

The Power of Praise, January 2, 2021

Praise, according to *Webster's* dictionary, means to _____, _____, _____, _____, express _____. To praise, then, is to give positive _____, expressing our _____ of something. Giving our approval means that we _____ or _____ with what we approve of. So to praise God for a difficult situation, a sickness or disaster, means literally that we _____ and _____ of it happening as part of God's plan for our lives.

We can't really praise God without being thankful for the thing we are praising Him for. And we can't really be thankful without being happy about whatever we're thankful for. Praising, then, involves both _____ and _____.

The very fact that we praise God also means that we are accepting the fact that God is responsible for what is happening. Otherwise it would make little sense thanking Him for it.

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1Thes.5:16–18).

We are to praise God with our _____, not in spite of it.

Our _____ gets us into trouble when we try to figure out why and how God brings certain circumstances into our lives. We can never _____ why and how God does something, but He wants us to accept that He does it. This is the basis of our praise. God wants us to _____ that He loves us and that He has a plan for us.

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom.8:28).

Are you surrounded by difficult circumstances right now? Have you been struggling to understand why they have come to you? Then try to accept that God loves you and has allowed those circumstances because He knows they are good for you. Praise Him for what He has brought into your life.

Praising God is not a magic formula for success. It is a way of life that is solidly backed up in God's Word. We praise God not for the expected _____, but for the situation just as it is.

Praise is based on a total and joyful acceptance of the _____ as part of God's loving, perfect _____ for us. Praise is not based on what we think or hope will happen in the _____. We praise God not for what we expect will happen in or around us, but we praise Him for what He is and where and how we are *right now!*

It is, of course, a fact that when we honestly praise God, something *does* happen as a result. His power obviously flows into the situation, and we will notice, sooner or later, a change in us or around us. The change may be that we come to experience a real joy and happiness in the midst of what once appeared to be a miserable situation, or the situation may change. **But this is a _____ of praise and must not be the _____ for praise.**

Praise is not a bargaining position. We don't say, "I'll praise You so that You can bless me, Lord." To praise God is to _____ ourselves in Him (Psa.37:4).

We're first to be _____, and once we've experienced being really delighted with God, we'll discover that everything else becomes _____. Still, it is true that God does want to give us all our heart's desires. If we could only learn to be delighted with the Lord in everything first!

God has a perfect _____ for our lives, but He cannot move us to the next step of His plan until we joyfully accept our present _____ as part of that plan.

Praising God is something more than a _____ in our own _____.

When we sincerely accept and thank God for a situation, believing that He has brought it about, there is released into that situation a supernatural, divine force that brings about changes beyond what can be explained as an unfolding of natural events.

God's power and presence is near when we praise Him. He actually dwells, inhabits, resides, in our praises! A remarkable example of how God works while we praise Him is found in 2 Chronicles 20.

Many of us are constantly defeated by the _____ around us because we aren't ready to accept that the battle is God's, not ours. Even when we realize our own powerlessness to cope with the enemy, we are afraid to _____ and _____ ourselves to God's _____.

God's Word makes it clear that the only way out of that dilemma is the step of faith on our part.

1. Believing that God's promises are valid
2. Accepting them
3. Daring to trust in them leads to understanding.

The principle in the Bible is very clear here: _____ comes *before* _____.

We are told to _____ Him, _____ Him, and _____ Him work. This is essentially how Jesus operated during His time of ministry in Israel. He openly admitted that of Himself He could do nothing; His part was to _____ to His Father's will in perfect obedience, trust, and faith, so that God's power could meet the needs of the people.

Jesus told His followers, "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:12-13).

Jesus said we could do even _____ things.

You may recognize your own condition on the list. Are you brokenhearted? Bound by physical limitations, sickness, spiritual limitations? In physical prison, or imprisoned by your own spiritual blindness? Are you mourning? Unable to rejoice, be thankful, or praise God? Is your spirit heavily burdened and failing?

Perhaps it is because you haven't fully accepted and understood the good news Jesus came to bring.

Praise is an active response, to what we *know* that God has done and is doing for us in our lives and in this world through His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

If we doubt in our hearts what God has done and is doing, we cannot wholeheartedly praise Him. Uncertainty about the Good News will always be a barrier to praise. If we want to be able to praise God in everything, we need to be sure our foundation is solid and without cracks of doubt and uncertainty.

APPEAL: This New Year, I will begin today to practice praising God for everything that happens (good/bad). Then watch as He turns your problems into pluses for your life.

PRAYER POINT: Praise God for the good as well as the challenges in your life, and in your family, in the church, at work, etc. By faith expect God's purposes to unravel despite those existing circumstances.

Let those who love God and are doers of His word sing praise and thanksgiving rather than speak words of accusing and faultfinding and murmuring.... {This Day With God p. 245}

While Christ was working at the carpenter's bench, others would sometimes surround Him, trying to cause Him to be impatient; but He would begin singing some of the beautiful psalms, and before they realized what they were doing, they had joined with Him in singing, influenced, as it were, by the power of the Holy Spirit which was there. {Adventist Home p. 443}