



Empowered By Praise

In 1990, my family faced a tremendous time of testing and trial. Both my wife and my oldest daughter were admitted into the hospital for different reasons. The situation facing us was serious. Being a pastor gave me little advantage in getting my prayers answered. In fact, it added an even greater responsibility because I was in the spotlight.

During that stretch of time, Daniel's experience in the lion's den was crystallized in my mind. I realized that Daniel was not saved from the den of lions; he was saved in the den of lions. (Daniel 6)

Every moment of that long, dark night Daniel spent trusting God. It was the Lord who kept the lions' mouths closed. Daniel remained in apparent danger until the morning's light when Nebuchadnezzar's guards pulled him from his prison, and so it is with us. I have learned the value of praising God even in the midst of dark trials. I also believe that no matter how serious the problem, God has a purpose for the difficulties we face. We can praise Him for His faithfulness.

Most of us have little difficulty praising God in times of peace and joy. It is easy to thank Him when we are on the receiving end of His blessings. However, few of us are accustomed to praising God before the blessing arrives. It is even harder to praise Him when our world has been turned upside down by a sudden trial or tragedy, but that is what God's Word instructs us to do – we are to praise Him even when it seems impossible. When we stand in the midcourt of praise, we line up with the heavenly hosts. We are at home with God, and God is at home in our praise.

Today, I can testify to the effective power of praise and prayer in times of great testing. Both my wife and daughter are living examples of God's healing power.

Praise Teaches Us to Worship God

Praise refreshes us in times of despair, and prepares us for worship. We will never be fully equipped to serve the Lord until we learn the principles of praise and how they apply to our lives as believers.

When we put on the garment of praise, we position ourselves for blessings. We clothe ourselves in heaven's atmosphere because we do what the angels in heaven are doing around the clock. We praise God because He is worthy of all praise.

When we gain even a glimpse of who God is, we are bound to praise Him even more. We are awestruck by His sovereignty and captivated by His holiness and infinite power. We become aware of His providence, goodness, and mercy. The more we know about God, the more we want to praise Him and abide in His love.

God Saves Us for His Glory

We are saved by God's loving grace. Once we come to Him, seeking forgiveness and salvation, God pours out His grace on our lives. We are sealed with a seal of His ownership and



the inheritance we gain is far more valuable than any of the earthly riches we acquire on this side of heaven.

If we asked the apostle Paul the purpose of our redemption, he would tell us, “the praise of God’s glory.”

Have you ever thought of your life as a vessel of praise to the Lord? When we make a commitment to obey God, we honor and praise Him with our obedience. Through prayer, we praise God with our devotion. When we show kindness to one another, we are living lives of praise and reflecting His love to others.

Satan hates praise, and he will do anything to stop us from glorifying God. He knows that God indwells the praises of His people. He also understands the power of praise. When our eyes are set on Christ through praise, we will gain a mighty victory as we submit our lives and hearts to Jesus Christ – the King of kings and Lord of lords!

Praise Equips Us for God’s Service

Praise changes the atmosphere of our trials. Those who know the secret of praise understand that feelings of depression, fear, doubt, and worry vanish in the wake of prayer and praise. Both of these change our attitudes because they require us to lift our eyes up to God and trust Him for the victory. Feelings of bitterness, resentfulness, and fear flee when we praise the Lord for who He is and what He has done for us.

Praise lifts the eyes of our hearts to heaven – the very place where God abides. Our lives are changed. We may be tempted to yield to fear or doubt, but we have the power through the Holy Spirit to say no to every dark thought and temptation.

Our praise to God acknowledges His authority over our lives. This is because in times of praise, we submit ourselves to Him for His glory and purpose. Our humility and courage to trust God demonstrate our dependency on Him alone.

Even a few words of praise that are spoken from the overflow of a humbled heart are a sweet aroma to the Lord. The psalmist reminds us that we can “enter God’s court with praise” (Psalm 100). Some people have a habit of entering His presence with a shopping list to be recited in prayer. Their words are not words of praise, but only express personal needs and desires.

When we fail to praise God, it is as if we have entered a home without properly greeting the host. We walk through the door and head straight for the kitchen, open the refrigerator and say, “I am famished, what do you have to eat?”

Instead, take time to enter God’s courts with praise and adoration. Express your love and devotion to the Savior and your gratitude for His faithfulness and gift of salvation. Practice praising God each day. Glorify His name, and He will bless you with the fullness of His presence.