

PRAISE IS DYNAMITE

INTRODUCTION

There is dynamite in praise. You know what dynamite is? It has a tremendous explosive power. It changes everything. Nothing is the same after that. Praise is like that.

I. PRAISE IS NOT OPTIONAL BUT COMMANDED

A. God's Will for us is to Give Thanks in Everything

When something negative happens to you, what is your natural reaction? What does a man do? What does he say? "Oh man!! Forget it!! No way!!" It is the first thing, it is a natural reaction. Everybody does it. The sinners do it too. God wants us to live a **supernatural** life. Have you heard of superimposing a picture? They can take two photo negatives and lay them one on top of the other and it looks like one picture. That is how God wants you to live. He wants you to live a supernatural life, above the normal. He does not ask, "Oh brother Mark, please try to praise." He says to **do** it. God's will for you is to "*give thanks in all circumstances*" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Many people ask me, "I want to do God's will. How can I do God's will?" I always show them 1 Thessalonians 5:18, where it very clearly and simply says, "*This is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*" Do not give thanks **for** everything, but **in** everything. In every situation God can bring a miracle about, or bring glory.



B. Praise is Commanded, as a Sacrifice

A sacrifice is something that is difficult for us to do. A sacrifice is something we do not **really** want to do. A sacrifice is something that is painful to do. I am mad and I do not feel like praising. However, God says, "Do it anyway." God says to just praise the Lord — "Praise the Lord, Hallelujah." Look at Hebrews 13:15, it says, "*Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise.*" Continually — very interesting. In all circumstances. What is that praise? It says, "*the fruit of lips, that confess his name.*" I see Baptist people singing like this, "Hallelujah, hallelujah...", but oh they would not want to raise their hands. No, that would be like the charismatics. Other people say, "I praise God. I praise Him all the time, in my heart." The Bible says, "*the fruit of lips.*" It is the fruit of your lips. It is something you should do orally. The fruit is confessing the name of Jesus. When you listen to the number of times ungodly people use swear words or the name of God, then you have some idea of how often we should say, "Praise God — Hallelujah — Thank you, Jesus."

C. Praise Personally

We are commanded to praise personally. Psalm 146 — 150. There are many Psalms that say, "*Praise ye the Lord.*" It's a command. But when we read those Psalms, we like to point our finger at other people and say, "**You** praise the Lord."

D. Rejoicing is a Must — Phil. 4:4

"*Rejoice in the Lord always,*" Paul says, "*I will say it again: Rejoice!*" He repeats it in 1 Thessalonians 5:16, and it is also in Psalm 32:11. So it is in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

E. Everything that Breathes *Must* Praise God

Psalm 150:6 says, *“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”* Not only us, but everything else that breathes. Have you ever seen how a chicken drinks? It looks up all the time. It praises God. You should be like that. It does its job.

F. Praise Always

Praise is to be offered from morning until night. Psalm 113:3 says, *“From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.”* All day long. This is a beautiful thing, when you think of the universe and how the world turns, how some people are awake and some are asleep, and how all the time praise is being offered to God from the whole world.

II. PRAISE PLEASES GOD

A. God Inhabits Praise

We see in Psalm 22:3, that God inhabits praise, *“You are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel.”* God lives in praise. Where you **praise**, that is where you are going to find God. When the four boys of Israel were standing by the fiery furnace, they gave glory to God. God was right there, and He delivered them. When thousands of people **complained** about God in the wilderness, where was He? He was not there, and they died. Thousands of them died in the wilderness.

B. Praise Glorifies God

Psalm 50:23 says, *“He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God.”* It says, “He who sacrifices thank offerings.” It is the same idea we found in Hebrews 13:15. And notice that if you sacrifice an offering of thanks while still in your troubles, then God will show you a way out of your predicaments.

Example: We have a birthday party. We have some friends and some relatives. And we drink and eat cake, and the people go home at about 2:00 am in the morning. And we say to our wives, “Wasn’t that wonderful? Let us give thanks to God.” Is that a sacrifice? I do not think that is a sacrifice. Everybody feels that way after a birthday party. You do not have to be a believer to feel good at a birthday party.

Example: However, when you have two flat tires on the car, that is different! You are going along in a car and you have a flat tire. “One flat tire.” So you put on a new tire. What does one person say? “Oh praise God; we still have a good spare tire.” Then you go a little bit further and you have another flat tire. What is the reaction of the people now? “Oh, what will we do now we have no more spare tires?” You see, the first time praise was normal, but the second time it would be supernatural. It is a sacrifice.

Example: I have heard of a true story like this. Some people had a flat tire, “Oh Hallelujah.” Then they get a flat tire again, “Well, praise the Lord there must be a special purpose for this.” There comes another car which stops to help. They have a beautiful opportunity to tell the people about Jesus. They go home and say, “Praise God that we had this opportunity. Without this flat tire we would not have had the chance to tell these people about Jesus.”

C. Praise because God is Holy

In Psalm 22:3 David says of God, *“You are enthroned as the Holy One”*. Therefore He is to be praised. God does not make mistakes. God cannot sin. God has no evil motive towards us. So we know that anything bad that happens is not God’s fault. What is the usual reaction of an unbeliever? He sees a picture on TV of starving children, and he says, “Why does God allow this to happen?” He thinks God is guilty. No, God is holy. That is why in all circumstances we can be quiet and give Him praise.

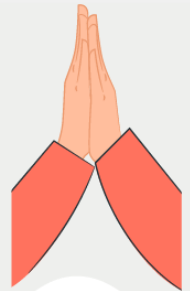
D. We Must Come to God with Thanksgiving

We must come to God with thanksgiving. It is a requirement. Psalm 100:4 says, *“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.”* It says to **“enter his gates with thanksgiving.”** We have just noticed earlier that God lives in praise.

So picture it like a beautiful house in a garden. God is in His house of praise and you are coming down the street to meet God. How are you going to enter? It says to *“enter his gate,”* open His gate *“with praise.”*

What is our normal reaction to each other when we meet each other and greet each other? How do you feel if I say “Hello, isn’t it a rotten day today?” How do you feel if I greet you with a greeting like that? You cannot say, “Oh, it is a good day,” because you think, “Oh what problem does he have?” Let us say I have a very sour character and there you are in your garden. You look up and see, “Oh, here comes that Abraham Bible” so you quickly go inside the house and say, “I am not home.” One day I rang the bell of an unbeliever’s house, and a little girl came to the door and said, “My mommy says that she is not home.” That is not a normal way to approach another human being. The right way to approach another human being is in a positive, pleasant manner. God expects to be treated exactly like that. It says, *“Enter his gates with thanksgiving”* and then you go on to praise Him for many good things. Have you ever heard people when they start to pray saying, “Oh God, it is a difficult day. Can you please help me with this? And I need help with that, and so-and-so needs to be healed, and he has a problem, and I do not know what to do. It is a terrible life.” The Bible says to *“enter his gates with thanksgiving.”*

Thank God!



E. We Must Pray with Thanksgiving Phil 4:6

When I was a young person I learned this special thing: I came into a Christian home, we knelt down around the table, and the father prayed, “Father, thank you that we have the right use of our mind.” I was twenty years old. For twenty years I had thought, “Of course, that is normal”. He woke up in the morning, thinking “I am normal... hallelujah, I am not crazy.” It is a beautiful idea. It is a gift from God. There are so many things for which we can give thanks. We should also praise Him for who He is: perfect and holy. We must pray *“with thanksgiving.”* Philippians 4:6 says, *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”*

III. PRAISE IS PRECIOUS

A. Praise is a Good Thing Ps. 92:1-5

“It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night, to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp. For you make me glad by your deeds, O Lord; I sing for joy at the works of your hands. How great are your works O Lord, how profound your thoughts!” (Psalm 92:1-5).

We know about many people in the Bible. We know about Joshua, Isaac, Hezekiah and Peter. All these people were doing things, but what do we read about Jesus? He went about doing **good**. The special mark of Jesus was that from morning until night He was constantly helping people. He was **doing good**. Do you want to be like Jesus? It says right here, *“It is good to praise the Lord”* (Psalm 92:1-5). So drop your sour mask and start doing these good things. It needs to be practiced at first, but after a while it should become second nature.

One or two days ago somebody came to me and told me about a big problem. As they were only half way through telling me about it, a big wave of joy started welling up in my body. I thought, “Hallelujah, this is not a problem. This is an attack of Satan.” That was the difference. It was not a problem. It was an attack of Satan. Nobody was guilty. Nobody had done anything terrible, “Oh thank You God. This is an attack from Satan and we can do something about it.”

B. Praise is the Very Purpose of Our Existence

It is the very purpose of our existence. 1 Peter 2:9-10 says, *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*

Now are you normal people? **No!!** You are especially chosen, you are a royal priesthood! You are all related to the Queen of England. You are royalty. You are a holy nation. Holy means specially set aside for blamelessness. You are a people belonging to God. So according to this verse there are four special things about each one of us. Why are we so special? What are we supposed to do with it? Sleep peacefully at night? Play with our children? That is not what this verse says. It says, *“that you may praise ..,”* so there is something for you to do. *“That you may declare the praises of Him who called you out darkness into his wonderful light.”* (1 Peter 2:9b)

This is the tragedy of the Jewish people. They know they are God’s chosen people, so they say, “I am one of God’s chosen people,” and then they live like the devil. They do not understand that they are chosen to do a very special job for God. It was God’s original intent that the whole Jewish nation would be evangelists, telling the whole world about Jesus Christ. Eventually God found only twelve of them who wanted to do that. When He was looking for other people, they took a boat to go to Tarshish. Do not let that happen to you. It was God’s desire that the Israelites would, within two years, go from Egypt to the Holy Land and build a tabernacle in that time! However, they complained. Instead of two years, they spent 40 years in the desert, a whole lifetime, and they died there. God has given you the same privilege. He has given you the same opportunities. He has given you the very same reasons.

Oh how precious it is to praise God. Oh how precious it is to be a chosen people. I do not understand what Jesus has done in my life. I know my younger brother does not love Jesus. My older brother does not love Jesus. However, I am one of His special people. Hallelujah! I belong to this royal priesthood. I am part of His Holy Nation. It may look as though I am a sinner. It may look as though I make many mistakes; but I am washed in the Blood of the Lamb. I belong to God.

Memorize these four beautiful reasons why we should give praise to Him.

C. Bear Much Fruit

The test of discipleship is to bear much fruit. John 15:8 Jesus said, *“This is My Father’s glory that you bear much fruit.”* (John 15:8)

Much fruit, of course, can refer to new believers, that you turn many people from sin to righteousness. In Hebrews we read that the fruit of our lips is praise. You can use your mouth any moment of any day. James said, *“Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.”* (James 3:10) God has given you a mouth as a special opportunity for much praise.



D. Praise — The Vital Proof of a Spirit-Filled Life

Ephesians 5:18-20 says, *“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Brothers, let me say that I am not a Charismatic. But if there is one thing we can learn from the Charismatics, it is this: They speak to each other *“with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.”* They *“sing and they make music.”* It is a special characteristic of their lifestyle, and it is not wrong!!

Colossians 2:6-7 says, *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”* This is a very interesting description-- **overflowing with thankfulness**. Overflowing means a bit more than full. Therefore it runs over and yes of course it is messy. If a vase of flowers overflows with water, everything is messy. If something is cooking and it overflows, it is messy. Do not worry about the mess. You are supposed to be overflowing with gratitude. Your lifestyle should be such that when I talk to somebody about you, they automatically start to tell me about your thankfulness. There are such people. As soon as you meet them, they always tell you something good, something pleasant, something they enjoy, something beautiful. That is the kind of person God wants all of us to be.

IV. PRAISE IS POWERFUL

The following are some of the results of praise:

A. Satisfies Me with Good Things

“From the fruit of his lips a man is filled with good things,” (Proverbs 12:14). We are talking about the fruit of our lips. We are satisfied by that. Have you ever noticed how good you feel when you tell somebody something nice? However, when you come to somebody and complain to him, “Why did you do that?”, then when you go away, how do you feel? Worse than when you came! When you share glories with other people, and when you share beautiful things with God, something happens to yourself.

Example: Jesus had just helped the lady at the well to repent of her sin when the disciples came with bread for Jesus. Jesus did not gruffly say, “Why did you do that? Or, “Thanks, but you are a little late.” What did Jesus say? He said, *“I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”* (John 4:32) In a polite way, He tried to say that He did not need their help just at that moment.

B. Praise Works Miracles

In 2 Chronicles 20, a terrible disaster was about to happen. Several armies were coming together to attack the Jewish people. The king was afraid, but he knew what to do. He prayed a prayer of confidence. Then God spoke through a prophet saying, *“You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you... Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, ... and the Lord will be with you.”* (2 Chronicles 20:17) Here is what they decided to do; “King Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: ‘Give thanks to the lord, for his love endures forever.’ As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men... who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.”

What an act of courage! What an act of praise! When God’s prophet told them not to worry about it because God was going to take care of it, these armies would not defeat them and would not destroy them, they believed it and started praising God before they had received an answer. So they went out there, blowing on their trumpets and with loud voices praised God, “Hallelujah!” What were they saying? “Here we are if you want to shoot. My heart is right here. Shoot your arrows this way.” Do you know of any army that says, “We are right here. Shoot this way”? When they looked in the distance, they saw that the enemies were killing each other, and it took three days to collect all the jewels and gold and equipment and all that they had. It was a huge victory.

Notice that this was purely an act of faith. God said, “I will deliver you.” They had two choices: “Oh how is this going to happen? OK. Let us see how He is going to do it.” Or they could say, “OK, if God has promised it then He **is** going to do it.” King Jehoshaphat said to the people, *“Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld.”* (2 Chronicles 20:20)

Remember Jericho. What did they do to capture Jericho? They blew their trumpets, they were happy, and they walked around the wall for six days. All they said was, “God this is wonderful. You are going to give it to us.”

Jericho was already a previous experience the Israelites could look back on, and by faith they could say, “Well, God did it then, He can do it again.” Praise works wonders.

C. Praise Claims Promises

Isaiah 53 tells us that *“by his wounds we are healed.”* (Isaiah 53:5b) I believe it speaks about spiritual healing from sin, but it can be used for physical healing also. There is nothing there that says we cannot claim this for physical healing.

Acts 16:31 says, *“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved -- you and your household.”* God has given us this promise to claim, to enjoy, to expect.

Example: When I was a pastor, I had one old lady in my church who every week pleaded, “Oh, please pray for my husband. He is a drunk.” So I went to visit her home. I saw how they lived with each other. She was the Christian and he was the drunk. If she had been my wife, I also would have been a drunk.

2 Tim 1:7 Tells us that God wants to dispel fear. *“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love...”* Notice verse six as well, *“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”* There are many, many other promises that can be claimed by praise.

D. Praise is the Secret of Increased Blessings

Psalm 67:3-7 *“May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the people praise you. Then the land will yield its harvest and God, our God will bless us. God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear him.”*

We see here that if the people of God praise Him, something good begins to happen: *“The land will yield its harvest.”* Why is it sometimes that the land does not yield a harvest? Maybe it is because people have not been praising God. There is a promise here; *“Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us... and all the ends of the earth will fear him.”* (Psalm 67:6-7) Three things will happen:

- 1) God will bless our harvest.
- 2) God will bless us.
- 3) The ends of the earth will hear about it and believe.

E. Praise Puts Us in Tune with Heaven

We are going to look in the book of Revelation, and see what they are doing in Heaven. Chapter seven is a very interesting chapter, with a song in it. In Revelation 7:10 we read, *“And they cried out in a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’”* In verse twelve we read of them saying, *“Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever.”* That is what they are doing in heaven. If you are going to go to heaven you are going to do that. For some of you that is going to be a big change!!! Some of you are not at all prepared. You are going around with a long face. The main thing in your mind is, “I yai-yai, I yai-yai.” You are not ready at all for heaven yet.

Let us look at Revelations 19:6b, *“Hallelujah! For our God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.”*

Some of you have never ever clapped your hands spiritually for Jesus. You have never said, “Hallelujah! Praise Jesus!” However, if you want a place in heaven, you better change your lifestyle. There is dynamite in praise.

CONCLUSION

You need to ask yourself a question:

Have I said something good about Jesus Christ today?

Have you said something good today about Jesus? It is easy to do at a conference. However, in your office, or factory, or when you are waiting for the bus and it is -15C and it is snowing and you are trying to keep your toes warm, it is a very important question to answer. Have I said something good about Jesus to somebody? Psalm 34:3, *“Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.”*

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.

Practical assignment

Completed

- Keep a journal for a minimum of 7 consecutive days. If possible throughout the day, definitely at the end of every day, take 10-15 minutes and record **everything** that you can praise God for from that day.

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