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“Throughout history God has been fashioning a people for himself who will love and obey him, and who will express and nourish their corporate life in gathered worship. The Psalms served as a vehicle for the prayers and praises of God’s people in Israel, and Christians today, who have been grafted in to the olive tree of God’s ancient people (Rom 11:17, 24), can join their voices together with these ancient people in their worship.”

These words, taken from the ESV Study Bible’s introduction to the Psalms, sum up why we have produced this album. As you listen, we pray you’ll be stirred to proclaim with the psalmist, “Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting” (Ps 147:1).

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You Will Never Change

Psalms 90

In light of God's eternal nature, even a life of a thousand years seems brief. That's humbling. But knowing the unchanging nature of God can also bring us a profound security. "The Lord is the dwelling place, i.e., the home and refuge, for his people in all generations because he himself is eternal. He has been God since before the creation. That God is the Creator is assumed. That the Lord has always been God indicates that he always will be, i.e., that he will not change."

Verse 1

You have been our dwelling place
A rock amidst the waves
Though everything around us shakes
Your truth will still remain
Our anchor forever

Chorus

Lord, You will never change
You will never change
From everlasting You are God
Your love forever will endure
Your promises are sure
To everlasting You are God

Verse 2

Our lives are like a passing dream
A thought that soon is gone
With all our strength we cling to You
Our rock, steadfast and true
Our refuge forever

Bridge

Teach us to number here
Our momentary years
From all eternity
You were and will always be

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Praise the Lord

Psalms 150

Praising God requires passion. "The list of musical instruments in vv. 3–5, with its mixture of wind, strings, percussion, and rhythmic dance, gives the impression of loud song and ceaseless motion—the worshiper's whole body offering praise to God." But that passion is informed by a clear and compelling picture of God's mighty deeds and excellent greatness. We have no greater demonstration of both than the incarnation of the Son of God, who gave his life as a ransom for many (Mk 10:45).

Verse 1

Praise the Lord, Oh praise His name
From the heights of heav'n He reigns
Seated in the highest place
Surrounded by unending praise

Verse 2

Praise Him for His mighty deeds
Awesome in His majesty
Praise Him now with trumpet sound
Lift your voice and dance around

Chorus

Everything that has breath, praise the Lord
Everything that's in us, praise Him
Everything that has breath, praise the Lord

Verse 3

Praise the Lord with instruments
Praise Him for His excellence
Look at what He's done for us
Bore our sins upon the cross

Verse 4

Praise the Lord with all you are
Mind and soul and will and heart
From His hand comes everything
He alone is God and King

Words by Doug Plank and Bob Kauflin, music by Doug Plank © 2008
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God Is Our Refuge

Psalms 46

Both nature and nations can threaten our sense of peace and well-being. This psalm assures us that our God is a fortress—a rock that can never be moved. "The people of God are secure, even in times of tumult and upheaval, because God is their refuge and strength (v. 1)."

Verse 1

The heavens shake, the mountains quake
And crumble to the sea
The oceans roar because the Lord
Is reigning sovereignly
And those who trust in You
Will never be afraid
Those who trust in You will not be moved

Chorus

God is our refuge, our shelter and our strength
The Lord our fortress, our rock and our defense
God is our refuge, our help in time of need
He will always be our peace

Verse 2

All around we hear the sounds
Of violence in the earth
The nations rage against Your name
Against Your mighty Word
And one day wars will cease
And endless peace will reign
One day all the earth will be made new

Bridge

If You are for us, who can be against us
If You are for us, we'll never be ashamed
If You are for us, who can be against us
If You are for us, we'll never be ashamed

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God Shall Arise

Psalms 68

This psalm recalls Moses's words each time the Israelites set out with the ark toward the Promised Land: "Arise, O LORD, and let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you" (Num 10:35). God arises not only to bless the humble, but to judge the proud and unrepentant. We can rejoice that when God arises, "the wicked (those who reject God's covenant) shall perish before God, while the righteous (those who embrace the covenant) shall be glad, because God is carrying out his purpose of reversing the effects of sin in the world." And now, "believers from all nations" can "share in the grateful awe of their privilege of being God's vehicle for further blessing to the world."

Verse 1

Father of the orphan, helper of the poor
Protector of the widow and the weak
You are our deliverer, You daily bear us up
You break the prisoners' chains and set them free

Chorus

God shall arise and His foes be scattered
God shall arise, Oh sing His praise
Lift up your eyes and see your Savior
Our mighty Savior, God shall arise

Verse 2

You ride upon the heavens, Your power is in the skies
But You became a servant clothed in flesh
And You obeyed Your Father, and in You was no sin
But You were counted guilty and died our death

Bridge

Let all the nations say You are awesome
Let every kingdom sing praise
Let all the nations say You are awesome
Let every kingdom sing praise

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Glorious and Mighty

Psalm 96

This psalm reminds us that God is King over all and uniquely worthy of our praise. "The universal rule of the one true God (who is above all other gods, who are worthless anyhow, vv. 4–5) is good news to those who will acknowledge his kingship." When Christ returns to establish once and for all his unending reign over the universe, those who know and love him will raise joyful songs for all eternity.

Verse 1

Majesty, Your glory is shining
Brighter than the moon and the stars
Marveling, we honor and fear You
Above all gods

Chorus

Glorious and mighty, You're awesome in beauty
Joyful songs we raise
Glorious and mighty, You're awesome in beauty
Greatly to be praised

Verse 2

Majesty, You fashioned the heavens
Your decrees can never be changed
Over all the plans of the nations
Your judgments reign

Verse 3

Majesty, we'll sing with creation
When You come again in the clouds
Every knee will bow down and worship
The one true God

Words by Joel Szebel, Todd Twining, and Bob Kauflin
Music by Joel Szebel and Todd Twining © 2008
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The Lord Is

Psalm 23

David uses two images in this psalm to describe the Lord: shepherd and host. Both reflect God's constant, personal, and lavish care for his own. "Just as a shepherd cares for his sheep, so the Lord cares for his people, providing for their needs, guiding them, and protecting them." We have no greater proof of that love than the atoning death of the Savior at Calvary.

Verse 1

The depths of Your grace who can measure
You fully supply all I need
You restore my weary soul again and again
And lead me in Your righteousness and peace

Verse 2

You're with me through every dark valley
There's nothing that I have to fear
You are there to comfort me again and again
Protecting me, assuring me You're near

Chorus

The Lord is
The Lord is my shepherd
The Lord is
The Lord is my shepherd
I shall not want

Verse 3

You gave Your own life for my ransom
So I could rejoice at Your side
You have shown Your faithfulness again and again
There's nothing good that You will not provide

Bridge

I will dwell in Your house
All the days of my life
I will dwell in Your house
All the days of my life

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Greater Than We Can Imagine

Psalm 145

Worship is the only proper response to God's glory. But his greatness is "past the capacity of the human mind to describe or comprehend fully. It will take many worshipers, and a long duration (forever and ever, vv. 1, 2, 21), even to begin to do justice to what the Lord deserves." That's why we're committed to magnifying the glory of Jesus Christ not only every day, but forever, and inviting every generation to join us in our glad pursuit.

Verse 1

Every day we'll bless You and praise Your name
And on Your glorious splendor we will dwell
On Your wondrous works, Lord, we'll meditate
And of Your awesome power we will tell
We'll speak of Your salvation
And Your abundant goodness

Chorus

Because You are greater than we can imagine
You are too beautiful for us to fathom
Oh You are great, and greatly to be praised

Verse 2

Every generation shall sing Your worth
And magnify Your mercy and Your grace
We'll sing about the Savior who came to earth
To bear the sins of those He came to save
You fill our hearts with wonder
We'll worship You forever

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I Want to Be Where You Are

Psalm 84

While God is present everywhere through his Spirit, believers continually long for a deeper knowledge and experience of God's presence as we walk in humble trust and obedience before him. This psalm is meant "to open the eyes and hearts of God's people to the staggering privilege of being a welcome guest in God's own house, and to write deep into their souls the conviction that wickedness offers no reward that can even remotely compare to the joy and pleasure of God's house."

Verse 1

How sweet the place where You dwell, O Lord
My soul longs and faints for You
My heart sings out a loud song of joy
For I have known the living God

Chorus

I want to be where You are, O Lord
I want to be where You are, O Lord
I'd rather have just one day with You
Than be anywhere else

Verse 2

There's no good thing that You will withhold
From those who live to follow You
I'd rather be Your servant, O God
Than have the riches of this world

Bridge

Those who follow You go from strength to strength
Those who trust in You are filled with joy

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Out of the Depths

Psalm 130

Our greatest problem isn't the trials we endure, but the sins we've committed against a holy God. We deserve God's judgment, not his help. But this psalm enables "worshippers to see themselves as forgiven people, whose only right to enter God's presence lies in his mercy." Knowing that in Christ we have received "plentiful redemption" (Ps 130:7), we have confidence to wait for and trust in God, even when we don't understand our circumstances. In every way, we remain joyfully dependent on God's free grace.

Verse 1

Out of the depths, O Lord, I cry to You
When I am tempted to despair
Though I might fail to trust Your promises
You never fail to hear my prayer
And if You judged my sin
I'd never stand again
But I see mercy in Your hands

Chorus

So more than watchmen for the morning
I will wait for You, my God
When my fears come with no warning
In Your Word I'll put my trust
And when the harvest time is over
And I still see no fruit
I will wait
I will wait
For You

Verse 2

The secret mysteries belong to You
We only know what You reveal
And all my questions that are unresolved
Don't change the wisdom of Your will
In every trial and loss
My hope is in the cross
Where Your compassions never fail

Taste and See

Psalm 34

While rich in doctrine and objective truths about God, the Psalms encourage genuine emotional responses to God. They invite us to "taste and see" that God is good. "The verb 'taste' (v. 8), which in the OT is commonly used in the literal sense, is a metaphor for personal experience." Our relationship with God should never leave us unaffected.

Verse 1

When I was poor and helpless
The Lord, He heard my cry
He saved this wicked sinner
The King redeemed my life

Chorus

Oh taste and see that God is good to us
Taste and see His never-failing love
Our God is good

Verse 2

You're near me when I'm broken
My comfort when I'm crushed
My hope in all afflictions
My God in whom I trust

Verse 3

I'll make my boast in Jesus
The One who is my life
His glory is my gladness
In Him I'm satisfied

Create in Me

Psalm 51

Genuine confession is always accompanied by a profound sense of guilt before God. But David shows us that confession of sin has a purpose other than morbid introspection. "The goal of this confession is not self-abasement, but a renewal of the joy and gladness (v. 8) that the faithful have in God's presence." This song focuses on the eager anticipation of a conscience cleansed by the blood of Christ.

Verse 1

Please have mercy on me, O God
According to Your steadfast love
Blot out my iniquity

Verse 2

Whiter than the snow that falls
Is the soul washed in Your blood
I'm guilty; come cover me

Chorus

Create in me a clean heart, a pure heart
You are the joy of my salvation
Create in me a clean heart, a pure heart
Here in Your presence I will sing

Verse 3

Sin has brought me to my knees
Mercy lifts me to my feet
Gratefulness is filling me

Bridge

Just as I am, without one plea
But that You shed Your blood for me
And You bid me come
O Lamb of God, I come

Words and music by Joel Sczebel and Todd Twining
Bridge by Charlotte Elliott (1835) © 2008
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Blessed Is the One

Psalm 32

Sin can be "covered" in different ways. "When God 'covers' sin, that is good because he blots it out (cf. 85:2); when man 'covers' his sin, that is bad because he is hiding it (cf. Prov. 28:13)." For those who trust in the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, our sins are covered completely and eternally.

Verse 1

Blessed is the one whose sins are overcome
Whom God has sheltered deep within His grace
Blessed is the one who trusts in God the Son
His steadfast love the sinner's hiding place

Chorus

Jesus, Your blood covers all my sin
Jesus, Your love draws my heart to sing
What a Savior, Jesus

Verse 2

I will always hide at my Savior's side
I find my refuge in His sovereign care
When the waters rise, God will hear my cries
His steadfast love will hold me safely there

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Sovereign Grace Worship (ASCAP)

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If you lead worship in your church or ministry, you can find insights, resources, and more at this blog by Bob Kauflin, director of worship development for Sovereign Grace Ministries.

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