

POWER OF PRAISE
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Introduction: We have learned that faith is necessary to please the Lord. We also learned that faith is not latent but an action word - faith must be released. When you praise the Lord for that which you do not yet see with your physical eyes, it takes faith, i.e. praise is faith in action!

I. Is It Necessary?

- A. Psalm 22:3 tells us that God manifest His presence to a praising people - i.e., signs, wonders, miracles, and answers to prayer happen when praise is a way of life (Psalm 100:4 teaches us that praise is a means of entering into the place of His presence).
- B. It isn't that God has a big "ego" and needs praise, but rather that His blessings are predicted upon our recognition of His Lordship. Praise is, therefore, for us. (Psalm 149 demonstrates how praise brings His Lordship to bear over the demonic kingdom).
- C. Biblical praise will help us overcome doubts, fears, and unbelief, strengthening the Word of God "in us," thereby increasing and under-girding our faith (Psalm 42).
- D. A life of praise is a life that learns to express the pure joy of knowing God.
- E. Throughout Scripture, we are commanded to praise God (Psalm 150:6; Psalm 66:2-3).
- F. For the VICTORIOUS Christian praise is necessary.

II. Reasons To Praise The Lord...

- A. Because God is **worthy**. We praise God because He is the Most High God who "stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth" (Isaiah 51:13). He is worthy and deserving of our praise. We should recognize His greatness and He should be exalted as "head over all" (I Chronicles 29:11).
- B. Because if we don't praise the Lord Scripture tells us that the "**stones** will cry out" (Luke 19:40).
- C. Because praise deepens our **intimacy** with God. Praise not only draws us closer to God, but through our praise, He is drawn closer to us. He "inhabits the praises" of His people (Psalm 22:3; II Chronicles 5:13).
- D. Because the Lord **delights** in our praise! We are the temple of God (I Corinthians 3:16), and as we worship Him, He takes delight and fills us with His glory.
- E. Because praising God **blesses** us. God desires us to follow His commands not only to bring Him glory, but to bring us blessings (Deuteronomy 30:16). Praising God blesses us by focusing our eyes on His greatness. It transforms our perspective on life's difficulties. The size of our seemingly monstrous problems diminishes in the light of His power.
- F. Because praise is a **weapon** in spiritual warfare. Praise is a powerful weapon to break down walls, open closed doors, and win battles as we fight to extend God's kingdom into places and hearts that the enemy holds in bondage (2 Chronicles 20; Acts 16:25-33).
- G. Because praising God fills us with a depth of **joy** and **satisfaction** no earthly pleasure can bring (Psalm 63:2-5).

III. How To Praise The Lord..

There are 7 different Hebrew words for praise:

- A. "Yadah" (II Chronicles 20:19-21) - means "to worship with **extended hands**.
 - 1. The opposite of "extending our hands in worship" is to "wring our hands in despair" - if we don't the former, we will probably do a lot of the latter.
 - 2. I Timothy 2:8

- B. "Towdah" (Psalm 100:4) - means "to extend the **hands** in thanksgiving." This is recognition that God is our source.
 - 1. Psalm 50:23 uses this word indicating that God is honored when we do this.
 - 2. To take God at His Word and offer thanksgiving based on His Word, not what we see, is faith in action.

- C. "Halal" (Psalm 149:9) - note that this is the root word for the expression "Hallelujah," an expression you often hear in church, meaning "**praise the Lord**." "Halal" literally means "to boast, rave, celebrate, to be clamorously foolish."

- D. "Tehillah" (Psalm 22:3) - means "to **sing**, to **loud**."
 - 1. Over 300 times in the Bible we are told to sing praises. There are 8 different Hebrew words for "sing" and all, by definition, are joyful and triumphant.
 - 2. Ephesians 5:18-19

- E. "Shabach" (Psalm 117:1) - means "to address in a loud tone, to commend, triumph, glory, to shout **Amen.**"
1. God is not against loud, vocal expressions of praise. He, in fact, delights in them. (Such praises, of course, must meet the New Testament standard of being "decent and in order").
 2. This is the word used in Psalm 63:4. Note the context in verses 1-3 and again you will see faith in action.
- F. "Barak" (Psalm 72:12-15) - means "to **kneel**, to bless God in an act of adoration." Note again in the above verses faith is being put into action.
- G. "Zamar" (Psalm 150) -- means "to **touch** the **strings**." This validates the use of musical instruments in worship.

IV. Praise Is Often A Sacrifice

- A. A "**sacrifice**" is often that which cost something (I Chronicles 21:24). It does not "cost" us any faith to praise God for what we already see. It is when we praise for that which we do not yet see that faith is released.
- B. Praise is a **choice**! We must choose to praise God even when we don't feel like it. Habakkuk wrote, "Though the fig tree does not bud...and the fields produce no food..., yet I will rejoice in the Lord" (Habakkuk 3:17-18). Circumstances did not produce wonderful feelings in him, yet he praised God anyway.
- C. Hebrews 13:15