

The Most Precious Praise

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala emphasizes the vital role of praise in the life of a believer, particularly in conjunction with prayer and during difficult times.

Duration: 20:05

Scripture: Exodus 20:3, Psalm 67:3-4, Matthew 6:9-13, Matthew 6:33, Acts 16:25-26, Romans 12:12, Ephesians 4:32

Topics: "Praise"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of praising God even in difficult times. He observes the depression and anger in people walking the streets, but highlights the joy that comes from praising Jesus. The preacher encourages Christians to praise God not only when things are going well, but especially when they are facing challenges or uncertainty. He emphasizes the power of praising God with a joyful heart and references the story of Paul and Silas praising God in jail, which led to their release. The preacher urges believers to look up, worship, and thank God with all their hearts, even in the midst of struggles.

Transcript

Along with the power of prayer, the one thing that no one has ever discovered the ultimate value of, is the value that along with prayer, you have to learn to praise. I notice that a lot of the congregation, a good number of people here struggle because they pray, but they can never break through to a place of praise. Then you might say, I can't praise because I wanna see my prayer answered first, but it doesn't work that way.

You have to praise before you see the answer, and you have to mix together with your petitions, a spirit of praise and thanksgiving. All throughout the Bible, there is this injunction, not only to call upon me in the day of trouble, but actually there's more commands to praise God than there is to pray to God, because praise is part of communion with God. And when you think that some of us just ask and ask and ask, and then when we get an answer, we don't even start praising then, we keep asking for the other thing that we need.

How would you like a person who treated you that way? Ask and ask and then you help them, and they say, now let me tell you about another problem I have. Could you help me with that? So our little passage for today is this, and here's where the challenge comes. It's in Psalms.

Let all the people praise you, oh God. Let all the peoples praise you. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you shall judge the people righteously and govern the nations on earth.

Let all the peoples praise you. Now what do we know about the Hebrew language and about poetry that repetition means what? Emphasis. When it's repeated over, what God is trying to say to us is, this is important, now listen to it.

Listen to it. So notice the repetition. Let all the peoples praise you.

Now that word for praise in the Hebrew language, there's nine or 10 words that all mean praise. This specific word is to confess with your mouth how great God is and to lift him up. And now notice what the petition is or the command.

Let all the people praise you, oh God. Let all the peoples praise you. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you shall judge the people righteously and govern the nations on earth.

Let, repetition, let the peoples praise you, oh God. Let all the people praise you. Notice that it's not just praise, but notice let them sing for joy.

In other words, not let them just say the words with their mouth, but from their corazon, from their heart, let them joyously praise you because grumpy praise is no praise. The only praise that God accepts is the praise that you can say with the joy of your heart. I love you, God, and I praise you no matter what's going on in my life.

One thing never changes, you are worthy to be praised. Can we say amen to that? You are worthy to be praised. Now we go on.

Then the earth shall yield her increase. God, our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us.

And all the ends of the earth shall fear him. Isn't that amazing? Let all the people praise you. Let all the people praise you.

Let them sing with joy to you. Let all the people praise you. Let all the peoples praise you.

And then what will happen? And then the earth shall yield her increase. God, our own God, shall bless us. When does the blessing come in this little sequence? When all the people praise you.

How many of us have been held back from the blessing of God because we think it only comes when we ask and we never take the time to just praise him? Praise him, praise him. Don't you have something to praise him for? Right now, this moment, I'm thinking of things that I can praise him for. Do you have something you can praise him for? How many have something? Lift up your hand.

Then lift up both your hands and just praise him out loud. Now thank him for it. We praise you, God.

I praise you, God, for visiting my heart, Lord. I praise you for healing my heart. I bless your name, O God.

I magnify your name, O God. We bless you and we praise you. So notice what happens.

You may put your hands down. Notice what happens. Then the earth shall yield her increase.

What breaks the silence and brings the blessing of God? It's preceded. Let all the people praise you. Let everybody in the Brooklyn Tabernacle praise you.

Let all the women praise you. Let all the men praise you. Let the children that are here praise you.

All that men might praise the Lord. Anybody in the Bible who gets in the presence of God is always found to fall and begin to praise him. When you just get near God and his glory and you think of his greatness and you think of his love for us, you have to praise him.

When we're not praising God, it's because we've drifted away from God. Can we say amen to that? When you and I are not praising God, it means we've drifted away from God. Is there a time to cry out? Is there a time to weep? Yes.

Is there a time to intercede for others? Yes, but it all has to be mingled with and end up with a concert of praise. Then the earth shall yield her increase. Then the blessing comes when your heart is clean and right, when you're trusting God and when you praise him.

I've had the enemy almost literally choke me as a young minister, at least that's the sensation I got, to try to stop me from praising God. In low moments of discouragement, wanting to throw in the towel, something told me, you better start praising God. When you're down and out, you better start praising God.

Oh, no, I got to tell God what I need. He already knows what you need. Why don't you take a shortcut and just start praising him? Let's put our hands together, just start praising him.

There's something about praise. We know the Bible says there's something about praise. God inhabits the praises of his people.

I remember one battle in an attic in a house I was living in in New Jersey, locked away in an attic on Saturday night with tremendous attack of fear, like the devil just was attacking me. I couldn't praise God. I was in a battle because when you break through and you begin to praise him, everything else begins to flow.

It breaks open the bottle where the water is kept, where God can start pour out his refreshing blessing, his spirit, his grace upon us. So we know from that that there's tremendous power in praise. When did the jail get open? When Paul and Silas were there? When they were what? Praising God.

Now, this is a struggle for me because I'm struggling at the altar with people who are sincere and they're praying, they're praying, they're praying, they're petitioning, they're petitioning, and they think by just repetition of petition, that will always bring the breakthrough. But I can't get them to praise God. They're too depressed.

They look down at the carpet. I tell them, please look up, there's no answer in the carpet. Carpet is a nice color, but there's no answer for this.

How many say amen to that? The answer is to look up. I'm telling you, that's the fight that the devil puts in our body. To look up and look away and praise God.

And praise him from your heart. And worship him and thank him. And do it vocally and do it with all your heart and do it with joy.

Well, Pastor Simbala, why don't you be real? Why don't you be real, though? Okay, let's be real. When the answer comes and the girl is converted and taken out of the red light district, the only thing we should be doing is praising God, giving him all the glory. Never praise anyone else because the Bible says, God will not share his glory with anyone else.

Don't praise a pastor, don't praise a preacher, don't praise a church. Give God all the glory and all the praise because that's what brings the blessing of God. How many have had answers to prayer and blessings that God has poured out on you and you were able to praise him for it? Just lift your hand, all right? Now, it's another whole thing to praise God in the midst of trouble.

The answer hasn't come. You just got laid off. The bills are this high and the money is this high.

Now, what are you gonna do? For most people, it's, I put away my praise until the answer comes. You start to praise before the answer comes. You tell God what you need and then you begin to praise him for who he is, for how much he loves you.

One thing no one can take from you, he gave you his son on the cross of Calvary. All your sins are washed away and you and I can't praise God. The Bible says, though we were dead, one day we're gonna always live.

We have the gift of eternal life. Our name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life and I can't praise God. I don't care about the economy.

I don't care about anything. God is worthy to be praised. Can we all say aloud, amen? God is worthy to be praised.

The test for this young woman of God is not when the woman is changed, it's when somebody threatens her life. And says, get out of here, you're gonna be in trouble. Now the question is, is she gonna be afraid and run or is she gonna say, God, I commit this to you and now I am gonna praise you.

Praise him for what? Praise him for who he is. Praise him for what he's gonna do. Praise him for his promises.

Praise him for his love. Praise him for his compassion. Praise him for his faithfulness.

Praise him for his mercy. The praise that is most precious to God is when you can praise God in difficulty. When the bottom has fallen out.

When the child is getting worse, not better. That's the test. And most believers, we have a reflex.

Answer, we praise. Problem, we get depressed. And that's not God's plan for us.

Let all the people praise him. Now all the people can't be doing good but let all the people praise him. All the people can't have everything they need at a given moment but let all the people praise.

That's one great failure in my life is I have praised God in my life but I need to praise him more. I need to, in everything, give him thanks. Bless the Lord, my soul.

And all that is within me, bless his holy name. When? All the time. There's even one sweeter praise.

When someone breaks your heart. When some family member, someone you love, hurts you. Whether they meant it or not.

If you've ever been hurt, just say, I. He's been hurt a lot, he came in last. Now, when you're hurt, when you're hurt. I went on a trip recently and I had been hurt and it was hard to get on the plane because I'd been hurt.

Doesn't matter what the circumstances, we all get hurt. And the closer you get to God, the more sensitive he makes you so the deeper the hurt is. How many have found that, right? Before you knew the Lord, you don't care what anyone says.

You just get out of here, man. I don't care what you say. Ah, but when you walk with the Lord, you love someone close to you, you're vulnerable.

Why do you think Jesus was called the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? Because he couldn't blow people off. It mattered to him. So I got on the plane and I realized, I can't do this, I can't minister.

You can't minister unless you're in a posture of praising God. But boy, when your heart is broken, to lift your hands. See, you don't have to feel anything.

The joy will come later. You gotta just make the decision, I will not let this pain keep me back from praising my God. Because people can hurt you, people can be kind to you, but God never changes.

And think how he feels when we stop praising him because of what someone else does. Someone else is mean to me and I'm gonna stop praising God? God didn't do the mean thing to me. That person did, but that's what the devil uses.

He uses sexual abuse and things that happened to you in your childhood. He uses all kinds of nasty scars that we have. I watch people walking on Fulton Street and Livingston Street.

There's such a depression and anger, but there's joy in Jesus. Jesus wants us to be happy and to be praising him because that's when the land will yield its harvest. That's when the rivers open up.

The battle is not when things are going good. Anybody can praise God. People who aren't Christians praise God.

People score touchdowns and score a basket and they're thanking God, they don't even serve God. But Christians, when your heart is broken, when someone has just stuck it to you, or when you don't know how you're gonna get out, to be able to praise God then. Oh, imagine how sweet that is.

They say that the most precious perfume comes when the smallest granulations are made and some of the most precious leaves and flowers have to be crushed, crushed, crushed, crushed. And then, oh, the smell is so beautiful. And that's the way it is in our lives.

The praise that comes out of our lives when we're in difficult circumstances, in prison, beaten. And there's Paul and Silas saying, oh, I bless your name, God. I praise you, God.

I wanna be that way. How many wanna bless God 24-7? Just, I'm gonna praise Him. Come on, how many are gonna praise Him? We're just gonna praise Him.

I wanna challenge you tonight before we go home. And if you look down, I promise you, I will take you physically and make you look up to God. I don't care if you're crying.

You don't think I've ever cried? Of course I have. But you gotta cry looking up to God and saying, God, I still praise you. I mean, He probably, that is like, the angels must just be amazed at that, that people can go through trouble and still praise the Lord.

Close your eyes with me. If you're in trouble, your heart's been broken, you're in a difficult place, and now you realize that the key that God is saying to you tonight is to remember to praise the Lord. I'm gonna praise the Lord.

I don't care how bad it looks. I'm gonna praise the Lord. I don't care how short I seem with the money.

I'm gonna praise the Lord. I don't care who did what to me. I'm gonna praise the Lord.

Satan, you're defeated when we praise the Lord. We're not gonna be grumpy. We're not gonna complain.

We're gonna praise the Lord. Pastor, going through some trouble, but I'm gonna praise Him. I got some tears in my heart, but I'm gonna praise Him.

Hallelujah. We give you praise. We give you praise.

We bless your name, Lord. We bless your name, Lord. Everyone, just open your mouth.

I don't care what you feel. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord with your broken heart.

Praise the Lord. Father, we praise you. When the answer comes, we praise you when we don't see the answer.

We praise you when it's great. We praise you in times of difficulty. We praise you when we're happy.

We praise you when our heart's been broken. For you are worthy to be praised. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Get everyone home safely, Lord.

We thank you for our pastors visiting us. Prosper that church. Let it explode with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let there be lines outside the building, people trying to come in, Lord. Such will be the great things you do among them. Help us to love one another and teach us all to be gentle with each other and kind.

There's so much pain and hurt and cursing and violence out there, Lord. Let us minister to one another, we pray, as we dismiss in Jesus' name.

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