

# Thanksgiving, Praise and Worship

by Zac Poonen

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*Giving thanks is a habit to develop, a debt to clear, and a sign of humility, and it's essential to cultivate a deeper relationship with God and to experience the blessings of God in our lives.*

**Duration:** 1:01:20

**Scripture:** Psalm 50:23, Psalm 138:1-3, Matthew 21:16, John 4:23-24, Romans 12:1, Hebrews 2:12-13, Hebrews 13:15

**Topics:** "Worship And Praise", "Gratitude To God"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the distinctions between thanksgiving, praise, and worship. It highlights the significance of expressing gratitude, offering praise, and surrendering in worship to God. The speaker encourages continuous thanksgiving, genuine praise, and deep worship as essential aspects of a Christ-like life, drawing insights from Psalms, Hebrews, and Revelation.

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## Transcript

What I want to speak on this morning are three words that the vast majority of Christians confuse, and those words are thanksgiving, praise and worship. I would say that my guess is that 99.9% of Christians, of believers, would not be able to tell you what is the difference between thanksgiving, praise and worship. It's like a big mixture.

Now, nothing's wrong in it. If you mix chicken curry with ice cream and pickle and eat all together, it's okay. It goes into your stomach, but it's tastier if you eat it separately.

That's all I say. So you don't get sick if you don't know the difference between thanksgiving, praise and worship, but when you put it separately, you may discover something about yourself which will help you to be more Christ-like. So Psalm 138, the first three sentences, notice David says, I will give you thanks, I will sing praises, I will bow down.

Thanksgiving, praise and worship. They are three different things, and though we may not know the difference, provided we are doing all three, we are okay. Definition is not as important as practice.

If your digestive system is working okay, it doesn't matter if you can't explain it. But here it's a little more than that, because these are three things that don't come naturally to us. Prayer comes naturally to us.

And even for, I think for 30 years, we have tried to teach people to learn to praise God, and I think very few have learned it. What I mean is, you do some homework when you're at home. Try to spend one minute.

It's not a lot of homework, right? 60 seconds? Try to spend one minute praying to God and asking for nothing. Only thanking and praising. You'll find one minute so difficult.

I mean, you'll find it here on Sunday morning. On Sunday morning, we tell people, let's praise God. People are saying, bless this meeting.

Bless this meeting is a prayer. There's nothing wrong in it. As I said, you can mix the ice cream with the pickle.

It's okay. There's nothing wrong in it. But, and there's nothing wrong in praying on Sunday morning.

There's no rule that you must worship on Sunday morning. The only reason is, because we don't have the habit of giving thanks or praise to God, we are losing a tremendous lot in our Christian life, and we're not even knowing it. I believe many, many problems in our life is because we have not learned to thank God, or to praise Him, or worship Him.

We think everything is going to be done by prayer. No. So, I want to share something with you along this line.

Let me show you another verse in the New Testament. In Revelation chapter 4, remember what we read in Psalm 138. I will give thanks.

I will praise. I will worship. It's a very good three-fold decision for all of you to take this morning.

Say to the Lord, say it many times in the coming days. I will give thanks to the Lord. I will praise Him.

I will worship Him. I will give thanks to the Lord. I will praise Him.

I will worship Him. Just keep saying that this week, and say, Lord, I want to practice it. And as you understand these three things, you'll find it makes a big difference.

Now, Revelation chapter 4, and verse 9, it says here, when the living creatures give glory, that's worship, honor, that's praise, and thanks to Him who sits on the throne. So, what do they give to God who sits on the throne? Worship, praise, and thanksgiving. Good for us to learn all three because we're going to join that crowd one day in heaven, where we are going to give worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God.

Now, I want to say one more thing, and that is, when we learn to give thanks to God, it becomes a habit in our life. We also learn to give thanks to men. We need to be grateful to men.

It's a, not only a Christian, even a gentleman will learn to give thanks. We teach our little children to say, thank you. Somebody gives them a gift.

They say, thank you, uncle. Thank you, auntie. Why do we teach them that? Because it doesn't come naturally.

You don't have to tell your child, grab that, that that comes naturally. Grab it out of the other fellow's hand. But you got to teach them what doesn't come naturally.

Say, thank you. Say, sorry. Those are things that don't come naturally.

And we teach our children that, but you know, we adults need to learn that ourselves. We haven't learned to say thank you to all the people who do things for us. In fact, Thanksgiving is, we are such fantastic misers, M-I-S-E-R, misers, when it comes to saying thank you to somebody who's done something for us.

We say thank you to a doctor, but we take so much for granted, particularly in the church. We know how to give thanks to strangers, doctors, government officials who help us. But in the church, everything's taken for granted.

My dear brothers and sisters, that is why you don't grow spiritually. That's why you don't get victory over sin. Because God sees that you treat some of those heathen people, some strangers, better than you treat your own brothers and sisters.

It's like that wife who told her husband, if you will talk to me just as kindly as you talk to the strangers who come to the door, that's enough for me. We take so much for granted when it comes to people we call our loved ones. We love other people more than we love our loved ones.

That's the tragedy. So Thanksgiving is something we give to God and to men. And I want to surprise you.

Praise is also something that we give to God and to men. It's only when it comes to worship that we give that only to God. He alone is worthy of worship.

So let's look at these two, these three words. Let me give you an example of a very godly man in the Old Testament who had a habit. We read off in Daniel chapter 6 and verse 10.

Daniel chapter 6 and verse 10. It says he had a habit here, it says, of giving thanks to God three times every day. What a wonderful habit to have, to give thanks to God three times every day.

Morning, afternoon, evening. It's like the doctor gives you a prescription and says take this tablet three times a day. We don't forget it because we want to be healed.

I mean uneducated, illiterate people forget when they are told to take a tablet three times a day. But we who are educated and literate think of a time when a doctor gave you a prescription to take a tablet three times a day. Did you forget it? Maybe once in a while, but most of the time we don't forget it because we are so keen on being healed.

You're told to give a tablet three times a day to your child, you will not forget it. But we say what are we gonna get out of giving thanks to God three times a day? You'll get what Daniel got. I'll tell you he got a lot more than most of us.

There is so much we're missing, but apart from that, do we give thanks only because we want to get something? When are we going to get out of this selfishness where our whole life revolves around what will I get if I start giving thanks? Well, I'm going to tell you, supposing you get nothing, will you still give thanks? I want to give thanks because it's godly to give thanks. We don't give thanks because we want to get something. Well, we do get something, but that's a byproduct.

But it's a very, very good habit to develop. Think of it like a debt. I think most of us, I hope all of us will develop that habit of clearing our debts.

The Bible says, owe no man anything. Supposing a person has done something for you, and you have not thanked him, you're in debt. It's like you borrowed a thousand rupees from somebody, and you never

returned it.

You taught your little child to say thank you for some five rupee gift, and we don't give thanks to people for what they do for us, much more to God. It's a debt, and until you see it as a debt, you're not going to take it seriously that this is something I have to do. I mean, think if you were in debt, and every day you're getting into debt, more debt, more debt.

You know that that's not a Christian habit. When we don't give thanks to God, we are in debt. Please remember that.

When we don't give thanks to men where we need to, we are in debt. So if we look at it as a debt, we'll say, yeah, I need to give thanks. And Daniel just, he was under the old covenant.

It wasn't a law. There was no law in the times of day. He just did it.

He was a spiritual man. It's one mark of a spiritual man. He learns to give thanks to God.

I want to show you Romans chapter one. It's a passage we have often referred to. In Romans chapter one, when it speaks about the decline of man into the depths of sin, and some of those depths of sin are described in the last two or three verses.

Verse 30, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, and so on and on and on and on. All types of sins. And you know where it all begins? It all begins in verse 21, where it says, even though they knew God, they did not give thanks.

That's the first step. When you think of this downward progression to evil, what was the first step downward? They knew God. They did not honor him as God or give thanks.

They did not worship. They did not praise him. They did not give thanks to him.

You may not sink to the depths of verse 31, but when you missed out the first step, when you've gone down that first step of not giving thanks or praise and worship, you're already going downwards. Even if you don't go all the way down to the bottom, you'll go down somewhat. You wonder why you're going down in your Christian life? Here's the answer.

You're not giving thanks. You're in debt. You need to clear your debt.

Now, you know, you can hear a message like this and do something today and forget all about it tomorrow. You've got a better memory. Maybe you'll forget it only next week.

Some things which we have not developed as a habit, we have to practice till it becomes a habit. It's like teaching your children to brush their teeth. It becomes a habit after a while.

Many of you need to be reminded to brush your teeth in the morning. Hope not. But when you were small and all of us were small, somebody had to teach us that.

There are many good habits that you may have. You were taught it. If you had good parents, they taught you those good habits to keep yourself clean, to wear clean clothes and things like that.

Why is it the people and children in the slums don't do it? Probably because they don't have clean clothes. That may be. But even if they do, some people are just filthy and they have no interest in cleanliness

because their parents never taught them to keep things clean.

Well, that's not so serious. I mean, physical uncleanness is not as serious as spiritual uncleanness. So don't get discouraged if you don't develop this habit overnight.

Work at it. Work at it and say, Lord, like David said, I will. It's an exercise of your will.

I will give thanks. I will praise. I will worship.

So I want you to turn now to Psalm 118. You know, many times in the Psalms you read this phrase, Oh, give thanks unto the Lord. And very often it's coupled with a reason.

It's not meaningless. It's not, you know, a ritual. OK, I'm supposed to give thanks.

OK, thank you, Lord. What for? Supposing you say thank you, Lord, and the Lord asks you, what for? Oh, I didn't think of that. I was just told on Sunday morning to just say thank you.

That's a ritual. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. OK, let's turn to Psalm 118.

Psalm 118 we read. First of all, thank God. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

That's a very good reason to give thanks. God is a good God. We have understanding that lots of people don't have, that our God is a good God.

He never, never, never, never does anything evil to us. Never. Even if you're evil, he will not do evil to you.

He may punish you in eternity. That's another thing. But he won't do evil to you.

He makes the sun to rise on good and evil people. He sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. He does not do evil because that's not his nature.

He's not even tempted to evil, the Bible says in James 1. God is a good God. Every single thing that he does, even when he disciplines you, it is for your good. It's your own lack of humility and your arrogance and your pride which prevents you from seeing it.

But everything God does is good. No doubt about it. I'll give thanks to the Lord, first of all, because he's good.

And then it says in verse 21, I'll give thanks to you because you have answered me. That's another reason to give thanks. The Lord has answered our prayers.

Think of the thousands and thousands of prayers that you prayed in your life, which you God answered. You thought it was a coincidence. No, it was not a coincidence.

It was something wonderful that God did, but he didn't manifest himself. It's like an anonymous gift. You thought, well, who was that? That was God.

There are no coincidences. God answered a prayer. Learn to give thanks to him first.

Don't say, oh, that new antibiotic healed me. No. There are many other people who take that new antibiotic who died.

How did you get healed? Oh, it was that specialist doctor who treated me. There are patients under that same specialist doctor who died. Give thanks to God.

God was the one who healed you. You prayed. There's nothing wrong in taking the antibiotic and going to the doctor or hospital, but give thanks to God.

It's humility. When we eat our food, Jesus had the habit of always giving thanks before he ate food because he recognized this is a gift from my father. It's humility.

The arrogant person, oh, no, I worked and I went into the shop and bought it with my own money. Okay. I'd like to see how long he continues like that.

Learn to give thanks to God for everything. I mean, giving thanks for food is such a small little thing. Do it everywhere.

Do it publicly in restaurants and everywhere. Don't be ashamed. I remember a man who went to a restaurant.

I don't know whether I should tell you the story. When he went to pay the bill, I mean, he ate quite a lot with his friends and all that. The manager at the counter said, it's free.

I said, it's free? Why? He said, when I established the restaurant, I'm a child of God. I'm a Christian. I decided that the first person who I see bowing down and giving thanks for his food, I'll give him his food free.

Now, there are not many believers who run restaurants in Bangalore, so you may not get that. But think of that. A lot of people don't give thanks in public.

They're ashamed. Anybody see me? Imagine, I'll never forget what Charles Finney, who was, before he was converted, he was a lawyer and God spoke to him one day for his salvation, and he left his law office and went into the woods. And he wanted to pray all alone where nobody would see him.

He was a respected lawyer. He doesn't want anybody to see him praying for salvation or something like that. So he got all alone in the woods and he knelt down, and suddenly he heard some rustling of the leaves.

He got up. There was nobody there. And suddenly it hit him, the pride of his heart, that he was ashamed to be seen kneeling down before his creator.

And he repented of that pride. Oh God, I'm ashamed to be seen kneeling down before you, my creator, by some other fellow creature. Forgive me.

He was converted. He was baptized in the Holy Spirit the same day. There's a lot of pride that prevents us from giving thanks in public.

Learn to give thanks for the answers to prayer. And then verse 28. First of all, I said we give thanks to God because he's good.

Verse 21, because he's answered our prayer. And verse 28, because you are my God. That's all.

I give you thanks because you're my God. I don't need any other reason. You are my God.

See what we progress from, that God is good, because he's answered our prayer. Finally, because God is God. So that's the position from which we learn to give thanks.

David also said in Psalm 139, I was saying this to the young people the other day, we need to learn to give thanks for the way he created us. I want to emphasize that because a lot of people have complaints against God for something that he did in their body which they felt was not right. Psalm 139, verse 14, I will give you thanks for I'm fearfully and wonderfully made.

I mean you formed my inward parts in my mother's womb, verse 13. And I was telling the young people you need to give thanks to God for the way he made you. The color of your skin, the shape of your nose, and your eyes, and everything else.

It was he who made you. And make a tremendous difference in your life when you learn to give thanks. Learn to give thanks for health.

A lot of people think of their wonderful creation only when something goes wrong. It's a very good habit to give thanks. Lord, I thank you for a healthy body.

If you studied a little bit about the functioning of the human body, I'll tell you, I read a little bit about it. It's an absolute miracle that we are alive even for one day. So many things have to be in such delicate balance.

There must be so much of iodine, a fraction of a milligram, a fraction of a gram of potassium, various things like that. Otherwise you'll go crazy. You'll say stupid things.

You know, we have to learn to give thanks for so many amazing things in this body and so many things. It's a wonderful habit to develop. And when we come into the New Testament, notice what it says in the New Testament.

This is just Old Testament we've been looking at. We read in Luke chapter 17, I think, where verse 11 about these 10 lepers who were cleansed. The thing I noticed in this story is verse 13, they raised their voices, all 10 of them.

They shouted out, Jesus master, have mercy on us. That's prayer. It's good to raise our voice in prayer.

But when they were healed, verse 15, one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back again with a loud voice. He didn't lower his voice. The same loud voice with which he prayed, with the same loud voice, he gave thanks.

Boy, you've understood something when you know how to give, how to pray with a loud voice and then give thanks to the loud voice. But it's only one out of 10. I think the proportion is about one in a hundred today.

One out of 10 in that day. And was that serious? No. I mean, it was serious because Jesus said, weren't there 10 who were cleansed? Where are the nine? And as the Lord looks down from heaven today, he says, didn't I forgive so many people? Why only so few come back to give thanks? Didn't I answer a million prayers? Why only 10 people come back and say thank you to me? Does that, does the Lord observe it? This verse teaches us he certainly does.

He certainly does observe when you've got something and you didn't give, come back to give thanks to him. He notices that because he sees there is one more ungrateful wretch who calls himself my child. Sad.

You know, when this chap came back to give thanks, he got something more. He said, stand up, go. Your faith has saved you.

I think it meant not only that his body was healed, but he probably got salvation. Salvation is much more than healing. I mean, those other nine lepers may have gone to hell, even if they lived 20 years without leprosy after they got healed.

Do you know that there are many people whom Jesus healed who are in hell today? Thousands. There are places where it says Jesus healed all of them. There must have been thousands in Israel who got healed, but only 120 waited for the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Most people who are healed, who were healed even in Jesus' time, never came back to him for salvation. They were happy. We got what we wanted.

You know, the person who comes back in humility and says, Lord, I'm deeply thankful for what you've done for me. He gets something more. And when you come back to God and give thanks, you get something more.

And that's what you've missed for so many years, but not too late to correct it today. 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 18 says, there are many, many areas where we don't know the will of God. Many areas.

We say, Lord, I wish I knew your will, but I'll tell you one area where you have no doubt about God's will. Okay. 1 Thessalonians 5, 18.

This is God's will for you. Give thanks in everything. That's it.

Okay. You understood God's will, at least in one area. In everything, give thanks.

In Ephesians 5, 20, it goes a little further and says, in Ephesians 5, 20, it says, always and in everything, all times, all situations. And in 1 Timothy 2, it goes one step even further. All things, all times.

1 Timothy 2, 1, it says, give thanks for all people. That's a little more difficult, right? Some of these fellows, you don't feel like giving thanks, but you know that if you are a child of God and you're wholehearted and your life is completely surrendered to Christ, there is absolutely no one on the earth who can harm you. I hope you believe that.

Romans 8, 28 says, all things work together for good to those who love God. Now, if you don't love God, you're not living according to His purpose. Then, of course, you're going to have a lot of problems.

I'm talking to those who love God and who only want to live for God's will on earth. For such people, I can give you a promise. For whom? You love God.

You don't love money and earthly things. You love God. And your only aim in life is to do His will.

Here's a promise for you. Every single thing, yes, I mean every single thing, Romans 8, 28 will work for your very best. Even if it doesn't look like that right now, it will ultimately work for your very best.

Now, if Romans 8, 28 had said 99% of things work for our very best, then I would say 99% of things I give thanks. I don't give thanks for things that are working for my harm. No.

Why do I give thanks for everything? Because everything works for my good. Because I love God and I'm only interested in doing His will. And therefore, I can give thanks for all people.

Some of those people whom you can't stand, who've done you harm. You know, the problem is not with them. You need to get your eyes open to Romans 8, 28.

It changed my life completely when I discovered nobody in the world can harm me. Their words cannot harm me. Their actions cannot harm me.

Their attitude cannot harm me. They can destroy themselves with their attitude and their words and actions against me, but they can't touch me. Sorry, you can't touch me.

I'm the apple of God's eye. There's a wall of fire around about me and around you also if you believe it. But if you've got private ambitions in your life to get on in the world and be somebody, then I don't know.

But if your aim in life is to live for the glory of God and you only want to do His will, I tell you nobody can harm you. Absolutely not. Not a human being.

And I don't need any black cat commanders around me to protect me. The angels are much better than that. Do you believe that? I hope so.

All things, all people, all times, because God is on my side against the devil. It's a wonderful life, the Christian life. Absolutely wonderful to live like this, give thanks for everything.

You know, it even helps us. I was seeing today, you know, many people say how to get up out of this. Sometimes I speak bad words or jokes that come out of my mouth, which I don't like.

You know, it says here in Ephesians 5 earlier on in verse 4, there must be no filthiness, no silly talk, no coarse jesting. What's it? No filthiness in your conversation. No silly talk.

No coarse jesting. The very fact that it says coarse jesting means that good jesting is okay. I believe in humor.

I believe Jesus had a sense of humor. Humor is such a wonderful thing. It's impossible for the devil to have created it.

Nobody laughs in hell. I hope you know that. Coarse jesting.

That's what it says. Not all jesting. Coarse jesting.

That means filthy jokes or jokes to make other people feel small. That's coarse. I mean, if you tell a joke, tell it on yourself.

That's okay. Some stupid thing you did. Not some stupid thing your little child did or your son or daughter did when they were small or some other person did.

No, that's evil. That's coarse jesting. To get rid of all this, the way is, it says in the same verse, start giving thanks.

Did you know that? In other words, when you drive out the demon, if you don't want seven more demons to come in, fill the house. So this demon of coarse jesting and silly talk and filthiness, you drive it out. But why do they come back in with worse demons? Because you don't fill the house with thanksgiving.

Here's a little secret. Start giving thanks and you'll overcome bad speech. You'll probably overcome anger.

Anger. Oh, that's bad. You want to get rid of it? Many of you are trying to get rid of it.

Why not start giving thanks from today? Just develop the habit and see how anger gradually, it won't disappear by tomorrow, but gradually disappears. Wonderful. Christian life is so practical.

We give thanks to God. Now let's tell you another verse before I move on. And that is Philippians 4, 6 says, if you, whenever you pray to God, also give thanks, you'll get rid of anxiety.

Isn't that great? Like filthy talk. Anxiety is another problem that a lot of people have. How to get rid of it? Learn to give thanks along with your prayer.

Now, it's not only to God. As I said, we got to learn to give thanks for men, to men. Jesus said, if you give one of my children a cup of cold water, now that's the cheapest thing in the world.

It doesn't cost you anything to give somebody a cup of cold water. Jesus said, you'll get a reward. And I thought of that.

I said, in the day of judgment, Jesus called somebody. What did this guy do for the Lord? Absolutely nothing. But one day he gave a cup of cold water to one of my children.

Here's your reward. I'm not saying he'll go to heaven because of that. He may get his reward and go to hell.

That's another thing, if he's not born again. But my point is that Jesus recognizes even a cup of cold water. And I say, Lord, I want to be like you.

I want to recognize and never forget that somebody, one day when I was thirsty, gave me a cup of cold water. I tell you, you look around and you'll see people around you who've done a lot more for you than give you a cup of cold water. Sure, they may even have left the church today and gone away, but I'll be thankful to them.

People who did something good for me, did something good for my family, maybe 20 years ago. I won't forget it. That's being Christ-like.

Never forget it. And I'll have an attitude of gratitude towards them all my life, even if I disagree with them in 101 other areas. I'll say, well, I may disagree with you 101 areas, but I'll never forget what you did for me here.

And I'm very thankful. I tell you, it'd make your Christian life glorious. We are such misers when it comes to expressing thanks.

Okay, now let's go on to the subject of praising God. We thank God, as I told you, for all these things. We praise God for who He is, even if He did nothing.

We praise God because He's almighty. It says in Psalm 22 and verse 3, that when we praise God, we prepare a throne for Him. Psalm 22 and verse 3, Thou art holy, O you who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

The praises of God's people make a throne. God is not a cheap king to sit on a throne of gold. No, no, no.

Gold is cheap. They walk on it in heaven. The streets are made of gold.

And to make a throne of gold for God is like taking tar. In the world, tar, the streets are tarred. To make a throne out of tar, it's all very sticky.

God's not going to sit on a throne like that. You know what's the only worthy throne for God? You really say you're my king? If God is your king, there'll be a throne in your life for Him. And that throne is the spirit of praise.

Lord, I praise you for who you are. I praise you that you defeated Satan on the cross. I know a hundred prayers of mine are not answered yet.

It doesn't matter. I still praise you. So what if my prayers are not answered? God is still on the throne.

Does that make any difference? Just because your prayers are not answered, does it mean God vacated His throne? No, He didn't. Does it mean Satan is not defeated? Of course, He's defeated. Long ago, He was defeated.

So to praise God is for who He is, irrespective of whether He did something for us or not, or answered our prayer or not. He is still God. He's the creator of this universe, and we need to recognize Him as God.

And we make a throne for Him when we praise Him. And the Bible says in Isaiah 61 in verse 3, that one of the things that Jesus came to do for us, many people know in the new covenant that Jesus was anointed to deliver us from our sins. That's written here too.

Isaiah 61, the spirit of the Lord is upon me to proclaim liberty to the captives, good news to the afflicted, to bind up the brokenhearted. We are all this. Before we are converted, we are afflicted, brokenhearted captives, prisoners, and Jesus came to set us free, to open our blind eyes.

And then what does He do to us? He gives us a garment of praise. Verse 3, the last part, a garment of praise. In other words, He clothes me with praise.

Do you know that you are naked if you don't have a spirit of praise? When you are born again, God gives you a dress. It's what's called a garment. And that garment is the garment of praise.

We have a bunch of naked Christians running around. And why are they not embarrassed when they run around naked? Tell me, who's not embarrassed when they run around naked? You know the answer. Who? Little babies, right.

So what are you when you don't have a spirit of praise and you're not embarrassed by it and you run around all over naked? You're a baby, that's all. Grown-up people are terribly embarrassed if they go anywhere without clothes. And a grown-up Christian is terribly embarrassed in the spirit of praise.

He goes away from his life. I say, I don't want to go anywhere without a spirit of praise in my life. No, nowhere.

I don't want to be seen anywhere. Anywhere without clothes. Okay.

At least from today, start wearing clothes all the time. A garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. I mean, what a fool you are.

And God gives you good clothes for you to wear those ragged beggar's clothes that you had. The devil gave you of heaviness. And you know, it says in, where is that, Philippians chapter 2. I love that phrase, that verse there, Philippians 2. It says, do everything, verse 14, without grumbling, without disputing.

No murmuring or grumbling in everything we do. Why? That's what I want you to see. Why? Because that is the only way in which you prove that you're a child of God.

In the midst of a crooked world. In the midst of a crooked and perverse world where everybody is grumbling, complaining, murmuring. Here is a person who's not grumbling, murmuring, and complaining.

Oh, he must be a child of God, right? But if you murmur and grumble and are complaining all the time, you are just like the world around you. You know, this verse gives me a little light on the virgin whose light, whose lamp died out. They had a lamp in the beginning.

The five foolish virgins, their lamp died out because they didn't have any extra oil. It says here that this is the light you hold up in the world, verse 15. The world is full of darkness, but here is the light that you hold up where everybody's murmuring, grumbling, complaining, darkness.

You're giving thanks and praising God. That's a light. And when that light dies out, what are you? A foolish virgin.

You may be a virgin. Oh, I don't sin. I don't do these wrong things.

Maybe, but you're grumbling and complaining. The light is gone. You need little oil.

You need the Holy Spirit's power. And that's what it says here. My brethren, verse 12, work out your salvation from this murmuring and grumbling.

And God, verse 13, is at work inside you to give you this desire. Have you got a desire to give up murmuring and grumbling permanently in your life? God gave it to you. And if God gave you that desire, he'll also give you the power.

He'll work in you to will it and to do it. What? Verse 14, being free from grumbling and complaining, we have a spirit of praise, a garment of praise all the time in our life. Do you remember that place where Jesus said in the Gospels once when he came in to the temple and all the children were shouting praise to God and the long-faced Pharisees said, Lord, tell these people, I mean, house of God is not a place to shout and praise God.

Right? That's what he told Jesus. Lord, don't you understand? House of God is a serious place. You must sit like you're attending a funeral and be serious.

These fellows praising God and raising their hands and shouting and saying hallelujah. Stop them. Children don't know anything.

That was about the one time Jesus was really happy when he saw these children praising God. You know why? Because Jesus came from heaven where everybody, there was no long-faced angel sitting there in any corner in heaven. Everybody was so happy and praising God and he came to earth for 33 years.

He saw people miserable, grumbling, complaining, long-faced people. Suddenly he saw some children praising God. He said, hey, that reminds me of heaven.

And he said in Matthew 21, he said, haven't you heard this? Verse 16. When he heard the children praising, he said, haven't you read it? You guys should know the Psalm 8, it says out of the mouths of infants, I have prepared praise for myself. Jesus said, if they keep quiet, even the stones will start praising me.

Do you know when you keep quiet, that's what the Lord says today. You are more dead than the stones in your building. I don't want the Lord to say that to me anytime, that I'm more dead than the stones in the building.

You think we are alive just because we come to the meetings? No, sir. You're not alive because you come to the meetings. Do you know that the devil attends every meeting in CFC? How many of you know that? I believe that with all my heart, as long as there's any anointed man standing on this pulpit, the devil will be pretty sure to be there.

One of his demons anyway. The more powerful the anointing, the stronger the demons he sends to the meeting. He's never missed a meeting in CFC as far as I know.

What does that prove? That you attended all the meetings. So what? If you don't have a spirit of praise, you are more dead than the stones in this building. If they keep quiet, the stones will cry out, out of the mouth of it.

Now, what I want you to see is, you know, I'm going to compare it. Whenever you read a verse in the New Testament, quoted from the Old Testament, go back to the Old Testament and see what it says there. It says in Psalm 8, this is what it reads, the original.

God doesn't show this to lazy people. Most Christians are lazy. They don't study the Bible.

But when you go to the Old Testament, it says, from the mouth of infants, he doesn't use the word praise there. Notice that. That's why you get something from Scripture.

From the mouth of infants, you have established not praise, but strength. Praise is strength. Why? Because of your adversaries to make the devil quiet.

And to stop him from working. You want to stop the devil from working? Psalm 8 verse 2, compare that with Matthew 21 verse 16. Through praise, you stop the devil from working.

There was an old preacher. I forget his name. Not sure if it was Billy Bray or one of these evangelists in England years ago.

One of these happy people. Always praising the Lord. And somebody tried to tease him saying, what will you do, Billy, if God finally sends you to hell? He said, I will just praise the Lord over there till the devil will say, get out of here, Billy.

We don't want anybody here. You know, I tell you, the devil hates praise. You want to drive the devil out of your home? Just start praising God.

Well, God, the devil can't stand before God's throne. You know that. Why does he get so much power in your house, in your life? Because you don't have a throne.

And the devil knows you don't have a throne. The infants praise God. Jesus was delighted.

I want to show you two verses in Hebrews before we go on. Hebrews chapter 2, verse 12 and 13. It's very interesting to see that Jesus is the one who leads the praise in the church.

Do you know who's the real song leader in the church? Hebrews chapter 2, verse 12. In the midst of the church, I will sing your praise. This is referring to Jesus.

Jesus is the song leader in the midst of the church. And every person who leads songs, if he recognizes the real song leader here is Jesus. I'm just sort of an understudy to him.

He can really read worship and praise to God. The other verse is Hebrews 13 and verse 15, where it says, God is very happy with this type of sacrifice. Verse 15.

Let us continually, continually offer to God the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. We can praise God in our hearts, but to praise him with our lips is a very, very, very important habit that we have to do continually. How much should our light shine? Continually.

I must have a spirit of praise all the time in my life. I must always be dressed with a garment of praise all the time. I never want to be naked.

And it says here, God is pleased, verse 16, with such sacrifices. In Psalm 50. This is a lovely verse.

Psalm 50 and verse 23. It says, whoever offers sacrifice of thanksgiving or praise honors me and makes a way, this is a proper translation of it, makes a way thereby for me to show him my deliverance. That means when you start praising God, you open a way for him to deliver you from that difficult situation.

We've seen before how when Jonah was in the whale's belly in Jonah chapter two, he prayed for three days and nothing happened. Then at the end of chapter two, it says he started praising God. And as soon as he started praising God and saying salvation is from the Lord, the Lord told the whale, vomit him out, spit him out.

For three days, he tried, tried every other method, didn't work. When he started praising God, the whale didn't want him anymore. The same thing with Paul and Silas when they were in a prison.

Now, when you're in a prison, we think the first thing to do is to pray, right? Lord, get me out of here. But they didn't pray. They said, hallelujah.

Well, we don't know. Maybe there's some good reason why we should be here. Maybe God wants to have us a little rest instead of running around all the time.

And so we stand, sit here and praise the Lord. Of course, our legs are tied up, so we can't run away anywhere. We just praise God and they praise, praise, praise the Lord.

Hallelujah, Lord, you're on the throne. The devil's been defeated. God shook that whole prison.

And the wonderful thing is not just that they escaped, but one jailer got converted with his whole family. Somebody went to heaven because he saw for the first time in his life this experienced jailer who had seen hundreds of prisoners. He never saw anybody praising God.

And he said, these people are different. You know what makes a difference in your life? It's like in the midst of darkness when you hold up a candle. People say, this guy is different.

Whenever I see him, there's a spirit of praise about him. He can bring people to Christ with a spirit of praise. That's all they did that brought conviction to that jailer.

Now, I also said we need to praise human beings. Do you believe that? We are such misers. We may pop that person's, pop him up and we don't want him to get proud.

Well, you know, Jesus was not so bothered about that like you are. He would tell a Roman centurion, I have never seen such faith in all of Israel. What was that? Was he thanking the Roman centurion or was he praising him? Tell me.

What was he? He was not thanking him. He didn't do anything. He was praising him, publicly appreciating him.

Misers that human beings are, we are always afraid. Oh, we'll pop him up. We'll be artificial.

That's because you're a miser. You're not like Jesus. Jesus publicly appreciated people.

He turned to Nathanael. First time he's seeing him, there's a man in whom there's no guile. Imagine saying that to somebody, turning around to Peter and say, blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah.

You didn't get that with your flesh and blood understanding my father in heaven revealed to you. I have, I tell you, I have never in my life seen a person like Jesus all around me. I see even among believers, misers, misers, they are misers with money and they are misers with praise.

I have decided to be different. Oh, we can't praise young people. What do you think Nathanael was? Do you think he was 85 years old? He was probably about 28 praising a 28 year old young man and saying, there's a fellow who's without guile.

You want to be like Jesus. I don't believe we are serious about wanting to be like Jesus. How many times do you appreciate some good thing your children do? Huh? Okay.

He did something you asked him to do and say, huh? Learn to be like Jesus. Appreciate that. Express words of appreciation publicly.

What about your wife? The husband? You ever say thank you? You ever appreciate? How many, when was the last time you appreciated your wife? Try and scratch your head and think about that. Or your husband? You mean there's nothing good in that person? Zero? Absolute zero? You mean he's exactly like the devil? Devil, I agree, is absolute zero. I heard of that guy who used to find something good in

everybody and some, he asked, somebody asked him, what about the devil? He's a hard worker, he said.

He's a full-time worker, 24 hours, he's at his job. He found something to appreciate in the devil. It's all a question of the way you look at things.

We are blind and I tell you the saddest thing is young people in our midst who should be the most wholehearted are some of the biggest misers. They have not learned to appreciate. You know the bible says you got to learn to appreciate your elders.

Have you read that verse in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 12? We request you brothers, appreciate, appreciate those who diligently labor among you and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction. 1 Timothy 5 and verse 17 says give them double honor. All the honor you give to the president of India, give double honor to the elders in your church.

How many of you do that? How many of you give more honor to the elders in your church more than to your boss in your office? Christians are misers. We're not like Jesus. We think we are wholehearted, far from it.

Finally, worship. You know the one book which gives us a picture of heaven is Revelation and seven times in Revelation chapter 4, chapter 5, chapter 7, chapter 11, chapter 14, 15 and 19 in all these chapters seven times you get a picture of heaven and it's always worship. Worship is more than thanksgiving.

It's more than praise. It's bowing down. It's surrendering totally before God and acknowledging he is worthy.

I have no right over my life. It says in Romans chapter 12 and verse 1 that in the new testament the way to worship is by presenting our body. In the old testament they worshiped God by giving tithes.

Listen, you want to get a revelation? In the old testament they worshiped God by giving 10 percent of their income. Today in the new testament God asks for something more, your body. The way you worship it says present your body as a living sacrifice to God.

That is your spiritual service of worship. How do you worship God? When you people bow down and fell down before God. What were they saying? You know it's like these people who bow down before kings.

I'm your abject slave. All my body everything is yours to command. That's what worship means.

God I have no right over my eyes now to read or look at anything which I want. It's yours. I have no right with my hands to do anything I want.

I have no right over my ears to listen to what I want. I have no right with my mind to think what I want. I have no right with this body to do anything anymore but your will.

I worship thee sweet will of God and all thy ways adore and every day I live I long to love you more and more. So that's worship where we bow down and present ourselves completely and all our service for God is going to be effective only if we worship. Jesus said in Matthew 4 10 to the devil it is written you shall worship and then you shall serve.

You know why so much of service is ineffective? Because we don't worship. Think of what Jesus told the Samaritan woman. God is a spirit.

John 4 verse 23-24. Those who are and the father seeks for those who will worship him in spirit and in truth. In the old testament they could only worship in the soul.

Clap, shout, dance. Good with the body or with the soul but in the new covenant we worship with the deepest part of us our spirit. We worship with words.

We worship with speech and the highest form of worship believe it or not is silence. Father of Jesus love's reward what rapture will it be prostrate before thy throne to love and gaze and gaze on thee. We can do that now.

Something we can do more in secret. It's very difficult to worship God in public in secret to gaze and gaze on God to pour out all that we have like the woman who poured out the ointment at Jesus feet. Our love, our devotion, our life, our body, our everything.

Dear brothers and sisters ask God to show that to you more and more. We can begin with thanksgiving and move on to praise and ultimately worship.

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