

City View at 16 - Building a Legacy of Praise

Psalm 145:1 ESV I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. **2** Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. **3** Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. **4** One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. **5** On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. **6** They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. **7** They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. **8** The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. **9** The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. **10** All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your saints shall bless you! **11** They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, **12** to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. **13** Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The Lord is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.] **14** The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. **15** The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. **16** You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. **17** The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. **18** The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. **19** He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. **20** The Lord preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. **21** My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

- I. Today is a lot like Thanksgiving Day for all of us who call City View Christian Fellowship home. City View is 16 years old this month, and that is something we want celebrate.
 - A. City view began in August of 2000 as a group of 116 people gathered in the old Watson Foods warehouse on Buddy Holly Ave.
 1. The founding pastor was Gary Kirksey. Alongside his sweet wife Marsha, he would faithfully and tirelessly serve this congregation for the first 14 1/2 years of it's existence.
 2. Their commitment gave City View the value of longevity and perseverance. For a church that is 16 years old, I am honored to be only the second lead pastor in its history.
 - B. The 116 people that met together that day were united in the sense that they were to be become a brand new congregation in the city of Lubbock, built upon a unique set of values that remain central to this day.
 1. They would minister with a compassionate heart, not just for their own congregation, but for the city (thus the name "City View"), and they would do so in deed and not word only, taking initiative to serve in a caring pastoral role over the entire community.
 - a) This was seen in the way that City View very intentionally reached out to the business community. In the early days, City View would host lunches where business leaders, saved or unsaved, and from any congregation,

could come and hear about how the gospel of the Kingdom relates to the marketplace.

- b) Furthermore, it was seen in the way City View made a determination to reach out to and serve other local pastors and congregations.
 - (1) Instead of viewing them as “the competition”, the leadership at City View would encourage other churches in their mission and minister to them in their crises.
 - (2) Oftentimes they would invite pastors and leaders from other churches to come and hear from a guest that had been brought in with a special ministry emphasis.
 - (3) It was these “others-focused” ministries of City View that led me and my family to make City View our home when our previous ministry assignment ended in the Spring of 2009.
- c) The uniqueness of this congregation was seen in the way the church viewed the task of praying over the city as of utmost importance.
 - (1) Both Pastor Gary and Equipping Pastor David Eppler served on the board of Pray Lubbock, a grass-roots ministry that brought local church leaders together to pray for the community.
 - (2) The church also gathered often to pray about the challenges facing the city, the church and individuals.
- C. I could talk for the rest of the morning about all of the different ways the congregation of this church embraced worship, missions, and evangelism. I could speak for hours about children’s ministries, and youth ministries, and the creativity and innovation that City View sought to employ in its outreach efforts.
 - 1. To say that God has used City View to be a blessing to many in the city of Lubbock would be an understatement.
 - 2. When we gather this evening for our anniversary dinner, we will hear from a few people who have been impacted by City View’s ministry. I hope you can make it as I know you will be encouraged and inspired.
- D. But the purpose behind our celebration this morning is not to commemorate an innovative church, a passionate church, or even a praying church. We are not blowing the trumpets of a church where it’s always been “unicorns and rainbows”, because quite frankly, things have not always been perfect. There have been a lot of things that have disappointed us, things that have discouraged us, and plans that did not materialize. There have been missteps as well.
 - 1. We have seen people that we love move on for a variety of reasons...
 - a) Some have been called to different ministries like when Rance and Stacy Bland obeyed God’s call on their lives and moved to Belgium as missionaries. Or when Bruce and Ruth Menefee pursued a ministry opportunity in Fort Worth. Or when Levi and Emily Bohn pursued their missions call in Norway. Or when Joe and Sydna Hamilton moved out of town to care for her ailing mother.
 - b) Others like Leland Marckley have left us and gone on to their heavenly reward.

- c) But others whom we loved have become disillusioned or discouraged, or maybe got caught up in an offense or misunderstanding, and have relocated to different congregations.
 - d) Still others, like the Apostle Paul's associate Demas, have loved this present world and deserted us (2 Timothy 4:10).
 - 2. At times City View has faced severe financial stress.
 - a) We have seen potential sales on our land that while they looked certain, were destined to fall through or be delayed.
 - b) Government agencies moved more slowly than can be imagined, making it very difficult for us to finish developments.
 - c) We have seen our resources become so limited for a season that all the staff had to go off salary.
- II. But every year in August, we pause as a church in order to remember and to celebrate, not the excellence of this church, or the perfection of our piety, but rather to revel in the goodness and faithfulness of our God! And he has been, and continues to be, good to City View! And oh, hasn't He been faithful?
 - A. He has been both good and faithful in the best of times and in the worst of times.
 - 1. At times when it would have been easy to see ourselves as the model church he was faithful enough to break us and bring us to our knees in order that we would look to him alone as our refuge, and not to ourselves.
 - 2. But when the trials seemed so heavy that we were sure that we would collapse under their weight, He has come through without fail, being our strong deliverer!
 - a) I remember a time when a business partner in a land development deal thought he could put us over a barrel and buy us out for a pittance of what our share was worth. But the elders prayed, and through the grace of God, and the negotiating courage of Mike Henthorn, the man finally paid us almost 12 times his original offer!
 - b) But what is mere money compared to the people we've seen rescued by grace?
 - (1) Like when David Henry was miraculously healed of a brain tumor that should have killed him!
 - (2) Or the people whose lives have been turned around; like Tommy Dunn who was delivered from both physical prison and the spiritual prison of drugs!
 - (3) Or Maryam and Pouyan who just this Spring were brought out of the darkness of Islam and into the glorious light of the gospel!
 - B. Much like we read in Psalm 145 this morning, thinking about the last 16 years should make our hearts rejoice, as we direct praise to the one who has sustained us and blessed us; to the one who continues to direct us and to the one who is our sure hope for the future.
 - 1. This day is about praise! It is not about self-congratulations or boasting, but humble and worshipful reflection on the goodness of our Father!
 - 2. Psalm 145 also gives us a guide for the future of our fellowship, and direction as to how we live our lives in unending praise to God as a church.

- C. You see this in David's opening words to God in this Psalm when he says that he will **extol** the Lord as both his God and his King.
1. To "extol" means to lift up, to magnify; to proclaim his glory and worth and to make much of God. To exalt him, and to loudly herald his fame.
 2. It represents David's desire to make God famous! He is saying "I want the world to know that everything that is glorious in my life is because of God!"
- D. He recognizes that God's beauty and majesty will only be rightly acknowledged if he is praised for all eternity as opposed to an hour and a half on Sunday.
1. **Psalm 145:1 ESV** I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name **forever and ever. 2 Every day** I will bless you and praise your name **forever and ever. 3** Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and **his greatness is unsearchable.**
 2. David is reserving praise for God every day of his life, and then forever and ever after that. And why will he do this? Because "his greatness is unsearchable".
 3. This means that for the rest of eternity, he can discover new ways that God is great, and good, and faithful, and yet he will never come to the end of the list. Those of us who call City View home must never forget that.
- E. Furthermore, in David's idea of unending praise to God, he points out something that we should notice: that true God-honoring praise is multi-generational.
1. **Psalm 145:4 ESV** One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.
 2. This is a thought that is echoed throughout the Old Testament, that we must make known God's law, his holiness, and his beauty to our children.
 - a) Something that has been said around here a lot is that "we are planting trees that we may never get to sit beneath."
 - b) I hope that City View has a long and prosperous story, but I do not care at all if anyone remembers my name or yours, only that the fame of God is proclaimed from one generation to the next because of what he does here.
- F. **Psalm 145:5 ESV** On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. **6** They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness.**7** They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. **8** The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. **9** The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.
1. David is saying that, as an act of praise, he is committed to meditating upon the splendor of God's majesty and his wondrous works.
 - a) This, he says, will prompt him to consider God's awesome deeds, to declare his greatness, and to boast of his abundant goodness, singing aloud of his righteousness.
 - b) For us who live on this side of the cross, all of these things find their truest meaning in the gospel!
 - (1) Is there any more "wondrous work" or "awesome deed" that God has done than rescuing us through the death, resurrection, and crowning of Jesus?

- (2) What more perfect portrayal of his abundant goodness is there than that **Luke 19:10 ESV** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
2. May all of City View's worship be anchored in the gospel of Jesus Christ; may all of our singing, preaching, giving, serving, and fellowshiping be because "The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made."
- G. **Psalm 145:10 ESV** All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your saints shall bless you! **11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, 12 to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. 13** Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The Lord is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.]
1. Here David turns his attention to the kingdom of God as the main concern of the saints. This means that we celebrate the fact that God is king; that he is in charge, and that we are the benefactors of his glorious rule.
 - a) But notice what David says in verse 12 about what the saints busy themselves doing: they "make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom."
 - b) The Achilles' heel of this or any other church is when we lavish the goodness that God has so freely given on ourselves, hoarding his goodness, without a thought to those outside!
 2. In 2 Kings chapter 7 there is a story of how Samaria, the capital city of Israel was under siege by the Syrians. God, however, miraculously sends the sound of chariots and horses, and a great army into the enemy camp, and they flee for their lives. All of this happens without anyone in the city knowing God has done it.
 - a) Now outside the city gates are 4 lepers who are starving. They decide to go and surrender to the Syrians, thinking that though they may indeed kill them, that there is also a chance that they will feed them, and that risk is better than sitting around waiting for certain death.
 - b) Imagine their surprise when they enter the camp only to find silver and gold, clothing, and an all-you-can-eat buffet just waiting for them! Well, just as you or I would, they begin to carry off the treasure and hide it, as they simultaneously stuff themselves with all they can eat and drink!
 - c) But something happens. One of them sudden awakes to the reality of the situation. **2 Kings 7:9 ESV** Then they said to one another, "We are not doing right. **This day is a day of good news. If we are silent and wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us.** Now therefore come; let us go and tell the king's household."
 3. Our lives of worship and praise are only as valid as they are evangelistic. I fear that modern churches are often like the those lepers, stashing away the goods of the gospel for our own consumption. We are not doing good! This is a day of good news! Let's shout it from the rooftops!
- H. **Psalm 145:14 ESV** The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. **15** The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in

due season. **16** You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. **17** The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. **18** The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. **19** He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. **20** The Lord preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

1. David wraps up this psalm by reminding us of what we at City View have learned so often (and continue to learn). If we are sustained, it is God who sustains us.
 2. It is God who upholds us when we are falling. There is no trial we can face that he cannot rescue us from.
 3. It is God who raises us when we are bowed down. God delights in restoring our joy and raising us to places of influence that we might freely and passionately glorify his name and make him famous.
 4. As we look to him, he supplies food and satisfies our desires. There is nothing that we need to be satisfied that hasn't been freely given to us.
 - a) **2 Peter 1:3 ESV** His divine power has granted to us *all things that pertain to life and godliness*, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, **4** by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.
 - b) There is nothing that will satisfy us if it isn't given from his hand; not a million dollars in the bank or 5,000 butts in the seats. What we want is what he gives.
 5. He is both righteous and kind. He is near when we call upon him. He hears our cry. He saves us and preserves us.
 - a) Why fear if he is kind? What can harm us if he is near when we call and hears our cry?
 - b) We must remember that according to David, God does not merely save us; but he also preserves us.
 - c) **Romans 8:38 ESV** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- III. So as we consider all of God's past goodness to this little church, and as we earnestly pray and trust him for continued blessing, let us take up David's closing words from Psalm 145 on our lips:
- A. **Psalm 145:21 ESV** My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.
 - B. This represents a two-fold commitment to a life of praise and worship for this body of believers; not only that we are committed to being a people of praise, but that the heart of our fellowship will beat for the day when "all flesh" will "bless his his holy name forever and ever".