* (145:4). *Wondrous works* (145:5). *Your awesome deeds* (145:6). What are these deeds? David could be referring to two types of deeds that will be passed down from generations. First, **it could be the ways that God had intervened**



**in the nation.** God delivering Israel from Egypt through the Passover. The crossing of the Red Sea. Manna and water in the wilderness. The crossing of the Jordan River. The conquest of Jericho. Gideon defeating the Midianites. Second, **it could be ways that God personally worked in the lives of certain Israelites.** God providing a plentiful crop one summer. God ending a season of infertility within a family. A wayward child returns to the LORD. These stories get passed on.

Note that David not only focuses on the great deeds of God, but he also notes how they will be passed on. **David emphasizes how God's works must be shared from generation to generation.** Look at verse 4. *One generation shall commend your works to another.* David refers to them two more times in verse 6 and 7 using the pronoun they. *They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds. They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness.* Where does this idea of passing these deeds on? It comes from Deuteronomy, chapter 6 where families have the responsibility of passing on their faith of God to the next generation. Or think about the Passover meal. The head of a family would recall over a meal how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt.

There's an interesting pattern to God's work. As I thought about God's work, I realized **that God's great works bring good out of bad situations throughout generations.** God's work seems to bring good out of the bad. This answers the question I posed earlier. If God ordains all events in my life, then what do I do with all the bad events? How do I praise God when I'm going through a tough time in my life?

Let's think of Israel's past. **God brought good out of a bad situations in Israel's history.** The jealousy of Joseph's brothers caused them to sell Joseph into slavery. Bad. It's never good

to hate your brother that you would sell him off as a slave. Bad situation. But God allowed Joseph to be sold into slavery so that he would rise within the ranks of the Egyptian government so that he could save his family from famine. Good.

Let's think about another situation. After Cyrus allows Israel returns to their homeland, the walls of Jerusalem are rubble. Bad situation. But this situation causes Nehemiah to step up and lead the efforts to rebuild the wall. He records the account of rebuilding the wall as a testament of God's faithfulness. Good.

Let's think even of our faith. It is through a bad situation that we receive redemption. God brought good out of the death of Christ. The religious leaders and Roman authorities put our innocent savior, Jesus to death on a cross. Bad situation. But God uses his death to pay the penalty for our sins. He then raises him from the dead to show that Jesus had conquered sin and death. Now whoever believes in him shall have eternal life. Good.

Now if God can bring good out of those situations, then **God can bring good out of our personal bad situations** as well. Let me share a personal example. Some of you may have already heard this story.

In September as I've shared already, Jo and I made a trip to southern California with some friends. One day we chose to visit Laguna beach. While our friends spent time on the beach with our god daughter, we took Hudson on a stroll through Laguna so that he could nap in our stroller. It was a hot day. We decided to go into a local Starbucks to get a cold drink to cool off. I open the door. Forgetting my son and wife behind allow the door to slam on the stroller. I look through the glass door at Jo's face that communicated to me: "Are you kidding me?" Bad situation. It revealed my unconscious selfishness. I look out for my own interests. My

mind's focus on a cool drink made me forget about my wife and child. Bad situation. This prompted me to pray for God's help to be aware of my unconscious selfishness. Help me to find ways to serve my family.

In October, Jo took a trip to Florida. Before I picked her up, I had the thought: I'm sure that she'll be thirsty after a long flight. I had better bring her yeti and some warm water. Her choice of beverage. She had to wake up early to catch the flight. I better pack a snack. I'm sure she must be hungry. I cut her a piece of banana bread that I made earlier. When I look back, I see how God had answered my prayer to more conscious of my selfishness and find ways to serve my wife. God took a bad situation. Slamming door on my wife and child. He brought good out of it by helping me to be more thoughtful.

Now lest you think that I'm a saint. This is an ongoing process. I still see my unconscious selfishness manifest itself. For instance, Jo loaded Hudson recently into the car. I planned to back out the car and let Jo in. As I backed the car out, I shut the garage door on Jo! As I said, God is still working on me.

Some of you might think. That's cute. But my situation is much more dire. A sick parent. A chronic illness. An unresolved conflict. Difficult work situation. The list could go on. You are just in a place where praise is not your thing.

Let me make a comment about Psalm 145. Some believe that Psalm 137 through Psalm 145 form a chiasm. The word chiasm is derived from the Greek letter, Chi that resembles the letter X. Biblical authors use Chiasm to structure their arguments. The first line and the last line parallel one another until you reach the center, which is meat of the argument. Think of a sandwich. Bread on top layer. Bread on bottom layer. Middle contains the important stuff.

Roast Beef. Roast Turkey. Pastrami. In this case, Psalm 137 parallels Psalm 145. The middle is Psalm 141. But I want to focus on how Psalm 137 parallels Psalm 145. Psalm 137 is a lament with no turn toward promise or praise. Israel laments about its exile in Babylon. The lack of promise or praise means that the exiles cannot find any reason to praise God. We lost our home. We lost our children. We lost the temple. We have nothing.

Psalm 145 responds to Psalm 137. Yes. Things may suck. Things may look hopeless. But we can still praise God because he remains our king. Our king is in the business of bringing good out of bad things. It may not happen in this life. It will certainly occur when Jesus returns to set things right.

But think also about this. When things get hopeless. Things are tough. We have two choices. We can either say: God, you are terrible for putting me in this circumstance. I can't see how you can bring good out of this. Therefore, no good can come out of this. This will lead to further despair. It will also to you withdrawing from God.

Or you can say: God I don't understand how why this is happening to me right now. I don't know why I'm going through this breakup. I don't know why this family member is dying of cancer. I don't know why I'm experiencing a terrible week in school. But I know you are good. You can bring about some kind of benefit of this situation. I may not be able to see it. Help me to trust you. This results in you are drawing closer to God. This is a good thing.

Let's move to the third reason to praise God. **Praise God's goodness because he keeps his covenant faithfulness.** God keeps his promises. He cares for his people. He will accomplish his purposes. **Praise God's goodness because he keeps his covenant faithfulness.**

**David praises God for keeping his covenant faithfulness.** He recall's God's covenant name. Look at verse 8. *The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.* This is a direction quote from what Moses writes in Exodus, chapter 34, verse 6. God made a covenant with Abraham that through him and his descendants would be blessed. Many years later, God delivered Israel out of Egypt. He brought them to Mt. Sinai. He proclaimed that they would a kingdom of priests to represent him to the world. He gave them a covenant. And what do they do? They break the covenant. They create a golden calf to worship. They break their half of the covenant. God would have had every right to destroy them and there. They recognize their sin. They ask for forgiveness. What does God do? God forgives them. He restores fellowship with them. He renews his covenant. Then... he reveals his covenant name. *Gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.* There's a lot to say about what God discloses about himself. But all these qualities tell us that God is so committed to his people that he would grant them mercy and give them what they do not deserve should they repent.

**God remains committed to his people.** This means that though God's people will fail in keeping God's covenant, God will be faithful to forgive them should they repent. If they fail to recognize their failure to keep God's instruction, then Israel would experience discipline. One form of discipline might be withholding the rain. Another form of discipline would be to allow foreign forces to oppress them for a season. If they remain hard-hearted, then God would expel Israel from the land. Why all these disciplinary actions? To produce repentance so that Israel would return to God.

Now note that God extends forgiveness and fellowship to anyone who turns from their sins and turns toward God. Look at verse 9. *The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.* Think about the non-Israelites that God allowed to experience his salvation. Rahab in Jericho. Ruth from Moah. Namaan from Syria. Just to list a few.

God not only keeps his covenant promises to Israel, but he keeps his covenant promises to us. We didn't experience deliverance from Egypt. But we experienced deliverance from sin through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

**Now the work of Jesus Christ broke the power of sin over us. But we find ourselves turning back to our fleshly ways.** We still struggle with gossip. We still struggle with sexual purity. We still struggle with finding our identity solely in Christ. The presence of sin continues to remain in our flesh.

But **God's commitment to his covenant promise to us through Christ means that he will forgive us when we return to him.** If we confess our sins, he will be faithful and just to forgive us and purify us from unrighteousness. This also means no sin how big or long will ever nullify the work of Jesus on the cross. Even if we continue to live in our sin, God will be working to woo us back. It might be through discipline. Experiencing the consequence of our sin. It might be through other people. But if we decide to confess and turn back, then God will be there waiting. God is good. Praise him.

Why should we praise God's goodness? First, he is our great king. Second, he has done great works. Third, he keeps his covenant promises. Praise God. Exalt him. Bless his name. For he is good.

Studying this Psalm made me think of a song we often sang in college. Blessed Be your Name. It must be a God thing that Wilson chose this same song to be part of our worship set this morning. Let me read to you some of the verses. Blessed be your name when I'm found in the desert place though I walk through the wilderness Blessed Be your name. Blessed be your name on the road marked with suffering though there's pain the offering blessed be your name. May be bless and praise God's name whatever situation we find ourselves in because he is good. Let's pray.

Blessed Be Your Name Lyrics

Blessed Be Your Name  
In the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow  
Blessed be Your name

Blessed Be Your name  
When I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed Be Your name

Every blessing You pour out, I'll  
Turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in, Lord  
Still I will say

Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your glorious name

Blessed be Your name  
When the sun's shining down on me  
When the world's 'all as it should be'  
Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name  
On the road marked with suffering  
Though there's pain in the offering  
Blessed be Your name

Every blessing You pour out I'll  
Turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in, Lord  
Still I will say

Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your glorious name, oh

God you give and take away  
Oh you give and take away  
My heart will choose to say