

BUILDING CAPACITY SERIES

**The
Power of**



PRAISE



'Paul and Silas, undaunted, prayed in the middle of the night and sang songs of praise to God, while all the other prisoners listened to their worship. Suddenly, a great earthquake shook the foundations of the prison. All at once every prison door flung open and the chains of all the prisoners came loose.' Acts 16:25-26 TPT

One of the weapons God has given the believer is the power of praise. When we praise the Lord with a sincere heart, things happen in ways we can't even begin to imagine. Paul and Silas experienced this firsthand as they prayed and praised while in prison.

This series we're looking at how the Lord uses our praise as an instrument to give us victory in different circumstances.

Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will encourage us as He reveals the power that is unleashed as we praise the Lord.

Stay Connected!



Day 1

Access to His Presence

'Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.' Psalms 100:4

One of the most important things sincere praise does for us is it gives us access to the presence of God. When we come before the Lord in praise and thanksgiving we are acknowledging Him for not just for what He has done/is doing but also for who He is. As we acknowledge His greatness and might, it also helps us to put ourselves and circumstances in the right perspective – God is greater than all.

'And so the Lord says, "These people say they are mine. They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. And their worship of me is nothing but man-made rules learned by rote.' Isaiah 29:13

It's not about mouthing off words that we don't really believe or mean – remember motives are important to God and He's always checking out our heart's disposition. This is why he wasn't pleased with the worship with the Israelites in the verse above. They spoke the right words, sang the right songs, but their hearts were far from Him. It's very possible for our lips to move while our minds are focused on something completely different.

'It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; to declare Your lovingkindness in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night...For You, Lord, have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands.' Psalms 92:1-2,4

Sincere praise comes when we take some time to reflect on who God is, His character of love, faithfulness, integrity and also His unlimited power before we start singing, speaking His praises. When the praise on our lips matches the intents of our heart, we are ushered straight into His presence, and no one ever leaves God's presence the same way they came.

Prayer: Help me to praise you with an open and honest heart Lord.



Day 2

Sacrifice of Praise

'Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.' Hebrews 13:15

When we think of praise, we may think of something bubbling up within us as we reflect on a positive experience. But there will be times when we may not necessarily 'feel' like praising, yet the Bible tells us to continually offer praise regardless of how we feel. This is because praise is not about us, but the object of our praise: The Lord Almighty. Regardless of what we're going through God is still and will always be God. When we reflect on this in spite of our circumstances then we realize that it's only by the help of the Holy Spirit that we can offer genuine praise.

'By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother's womb. My praise shall be continually of You. But I will hope continually, and will praise You yet more and more.' Psalms 71:6,14

We see in David's life story that he went through a lot of challenges, some even life threatening. When we go through many of the psalms David wrote we see that he didn't deny any of the issues he faced. However having clearly laid out all he was facing, he would always reflect on God's goodness and praise Him in spite of the challenges. David chose to praise even when he didn't have the answer to his prayer, even when everything around him seemed to be falling apart. And with the benefit of hindsight, we see that the Lord stood by David through it all and gave him victory.

"For thus says the Lord : 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel' Jeremiah 33:17

The Lord is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him and heartfelt praise is part of seeking Him. The Lord gave David a reward that he could never have earned, confirmation from the Lord that he would always have a descendant on the throne of Israel, to the extent that even Jesus was called the son of David. Imagine what things of true value are waiting for us as we praise?

Prayer: Forgive me Lord for the times I've allowed my circumstances to determine my praising You. Give me a heart that praises you because of who you are and not what I'm going through.



Day 3

Victory in Battle

'Now when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.' II Chronicles 20:22

There's something about praise that triggers angelic activity on our behalf. In the scripture above, Jehoshaphat faced a major attack that looked insurmountable, yet the Lord assured him that not only was victory guaranteed, the army wouldn't even have to fight. However, it wasn't until the people started praising that the victory was activated. We may not fully understand how God does it, but amazing things happen on our behalf when we praise Him.

'... the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the Lord and praising him for his holy splendor...' 2 Chronicles 20:21

'For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds' 2 Corinthians 10:4

What a strange military strategy, sending praise singers ahead of the fighting men! In the natural, when faced with such strong opposing forces what makes sense would be to put your best soldiers and weapons forward. But this strange strategy is exactly what the Lord used to bring victory. God's ways are not our ways and whether His success strategies make sense to us or not, He knows what He is doing. In His infinite wisdom He has wrapped powerful spiritual weapons of war in our praise and uses it to give us victory in our battles.

'But you will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still and watch the Lord's victory...' 2 Chronicles 20:17

In God's battle tactics, praise positions us for victory. This is why the enemy often tries to discourage us from praising God, limiting it to when we 'feel' like it. Praise Him whether you feel like it or not. And definitely praise Him whenever you feel a prompting in your heart to do so, you don't know the unseen battle being waged on your behalf. As we praise, we shift focus from whatever we're facing to and our limitations to the Lord's immeasurable power.

Prayer: Dear Lord, let your praise constantly flow from my lips.



Day 4

Access to Peace

'But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.' Acts 16:25-26

The background to the verse above is that Paul and Silas had been mobbed, stripped, severely beaten with wooden rods and thrown into prison, all because a slave girl used for fortune telling was delivered from the spirit of divination in her. Having gone through all this, you would expect them to be full of anguish from the physical pain and the fact that they were being punished for doing God's work. Yet they did the strangest thing while being imprisoned – they prayed and praised so loudly the other prisoners heard them. And this praise provoked a miracle.

'You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.' Isaiah 26:3

We aren't told what they prayed, but we know that for them to be praising God, they couldn't have been complaining, because you can't do both at the same time. To have the presence of mind to praise God in such circumstances, they must have deliberately chosen to keep their eyes on the God they served and not the circumstances around them. Doing this would have opened the door for the Lord to give them His peace. Remember they didn't know the miracle of open doors and loosed chains was going to happen. They were just praising God and considering what they had gone through, that was already a miracle in itself.

'Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.' Philippians 4:6-7 NLT

Are there situations troubling you right now that have you feeling 'beaten up'? Is your mind troubled because of things you feel are outside of your control? Don't let the devil rob you of your peace. Choose to praise God in spite of what's going on and reclaim your peace of mind.

Prayer: Lord I choose to praise you, trusting that you will fill me with Your peace.



Day 5

The Right Focus

For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will help you. Isaiah 41:13

We live in a very 'self' oriented time where a lot of emphasis is placed on what we believe we can do for ourselves, by ourselves. But the Bible tells us clearly that dependence solely on self will fail. That doesn't mean that we don't have any role to play, but we shouldn't rely on ourselves alone. Praise makes us take our focus off ourselves and our perceived strengths and redirects it to the One who can never fail.

'We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps' Proverbs 16:9

'My lips shall utter praise, for You teach me Your statutes... Let Your hand become my help, for I have chosen Your precepts.' Psalm 119:171, 173

'Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.' Ephesians 3:20-21

As we praise the Lord, we open ourselves up to receive His help which can take us far beyond what we could ever ask or even think. Whatever we can achieve in our strength will always be far below what the Lord is able to do. The psalmist understood this principle of God-dependence versus self-dependence and connected himself to the Lord's statutes and help. Imagine what our lives would look like if we did the same.

Prayer: I praise You Lord because You give me strength when I am tired and weak. You refresh me when I feel drained. I praise You because order my steps and lead me along the best pathway for my life. I praise you because You are always faithful and will never leave or forsake me. I lift up my eyes to You Lord, and I acknowledge that my help comes from You.

Thank you for completing the study. We'll love to hear from you, so please connect with us on:

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