

Prayer and Praise

by Roy Daniel

The sermon emphasizes the essential role of praise in the Christian life, particularly during challenging times, as a reflection of faith and gratitude towards God.

Duration: 39:40

Scripture: Psalm 51:12

Topics: "Worship And Praise", "Faith And Trust"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the importance of valuing and praising God regardless of the size of the crowd or the circumstances. He shares a personal experience of a disappointing turnout at a meeting, but emphasizes the need to still praise God. The speaker also mentions his father's advice about the ups and downs of missionary work and how God is always watching. He concludes by sharing a story of a man whose life was transformed by God and how his testimony impacted others.

Transcript

I still remember the first time that I ever stood in front of a microphone. And it was a scary moment because I wasn't used to it. I was at church in South Africa, I was a little boy and we had to say something in the front.

And I got such a fright when I spoke and my voice came out that I jumped back. And then I had to pull up courage to go forward again and to speak to the people. It's wonderful to be here, thank you for the privilege.

And it's always wonderful to preach, especially when you've got a message on your heart. And I'd just like to say before I pray, that you must please pray for these meetings, above all else. I was in different towns in South Africa and it was wonderful to see how the Lord worked.

But I think one of the places which was of the greatest blessing was where a lady was crying, tears flowing down her face before her, praying to God for God to work. And how God moved in that town. Before we start, we're going to read from Psalm 107, verse 8. Psalm 107, verse 8. Psalm is a big book.

Okay, verse 8. And it goes, O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His merciful works to the children of men. O that men. O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men.

And you know, the psalmist was so important in this verse that he repeated it again in verse 15, verse 21 and verse 31. Four times, O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men. As if he was looking around at the people of God and there was a lack of praise.

And he cried out, O that men would praise the Lord. You know, Dale Moody, I'm sure you all know about him. He said somewhere, in one of his books or something, that there's more written about praise in the Bible than prayer.

There's more written in the Bible about praise than prayer. And of course, if you look at Habakkuk 3, you'll see that it starts with the words, a prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet, and the same prayer ends with, In other words, praise or singing is prayer. If it isn't prayer, then it's not true praise.

If you're just sitting in the church and you're singing for the sake of everybody singing around you, then you're praying and praising in vain. With that thought, let us go over to pray. Father, thank you that we can be here today.

Thank you for thy precious and wonderful word. And thank you that you created this whole world by the word of God. And that one day the world is kept in store unto destruction by the same word.

And in between those two times, the creation and thy coming again, is a chance for us, Lord, to be changed by the word of God. Father, help us today to be receptive to thy word. I ask for thy presence above all things.

We come into the holiness by the blood of Jesus Christ, and that alone. And thank you that you are here, Lord. You are faithful.

He is faithful that promised. In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

If we could turn in our Bibles to 1 Chronicles 9, verses 33 to 34. 1 Chronicles 9, verses 33 to 34. One of the most lovely little sections in Scripture.

It says here, And these are the sinners, chief of the fathers of the Levites. The remaining in the chambers were three, for they were employed in that work day and night. These chief fathers of the Levites were chief throughout their generations.

These dwelt at Jerusalem. And here we see, originally they were put in an appointment by David. And these singers that were put there, there was many of them.

And they were free, they didn't have to do any other work. And the most amazing words here, is that they were the chief of the fathers of the Levites. They weren't the lowly people, they were the chief of the fathers of the Levites.

We read again in 2 Chronicles 5, verses 13 to 14. We could turn there. 2 Chronicles 5, verses 13 to 14.

And here we read about the singers again. It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound, to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. And when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, for His good, for His mercy endureth forever.

Excuse me. That then, that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord. So that the priest could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud.

For the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God. And isn't that a wonderful thought? The glory of the Lord had filled the house of God. And here, in the Old Testament, is one of the most important chapters in the Bible, was when King Solomon had finished building his wonderful temple that God had ordained that he should build.

And as at the point when the singers and the trumpeters were as one, in singing and praising God, at that point it said, then, then the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And I don't know if you've noticed in the New Testament, Luke chapter 24 verse 53 says, just after Jesus, or before He had, or after He had ascended up to heaven from the disciples, that it says in chapter 24 verse 53 of Luke, the disciples were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. They were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God, and shortly after that the Holy Spirit came down and filled those temples, the disciples.

And it's one of the most interesting things in the Bible. I hope the Bible excites you. It's one of the most interesting things in the Bible to think that in the Old Testament, when they started to praise together as one, that then the glory of God came down and filled the temple of Solomon.

And in the New Testament, when they praised and prayed in Jerusalem, the glory of God came down and filled the disciples. Isaiah 64 verse 5 is one of the most staggering portions of Scripture to me. It's one of the most wonderful portions of Scripture.

I often claim it before the Lord. It says, Thou meetest, He's speaking to God, Thou meetest Him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember Thee in Thy ways. Notice it doesn't say only, Thou meetest Him that worketh righteousness, or Him that rejoiceth, but both together, Him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember Thee in Thy ways.

You know, I remember we've got a wonderful principal, the only problem is he's not English, of our Bible college. And he's a wonderful, wonderful man. I call him Uncle.

And one day, he told us of how he had gone to the Plata land, that's the country of South Africa. And there he had met what we call an Afrikaner, a very, I can't remember the English word, simple Afrikaner there. And he was a farmer, and he was, and that Sunday, I think he stayed in his house, that Sunday this farmer preached.

And it was just so wonderful, he said, to see the power of God come down in that meeting, as God worked in those people's lives. And he wondered, this person had never been through Bible college, and this person had never been to theological seminar, whatever you call it, what is the secret of this man's power with God? And he thought that he had it, when he saw every morning, in that house, for about three hours, no one was allowed to disturb him, not the telephone, not anything, he spent time alone with God. And he took out his old concertina, I don't know what they call it in America, for three hours he just praised God.

And obviously he spent time with the Word of God, and prayed other times, but three hours of his day was just there spent to praise God. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways. You know, Luther, he used to have a problem.

He struggled to come into the presence of God, in his quiet times. And my dad was saying on the phone the other day to me, my dad and I have lovely conversations of the Lord over the phone, because we don't

see each other many times. And he talked of Luther, and he said, when Luther always used to struggle in his quiet times, to get through to the presence of God, until the day when he realized in the Scripture that God cried out that we must give thanks, and that we must praise Him.

And he used to spend the first few minutes of the day, and when he went into his quiet time, just praising and thanking God, and he came into the presence of God. And John Wesley realized this from Luther, and of course Luther used to sing the Psalms and so on. But John Wesley had his brother to give him wonderful hymns and himself, and a few others.

And John Wesley used to do the same, in his quiet time, his many hours of meditation with the Lord. I have a friend in South Africa. I'm sure you've all got friends, you know what that means.

And this person has got my name, he's Roy Porrow. A wonderful, wonderful, wonderful, wonderful man. A lovely old man, with a squeaky voice.

And he loves the Lord. And I remember once outside a church there in South Africa, he came up to me, and he said, Roy, I've listened to a minister. And he said, this minister said that he'd done a study, a study of the great intercessors.

And he was surprised to find out, that most of the great intercessors, or that the great intercessors, that not one became a great prayer, before he learned to pray. Not one of them became a great prayer, before he learned to pray. I don't know if you've heard of my grandpa.

He's a wonderful man as well. He's 77 years old, and him and I have got one thing in common. We both can't sing.

And he loves to sing, and I love to sing. And that's a problem for everybody around us. And I once said, we're the only people who can sing two different songs, with two different tunes, and both sing it false, and not worry about each other, and be in the same room.

But anyway, as I said, my grandpa loves to sing. And another thing I know of my grandpa, is he's often gone through many hard times, many hard times. He's often been on the point, I just am amazed at him many times, as he's on the point of losing everything that he'd worked for years, and years, and years, and years to build up as a farmer.

And then I see him there in the room, and it's Christmas Day, you could say. It's almost at the point of losing everything, as far as we're here. And there he is with his smiley face, and he's speaking to this person about his soul.

He's talking about Jesus. And in between that, he's praising. You know, there's a person called Robert in South Africa.

He came out on a meeting for salvation, but I doubt, I think he, I really think he backslid, or he wasn't saved at that point. And I remember once, I asked for the name. Now what is the name of that, it's like a van without the back.

A pickup truck. That's right, America. We call it a Bucky in South Africa.

And we were going for about 300 kilometres or so, less than that. My grandfather was going to drive the one car, and there was someone else going to drive the pickup truck. And Robert was coming with.

And I remember Robert saying, he said, I don't want to sit in the front with that old uncle. He said, because he sings all the way. And I didn't want to tell him I sing with him.

But I did sit in front of my grandfather. And you know what I love about my grandfather? All his false singing, like me, and so many other things. How God blesses him in his ministry.

He lives on top of his tractor looking for the next sermon. And I remember once, we went up in this valley, up in the Khamtus Valley in South Africa. And we came to a church there.

And out of that church came a man, and he said, I'm the man who built the church. Obviously he was speaking another language. I guess the man would care for both.

And then he came on the next one, and he said, I'm an elder. And the other said, I'm a deacon. And he went on, and they went on like this, about five of them.

And I remember sitting there, and my grandfather brought the sermon from the heart of God. And all that church council, and the man who built the church in his seventies, came out for salvation that day. And how God has used my grandfather.

And I really believe God blesses a person who praises and works righteousness. I don't know if you know Psalm 67, verse 5 to 6. I forgot the verse somewhere. 67, verse 5 to 6. It says, let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us. Then shall the people yield her increase, and God, even our own God, shall bless us. Do you believe that? I believe that.

I've seen it in my grandfather's life. The man who praises God through the hard times. But you know, that's not the reason why we should praise.

That's not the reason why we should praise. If I was asked a reason why I praise, then I would say, I'd look to Psalm 18, verse 3. Psalm 18, verse 3. It says basically, let us praise the Lord who is worthy of praise. Who is worthy to be praised.

And you ask the question, how worthy is God to be praised? How worthy? I'd just say this worthy. If you think of the nails through his hands, or the crown of thorns on his head. If you think that he who knew no sin became sin for us.

If you think of all that he suffered on that cross just for us, then you can say with me, he is worthy of praise. There's a song, I hope you all know it. It's an old little chorus and it says, they say he is wonderful.

They say he is wonderful. The sun, the moon, the stars that shine all say he is wonderful. And then I ask the question, but do you say he is wonderful? Do you say he is wonderful? Along with the sun and the moon and stars, do you say he is wonderful? It's a question.

Now it's easy to praise, it's easy to praise God when you've just won a million dollars. I don't say you should win a million dollars. But it's easy to praise God when times are going well.

The world expects it of you. But what about the hard times? Now Hebrews 13 verse 15 says we must offer the sacrifice of praise. The sacrifice of praise.

And I was at church in Western Cape in South Africa and I remember going and then I've got a problem, I've got a blocked nose. It's forever blocked. And I can't smile very much.

But I was in this church and they were singing their hearts out. You could hear them just singing and singing those wonderful loud old stuff. And it was enjoyable.

But when I came out of that church, I think the name of the missionary was Vian and Hannes, the two of them. And one of them turned to me or turned to Hannes and said, you know those people stank of drink. Those people stank of drink.

And it's so sad. And they were saying it's easy to praise when you're going through good times. It's easy to sing.

But what about the hard times? Now the devil loves to hurt your faith. I can tell you that. The devil loves to hurt your faith and to stop you praising God.

I was once in a place called Hannes Bayen in South Africa where one of my friend's family is. And then we've got a thatched roof. I hope you call it here in South America the same.

A thatched roof, big house near a big dam with a poofy slide. It was a wonderful place for a young man to be. But there was one problem.

I'm slightly tall. And the doorway in that place, especially for an absent-minded person, was very low. And I'm half ashamed to say that I didn't only hit my head once.

I hit my head again and again and again. And I suppose each time I told myself I wouldn't hit my head again. And then it happened.

And I think at the end of the weekend I hit my head about seven times. And here comes the devil and he says, with all respect, he says, Roy, there's obviously something wrong with your spiritual life. Look, the Lord could have easily stopped you hitting your head.

He's allowing it because there's something that you've got to put right. And there the devil attacks your faith and he takes away your song. I know a person there in Pretoria.

It's the capital of South Africa. And she's a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful woman. An old woman in her 80s.

But I love having tea with her. I've got about, probably about ten old people in South Africa near their 80s. One 91.

I sit at his feet and I just love to listen to a person who was used in revival in the old days. But this, I call her Tani, Auntie. She was in Pretoria and I went to visit her son and I found out that she was staying next door and I went to visit her.

And she told me a story. She hadn't always gone through wonderful times. In fact, she'd been through more fires than most people on earth.

33 years before, this is when I went to her. It's a bit longer now. She lost her son in a motorcycle accident.

And ten days later, ten days later, she lost her husband of a heart attack. I don't know when, but a time afterwards she lost her grandchild. The grandchild's husband.

Their child. In a taxi accident. The fire popped.

And in that same accident, one of her other grandchildren had to go into a wheelchair. But luckily only for four years. She herself, I don't know, she's one of those extremely unlucky persons.

She fell six stories in an elevator. You can imagine. I've seen her there.

She's crouched over. She isn't allowed to make her own food. She's got this apparatus which she walks step for step.

And to top it all, in 2004, she just happened to be in the way of a mechanical door. She couldn't get through in time and it hurt her very much when it crushed her. And that same year, she had heart failure.

She suddenly couldn't move or something like that and they took her to the doctor. And the doctor said to her, you've had heart failure. And then she said a very strange thing which most of us would call a bit stupid.

She said, praise the Lord, I've had heart failure. And then the doctor looked at her and said, but you've got sugar diabetes. I'm sorry to tell you.

She said, praise the Lord, I've got sugar diabetes. And you know, she said to the doctor, you know, I'm a woman in my 80s. It could have been much worse.

It could have been cancer or something. You know, whenever I walk through that door, it's just a wonderful thing. You just hear these words.

As your feet go in through that door, this is how I've experienced it. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Every third sentence is just those words. Praise the Lord. Now let me ask you a little question.

When do you stop praising? What little things stop you praising God? You know, it's wonderful. You have the testimonies of people who come to her for help. She can't go to people, but people come to her.

Three o'clock in the morning, suicide case, phones her. Other people come to her. Wonderful how they meet with God.

Many of them. But you see, they know she's real. She doesn't only praise God through the good times.

She praises God through the bad times. And I'm sure you've all read of, in church history, how many, not all, of the martyrs, not all of them, but many of them, as the fire was creeping up their bodies, how they sang in praise to God. And it's a wonderful testimony.

Many people say you've got dying grace. And of course, if we fail a lot now, it doesn't matter, because God will give us dying grace. And I agree with them in one sense, that there's a grace we're going to get when we die, which we don't have now.

But I would like to ask this question from my heart. If you can't praise, discipline yourself to seek God, to praise God, when the little things go wrong, now, how do you expect to praise God when the big things go

wrong? If you cannot seek God, to praise God when the little things go wrong, how can you expect to praise God when the big things go wrong? And before I go on, I've just got a thought. It's a bit off from my sermon, but I remember my dad.

Now, my dad has been a big encouragement to me through the years. It's very hard to be down when he finds you for various reasons. But one of the things he always says to us as children, to me as a missionary, he says, Roy, you're going to experience different things on the mission field.

Sometimes you're going to get small crowds. Sometimes you're going to get big crowds. Sometimes there's going to be mighty millions of God and sometimes there's going to be less.

And then he came to these words, basically. He said, Roy, God's looking at you. God's looking at you.

And he wanted to see if the few people, when you've got the little crowd, whether they aren't as important to you as the big crowd. And will you praise God through that and spend as much time in prayer for the few people as you would for the lots of people. And I always remember that.

And I remember the very first, I've had many, many, many series of meetings in the four years, or, sorry, few years I've been as a missionary. But I remember the first one. It was a bit of a, you could call almost a disappointment.

I came to this town. We did a lot of work, an extreme amount of work. And we came to the meeting there and we expected to have this wonderful revival as God had worked in other places.

But this was our first series of meetings. And I stood up there and there was only one person in the meeting. And it was the piano player.

And unfortunately, we didn't preach that meeting. We did sing a few hymns. But at the end of that series, it grew to about 13 people.

And a few of them had been saved, not through me, through my co-worker, that first series. And I remember at the end of that series, I just suddenly, I think I remembered what my father said. And I thought, I'm going to praise God.

I'm going to praise God. And I praised God. It wasn't easy.

But I remember that Monday, it was two days later after that series had finished, I got a phone call from a very old man. And he phoned me and he said, Roy, we've organized a meeting. And he'd organized for churches to come together.

And he basically packed almost that hall full. And I came there and I preached from my heart. And people met with God there who'd been prayed for for years.

Oh, thou meet a sinner that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways. But you may say, I don't always feel like praising. I don't always feel like praising.

Let me answer you. I don't praise in my feelings. I praise in the Lord.

Paul said, rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say rejoice. Not rejoice in your feelings.

Nowhere in the Bible does it talk of faith and feelings and praising and feelings. The Bible reading and praising and prayer are all the same in one way. If you discipline yourself, Bible reading, praising and prayer, if you truly say it and you discipline yourself to spend more and more time with praising, praying and reading your Bible, then eventually the more you'll want to do it.

There's an old saying, weeds soon choke the unused path. Weeds soon choke the unused path. And I'd like to ask a question to each one of you today.

And that's this. Is the path of praise full of weeds in your life? Is the path of praise, I'm not talking about church when you sing with everybody else, but is the path of praise full of weeds in your life? If so, then I would, apart from one thing I'd say at the end of the sermon, I would trample those weeds. I would praise God, offer the sacrifice of praise that there's not one weed left.

That there's not one weed left. Of course it's hard at the beginning when you're going through a path full of weeds, an overgrown path. As little boys, like the monkeys barefoot between the thorns, we used to run up the mountains in Africa.

And then many years later we came to the same place and it was so hard to get through because the paths were gone. They were overgrown. And at first it might be hard, but trample them down.

Paul didn't say only rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice. He said, he reiterated himself in 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 16. He said rejoice evermore.

Rejoice evermore. I love Amazing Grace, the last section there of Amazing Grace which is, when I'd, how does it go? When I'd been there 10,000 years back shining as the sun, with no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun. I hope that's what you're looking forward to in heaven because that's what I'm looking forward to.

Worthy is the Lamb. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. God wants people to offer the sacrifice of praise.

God wants people to offer the sacrifice of praise. Jeremiah 17 verse 10 says, I the Lord searched the heart, I tried the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doing. 1 Samuel 13 verse 14 says, the Lord sought a man after his own heart.

And then in Acts 12, Acts 12 verse 22, it says these words, sorry 13 verse 22, I found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart which shall fulfill all my will. And you know what I love about David is he was such a, the person that God found was a play of heart. He so loved singing praises.

He so loved singing praises that he eventually became known as the sweet psalmist of Israel. The sweet psalmist of Israel. And he went through many struggles in his life.

Inward struggles as a Christian, or as a man of God. But if you read in the Psalms, he always at the end offered the sacrifice of praise. Always at the end of his Psalms offered the sacrifice of praise.

But after David, after David had fallen into sin, he came back to God in Psalm 51, that famous chapter, and he said very interesting words. Psalm 51, I'm trying to find the word, Psalm 51, verse 12 to 13. He said, Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Those wonderful words. Then, then, will I teach transgresses thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Then will I teach transgresses thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Psalm 40, verse 3. I can't quite remember, but the Lord has put a new song in my heart. Even praise unto the Lord. Many shall see it, and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

Many shall see it, and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Now I want to ask you a question. Do you believe that? You know, I'm not saying if you walk down the street and you praise past everybody's house so that they close their ears, that you're going to get revival, that a million people are coming to God.

But I wonder how many people have not accepted Christ, because they've never met someone who prays God through the hard times. Many shall see it, and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord. You know, I was once at a convention in South Africa, and it was wonderful.

We were having a lovely time there. I think my father was preaching at some of the meetings. In between, I was in charge of some of the youth activities, probably throwing water balloons at each other or something.

Can't remember. But I remember there was this boy, and he smoked, and he swore, and he drank, sometimes on the campsite. It was against the rules, obviously, but we caught him sometimes.

And he came up to me, and he was so close with me once, that he swore in my face. He swore in my face. Zark.

And it was a great blessing to me at the end of that convention. Zark came up to me at the door. He'd missed one of the meetings.

And as I came out of the door, he came up to me and said, Roy, I want to see you in the room. And I went there to the room, and he said to me, he sat down there on the one bed, and he said, Roy, there's a great joy in the world. There is a joy in the world.

But the joy that I see in you, Roy, the joy that I see in you, that's a greater joy. And I want that joy. And you know, he knelt down there on the ground.

And I've never seen a man, rarely seen a man so changed in one moment, as he stood up, and he had God's joy in his life. He was saved. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature.

Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. And of course, faith doesn't have anything to do with feelings.

But there was this man. He went out, and he went to testify about how Jesus changed his life. He never touched, drank again, or smoked, or swore that I knew.

I phoned him one year after he had met with God. He testified that he never ever touched, drank again. He went to school a week after that, a large school there in the Western Cape of South Africa.

And he organized meetings. He wanted to become a preacher. A little bit too much zealous before, wisdom, or too little wisdom with zealousness.

But it was wonderful that God so changed the person. Do you believe that verse? Many shall see it, and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.

Now David wrote in Psalm 23, I remember once in college, I was going through a struggle because I wasn't where I should be with the Lord. I wasn't where I should be with the Lord. And it's terrifying being in a situation where you know you're not where you should be with the Lord, but the more you try to make yourself right, the less right you are.

I don't know if you've ever felt like that. You've tried to fix it yourself. And then I remember sitting there, it was in front of a lecture hall.

I can't remember who the lecturer was, what he lectured about, nothing. I just know my Bible was opened, suddenly opened as I was thinking of these things. And I burst into tears as I saw that verse in Psalm 23.

He restoreth my soul. He restoreth my soul. And then shortly afterwards, my cup runneth over.

My cup runneth over. And he did. I didn't have to do anything.

He'd already done it at Calvary. Even for a Christian who needed to be right. So I'd like to ask that question again.

Is the path of joy, of praise, sorry, in your life full of weeds? Is it? Well then I've got one advice for you. Go home, and when you're home, well, when you can, pray to God. Ask Him to restore yourself.

And then, not worrying about your feelings, discipline yourself to offer the sacrifice of prayer. Religion isn't about rules, but what a wonderful thing it would be is to go for a walk. Pray for half an hour going out, and pray for half an hour coming in.

If you discipline yourself to do that, not worrying about your feelings, God will bless you in a wonderful way. Praise Him, then pray. Let us pray.

Father, thank you that we've got tongues, that we might praise you. Thank you that we are, that of us are thy children. Thank you for dying on the cross for us.

And Lord, as I stand here unworthy, I just ask that the Christians in this hall, that you give them the grace to praise thee more and more. To praise thee through the hard times, God. That those who need their soul to be restored, that you would restore it through the blood of Jesus Christ, and through the working of the Holy Spirit.

And that you would work in their lives to make it a life of praise, and pray, a life of Christlikeness. In Jesus Christ's name, I ask all this. Amen.

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