

September 7, 2025

"The Vulnerable Hallelujah" – Richard Wallace

Psalms 150

¹ Praise the Lord.

Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.

² Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.

³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,

⁴ praise him with timbrel and dancing,
praise him with the strings and pipe,

⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.

⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.

1. When you hear the word "praise," what's your honest first reaction?
2. Read Psalm 150 aloud together. What strikes you most about this psalm?
 - a. The sermon mentioned that Psalm 150 comes after 149 other psalms, many filled with lament and complaint. Why do you think the editors chose to end the book of Psalms this way?
3. Have you ever felt pressure to "put on a happy face" in Christian settings? When and why?
 - a. What's the difference between toxic positivity and what the sermon called a "vulnerable hallelujah"?

Praise as Memory (Past-Facing)

4. Share about a time when you experienced God's help during a difficult season. How does that memory affect your ability to praise now?
5. The sermon talked about "first naiveté" vs. "second naiveté." Can you identify these stages in your own faith journey?
6. What are some practical ways you could better remember and record God's faithfulness in your life?
 - a. How might keeping a prayer journal or gratitude practice change your perspective on current challenges?

Praise as Defiance (Future-Facing)

7. The sermon described praise as "rebellion against despair." When have you seen someone worship or hope against seemingly impossible odds?
8. What would it look like for you to practice "defiant praise" in a current area of struggle or uncertainty?
9. How can we help each other remember God's faithfulness and maintain hope when our own is failing?

Praise as Participation (Present-Facing)

10. Psalm 150 moves from temple instruments to street instruments, from priests to "everything that has breath." What does this suggest about where and how we should worship?
11. How could you make ordinary moments of your week into acts of worship?
12. Why is it often easier to be cynical than celebratory in our culture? What makes enthusiastic praise feel risky?

13. Which of the three dimensions (memory, defiance, participation) feels most natural to you? Which feels most challenging?
14. What would a "vulnerable hallelujah" look like in your life right now - one that doesn't ignore your pain but finds its way through it?