

How to praise God

I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.
Psalm 9:1-2

The Psalms are filled with praises to God. David, the chief psalmist, understood the importance and benefits of praising the God that made him and kept him. We see evidence of this in this psalm, as in many others. If we are careful readers and meditators, we can also glean from an expert like him the elements that should characterize our praise. For example, he begins with the key principle of praising God with “my whole heart.” This then indicates that it is possible to praise with only part of our heart. Of course, we understand that here by “heart” he refers to our innermost being. Have you ever found yourself praising half-heartedly? We all know how possible that is. But David’s insinuation here is that the only acceptable praise for our God, who made us and all things, must be whole-hearted. Otherwise, we are the losers, because we miss the blessing of being filled with the truth of who He is.

David also expands his praise by showing forth all the marvelous works of God. After basking in His Person, we also are blessed to consider the abundant works of God, which should make us not only marvel at his power and goodness, but also communicate it through our praise. He then describes an acceptable attitude of praise, when he describes being glad and rejoicing “in Thee.” Even in the most difficult circumstances, in which our human response may struggle for gladness, we have the choice to allow the knowledge of our God and His marvelous works to make us glad and rejoice in Him alone. Finally, he describes the form of his praise: singing. Not only singing, but singing *to His name*. So how should we sing praise to His name? Make sure that our song is characterized by all the foregoing characteristics, as we recognize and are consumed by Him who is most High!