

Any objection to the carryings on of our present gold-calf Christianity is met with the triumphant reply, "But we are winning them!" And winning them to what? To true discipleship? To cross-carrying? To self-denial? To separation from the world? To crucifixion of the flesh? To holy living? To mobility of character? To a despising of the world's treasures?....

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Prayer Study #319

THE POWER OF PRAISE

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Around 1970 a man from California wrote a book, *Prison to Praise*, that revolutionized the charismatic movement in America. Merlin Carothers' little book turned the attention of the Body of Christ to the power of praising the Lord. Praise is a scriptural command, an invitation to the presence of the Lord, and a weapon of warfare. I believe it is one of the most neglected commands by the Body of Christ in these last days. We certainly don't want to get into religious rote and tradition speaking praise words without our hearts being in it, but praise is so important to the spiritual health of every believer. Furthermore, and more importantly, He is worthy of our praise.

A Spiritual Command

PRAISE the LORD! Praise the name of the LORD! Praise Him, O you servants of the LORD! You who stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God. Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good: Sing praises to His name, for it is pleasant.

Psalm 135:1-3

An Invitation to the Presence of the Lord

But thou art holy, O thou who inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Psalm 22:3

A Weapon of Warfare

And when he [Jehoshaphat] had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying, "Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever." Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, and they were defeated. For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the

inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped. When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies and precious jewelry, which they could carry away, and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much.

2nd Chronicles 20:21-25

(Much of the rest of this teaching is from notes I took many years ago, probably in the early 80s from a teaching by the son of the Canadian minister who was one of the early deliverance ministers of modern times, Maxwell Whyte. I believe the son's name was Stephen Whyte.)

Who should praise the Lord?

Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all the depths; fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind, fulfilling His word; mountains and hills; fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowl; kings of earth and all peoples; princes and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens, old men and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven.

Psalm 148:7-13

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!

Psalm 150:6

The dead do not praise the LORD, nor any who go down into silence. But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and forevermore. Praise the Lord!

Psalm 115:17-18

How to Praise the Lord?

1. **With the whole heart:** *PRAISE the LORD! I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation (Psalm 111:1).*
2. **With praise that can be heard:** *Oh, bless our God, you peoples! And make the voice of His praise to be heard...(Psalm 66:8).*
3. **With shouting:** *Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! (Psalm 47:1).*

4. **With singing:** *Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding (Psalm 47:6-7).*
5. **With a joyful noise:** *Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands (Psalm 66:1).*
6. **With crying out:** *Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee (Isaiah 12:6).*
7. **With laughter:** *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the nations, "The LORD hath done great things for them" (Psalm 126:2).*
8. **With skill on musical instruments:** *Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet! Praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance! Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals! Praise Him with clashing cymbals! (Psalm 150:3-5).*
9. **With thanksgiving:** *But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD (Jonah 2:9).*
10. **By bowing and kneeling before Him:** *Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker (Psalm 95:6).*
11. **By falling prostrate before Him:** *And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground (Nehemiah 8:6).*
12. **With clapping of hands:** *Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! (Psalm 47:1).*
13. **By raising of hands:** *Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name (Psalm 63:4).* The raised hands are a universal sign of surrender. Also, a child raises his or her hands when he or she wants the father (or mother) to pick him or her up. And finally kids in school raise their hands when they know the answer. We at first love raise our hands as a symbol of worship to the Lord of lords and King of kings.
14. **With dancing:** *You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, to the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O, Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever (Psalm 30:11).*
15. **By speaking in tongues:** *For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God...(Acts 10:46-Note that at Pentecost they were not*

preaching in other languages. They were overheard by men from many nations as they were *magnifying God* in other languages.)

Gaining Freedom in Praise

1. **Recognize that praise is a requirement:** *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!* (Psalm 150:6)
2. **Recognize that goodness, mercy, and the faithfulness of the Lord make Him worthy of praise:** *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name, for the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations* (Psalm 100:4-5).
3. **Surrender any bitterness against God for your person or circumstances:** *I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Your works and that my soul knows very well* (Psalm 139:14).
4. **Determine to please God rather than men:** *The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favor, but justice for man comes from the LORD* (Proverbs 29:25-26).
5. **Obey God. Be willing to sacrifice your pride, your traditions, and your personality and even suffer in order to be obedient to God:** *Though He [Jesus the Pattern Son] was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered* (Hebrews 5:8). *So Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to heed than the fat of rams* (1st Samuel 15:22).
6. **Learn how to praise from scripture:** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the LORD* (Colossians 3:16).