

The Power of Praise



Praise Him

His splendor covers the heavens,
The earth is full of His praise.
According to His excellent greatness,
He is forever worthy of praise.

For He alone is exalted,
Let us praise Him with dancing and song.
As with grateful shouts of Hosanna,
We acknowledge to Him we belong.

Give thanks to the Lord for His goodness,
For only He is righteous and just.
Placing your hopes for tomorrow,
In Him who deserves all our trust.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving,
And enter His courtyard with praise.
Giving praise to Him who's Almighty,
Unto Him who is Ancient of Days.

His lovingkindness endureth forever,
And His truth is forever the same.
I shall praise Him for the help of His presence,
And give thanks to His holy name.

Dr. Ira S. Wile, who has had wide experiences in dealing with difficult children, once told me of a particularly interesting case, which made him realize the need for praise as a practical doctor's prescription. "It was a case of two boys," he said. "One was particularly bright; the other seemed mentally inferior. The father asked me to find the reason.

"When I had gained the child's confidence, he told me the story children almost invariably tell in such cases. 'Why don't people like me,' he asked, 'the same as they do my brother? When he does something, they smile; when I do anything, they scowl. I can't ever seem to do anything as good as he does.'

"I separated those boys as much as possible," said Dr. Wile. "I had them placed in different classes in school. I told their parents to stop using comparisons as a goal upon the backward one, and to praise him for his own little accomplishments. He soon was standing on his own feet."

—Princess Alexandra Kropotkin, *Liberty Magazine*

Praise is an amazing thing. We often take its power for granted or fail to recognize it at all. Praise can cause us to look at circumstances differently. Praise can cause us to realize that everything is not forgotten or forlorn. Praise can be the catalyst that begins to lift us out of our depression. Praise can bring us comfort by causing us to remember everything on earth is passing away. We will soon be with God, no longer experiencing the things of this sin-infested world. Praise gives us hope, based on the eternal promises of God throughout the ages.

Today, we are going to look at a psalm of praise, Psalm 100. In the five previous psalms, there has been an exhortation to praise God from various aspects and by a specific people, Israel. In Psalm 100, we have a universal call for all men to praise God. Read Psalm 100.

- *Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth.* All the inhabitants of the earth, not just Israel. *All the earth.* There is only one God, only one Creator, and only one Father of us all. Therefore, all the earth should shout for joy.
- *Serve the Lord with gladness.* Wherever you serve the Lord, serve Him in gladness. Service should not be performed out of compulsion or because we feel forced to, or with reluctance, but with joy—realizing that it is His will for us to serve. If you are struggling in your service to the Lord, maybe you need to see if God has equipped you in a different area. But don't be too quick to move. Pray for guidance. You very well may be exactly where God wants you so you grow.
- *Come before Him with joyful singing.* Songs express joy. Birds sing, nature rejoices. We should also know God's precious promises, which He has given to us.

- *Know that the Lord Himself is God.* He is Jehovah, the only true God. All others are but idols and vanity. They have no claim to worship or praise. The Lord is the Creator and He alone is worthy of all praise.
- *It is He who has made us and not we ourselves.* Every created thing is proof and evidence of God's awesome power. In Romans 1:19-20, we are told "because that which is known about God is evident within them; for since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse." We all know, and should praise, God.
- *We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.* God owns us and can do with us what He pleases. That does not make the natural man very comfortable. It may even incite anger. What right does He have to do with me as He pleases? He brought us into existence; therefore, doesn't He have the right to do what He desires? But attached to this is the fact that God, as our owner, is our Shepherd who guards, protects, guides, and directs His flock. We cannot be more secure.

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- *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.* The gates and courts refer to the temple and how they were to enter these areas—with praise.
- *Give thanks to Him.* Be grateful for all that He has done for us. Take time to give Him thanks and praise.
- *Bless His name.* Ascribe to Him the honor and acknowledge Him as God.
- *For the Lord is good.* Even though God is omnipotent and Creator of all that is, He has shown great patience and mercy to us. His goodness is seen in all of His eternal attributes, in His truth, faithfulness, promises, and in His Word.
- *His lovingkindness is everlasting.* His lovingkindness can be seen in His compassion for us. He has provided a path that does not lead to dread and judgment, but one that leads to forgiveness, restoration, and adoption. He has given us His everlasting promises, and nothing will cause any portion of them to fail. *Wow!*
- *And His faithfulness is to all generations.* God's faithfulness (the King James uses the word "truth") is the same in every generation of the world. God is the same to all generations, unchangeable in His mercy, unchangeable in His truth, and is worthy of all praise.

Mrs. Chas. E. Cowman tells of a missionary in dark China who was living a defeated life. Everything seemed to be touched with sadness. Although he prayed and prayed for months for victory over depression and discouragement, his life remained the same. He determined to leave his work and go to an interior station and pray till victory came. He reached the place and was entertained in the home of a fellow missionary. On the wall hung a motto with these words, "Try thanksgiving."

The words gripped his heart and he thought within himself, "Have I been praying all this time and not praising?" He stopped and began to praise, and was so uplifted that instead of hiding away to pray and agonize for days, he immediately returned to his waiting flock to tell them that praise changes things. Wonderful blessing attended this simple testimony and the bands that had bound others were loosened through praise.

—J.A.R., *Missionary Worker's Manual*

Is praise a missing ingredient in your life? Why not try thanksgiving? You too may be surprised at the outcome.

WEEKLY WALK

How often do we take the time to reflect and praise God? Psalm 100 has given us several reasons. As you go throughout your week, read this psalm every day, and take time to praise God. Journal how your focus for this week has affected your life and/or the lives of those around you.

Monday - No matter what our circumstances, we always have something for which we should praise God in our lives. Sometimes—in times of sorrow or loss—it may be difficult, but there are always reasons to give praise to God. Today, give thanks to God for those things for which you are grateful.

Tuesday - Praise God today for the people He has made part of your life, e.g., parents, spouses, friends, even for some of those challenging people. Give praise to God for their influence and effect on your life today. Journal who they are and why they have been a blessing.

Wednesday - Praise God for those things that often go unnoticed—the food we eat, the beauty of creation all around us, the air we breathe, or the color of a beautiful flower. Take time to notice, and praise God for them all. List the ones that came to mind today.

Thursday - Praise Him. Praise Him. Think of His wonderful greatness. Acknowledge today all He has provided for you, including His Word.

Friday - You have gone through this week with the topic of praising God as the focus of each day. However, is praise an integral part of your life? Do you praise those around you, or do you treat them critically? Today, take time to praise those around you, especially your family.

Saturday - What are the primary areas of focus for your life? Is praise, thanksgiving, and hope an integral part of these key areas? They should be. Focus on the positives, and be quick to praise!

Sunday - What a wonderful opportunity we have each week to spend time praising God with others! A time to worship and praise God; a time to build up and be built up; a time to be thankful for all that He has given to us. Attend church today!