

## Session 6: The Most Natural Thing in the World

### Lesson summary

“The world rings with praise,” C.S. Lewis once wrote, and it’s true. Praise isn’t just a religious phenomenon; it’s a regular and common feature of our lives. Whenever we encounter beauty or goodness or blessing in our lives, our natural and fitting response is to celebrate it and sing its praise to others. For that reason, it comes as no surprise that the activity of praise is so central in the psalms. The God we encounter in the Psalms, and all of Scripture, is an unending source of beauty and goodness and grace. The question is: what does genuine, authentic praise look like? And how can we continue to praise amidst the sorrows and disappointments of life? Father Jonathan explored praise by focusing on what the psalms teach us about both the *context of praise* and the *content of praise*.

1. Review **Psalms 146-150**, focusing especially on **146 and 150**. How would you compare the attitude expressed in these psalms to your attitude in your life with God?

Why do you think the book of Psalms as a whole concludes with these 5 psalms of praise?

What was one point from this week’s video teaching that stood out to you?

2. Describe one particularly memorable experience of praise from your own life. What stands out to you about this experience of praise? How would you relate it to the description of praise that we find in the psalms?

3. In Romans 1:21, Paul describes sin in human history by saying that “although humans knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

Why would Paul connect sin with the failure to praise? How might a lack of praise lead to futile and foolish thinking? Why do you think praise and thanksgiving to God don’t come more naturally to us in August 2021?

4. Why do you think the writers of the Psalms found themselves drawn to praise even during times of great distress and sorrow? How can we continue to praise when life goes badly? What has helped you do that?

5. What do you think is the greatest challenge for you in applying the lessons of praise and thanksgiving to God found in the Psalter’s concluding psalms of praise? What is one practical step you can take in the coming week to overcome this challenge?

(Read **Psalms 95, 96, 97, 98, 99 and 100** in preparation for the next lesson.)