

SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG
Praise as a Way of Living
OPTIONAL SEMINAR



Sing to the Lord, all the earth; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; He also is to be feared above all gods.
(1 Chronicles 16:23-25)

INTRODUCTION

Praise, according to the Scriptures, is an act of our will that flows out of an awe and reverence for our Creator. Praise gives glory to God and opens us up to a deeper union with Him. It turns our attention off of our problems and on the nature and character of God Himself.

As we focus our minds on God and proclaim His goodness, we reflect His glory back to Him. The results can fill you with peace and contentment (Isaiah 26:3) and transform your outlook on life.

Praise to God also is what we offer to acknowledge God's excellent being. You might think that praise is the same as saying "thank you," but there is a difference. Thanksgiving describes our attitude toward what God has done, while *praise is offered for **who God is.***

- Psalm 18:3 says "I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise..."
- Lamentations 3: 22 tell us it is because of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, His compassions never fail, they are new every morning, great is His faithfulness.

And when the Psalmist recounted God's grace in his life, he could not help but utter the words, "*Let all that I am praise the Lord; with my whole heart, I will praise His holy name.*" (NLT)

All believers are commanded to praise God! In fact, Isaiah 43:21 explains that praise is one reason we were created, "This people I have formed for Myself; they shall declare My praise." Hebrews 13:15 confirms this: "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name."

Praise is our highest privilege.

Praise originates in a heart full of love toward God. Deuteronomy 6:5 says, "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."

HOW TO PRAISE GOD

How can you bring praise to God? What can you do to make it an integral part of your life? Praise can be expressed in song, in verse, or in prayer and it is to be done continuously! Psalm 34:1 instructs, "I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips." Psalm 71:6 says, "From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will ever praise you."

Praise to God is expressed outwardly through our everyday actions, as well as inwardly in our thoughts. Praise is an act of Christian worship.

"Where do I begin?" you may ask. "How do I start praising God?" If praising God is new to you, try praising God for who He is to you, personally. Proclaim that God's goodness is without measure; it is abundant and overflowing! Here are some ways to get started:

- Praise God for His holiness, mercy, and justice (2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 99:3, 4).
- Praise God for His grace (Ephesians 1:6).
- Praise Him for His goodness (Psalm 135:3).

- Praise God for His kindness (Psalm 117).
- Praise God for His salvation (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

How about you and me – How can we praise God?

When others look at you, do they see a reflection of God's praise?

Do you know Him as your Lord and Savior?

If praising God is new to you, try praising God for who He is to you, personally. Proclaim that God's goodness is without measure; it is abundant and overflowing!

When Kind David reflected on God's goodness, and how wide, how deep and how high His grace was towards him personally, all he could say in response was:

*Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!
Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities. Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction. Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

Psalm 103:1-5

It is interesting to note that David praises the Lord and reminds himself not to forget God's benefits (v2).

The problem about many of us is that we usually remember more our hurts, our sorrows and our burdens, but we tend to have short memories when it comes to recalling how the Lord has been good to us.

Forgetting is far more than just failing to remember something. This word carries the idea of turning from God to follow other gods. A lapse of spiritual memory on our part will cause us to wander!

David wants his soul to contemplate all the "benefits" which the Lord has given.

The world around us is in a constant state of change! There are wars going on. The economies of most of our countries around the globe are in bad shape.

People are having problems with their health, their homes and their finances. Even the Church is not immune from problems as people come and go.

But, it would be well to remind ourselves that while the world is changing, while the church is changing, while your life is changing, the benefits of the Lord never change! Why? Because He never changes (Hebrews 13:8)!

David lists several reasons why he (and we) should praise God:

PARDON

“Who forgives all my iniquities”: AS A SINNER GOD FORGIVES ME

This is one of the benefits we are reminded, not to forget. Our loving God pardons us and cleanses us when we come to Him in humility and ask for forgiveness for our sins (1 John 1:9). Forgiveness is part of God's nature; it is as natural to Him as breathing is to us. He will forgive, and He has forgiven.

This is a cause for rejoicing and praising God, for on our own we have no hope.

AND, because we have been graciously forgiven, we will naturally forgive others who have wronged us, or caused us trouble and pain.

So, as a sinner God forgives me!

HEALING

“Who heals all my diseases”: AS A SICK PERSON GOD HEALS ME

What are these diseases God heals us from? Primarily, these are sicknesses of the soul, among them: *lust, hate, greed, jealousy, pride, discouragement, anger, fear, guilt, and doubt*, just to name a few. Just as surely as diseases of the body can take away physical life, the diseases of the soul can deaden us toward the things of God and leave us lifeless and weak.

But thank God, He has a remedy for these diseases of the soul! Each day, the divine Physician visits His patients and through His grace He tenderly and effectively heals all the diseases of our souls.

Ellen White writes in *Ministry of Healing*, p. 251, “Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise.”

Lonnie Melashenko comments in his book, *Passion for Prayer*, “So we need to praise God most when we feel like it least. We need to thank Him even when it hurts. *Especially when it hurts because praise is usually the shortest path through adversity to victory and through pain to healing.*”

- **Invite the audience to sing a song of praise.**
- **Ask them to say one word of praise to God.**

DELIVERANCE

“Who redeems your life from the pit”: AS A SLAVE GOD REDEEMS ME

To redeem means to rescue from danger in the time of trouble. The “pit” refers to death itself. God has preserved you to this very moment and has protected you every step of your journey. If God willed it to be so, you would die today—and you might die today—but it cannot happen without God’s permission. Satan himself cannot touch you with God’s permission.

God is constantly at work behind the scenes, working to protect us from trouble, to clear the way ahead, and to give us strength for each new day. The story is told that over a bed in a hospital in England there is bronze plaque with these words: “This bed has been endowed by the savings of a poor man who is grateful for an unexpected recovery.”

If we could only see life as God does, we would make a new plaque like that every day.

CORONATION

“Who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy”: AS HIS CHILD GOD CROWNS ME

The older translations say that he crowns us with “lovingkindness.” It’s the loyal, unending, unchanging love of God toward us. He heaps up his blessings—and then he pours them out on us.

Then he crowns us with “tender mercies.” Why doesn’t he say “tender justice”? There’s nothing “tender” about justice. Mercy implies failure and

defeat. *Tender mercy means he knows what we are going through and he meets us where we are.* If we were to receive what we truly deserve from God, we would stand no chance. But instead of justice, God give us “tender mercy.”

The crown reminds us of our position as the children of God. In our day only kings and queens wear crowns, but it is the privilege of every Christian to be crowned with lovingkindness and the tender mercy of God.

SATISFACTION

“Who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagles”: AS A SAINT GOD SATIFIES ME

The text says he satisfies you with good. That means there is nothing on earth that can satisfy us deeply except God himself. The “good” of verse 5 comes from God—not from anything we see around us.

One translation says, “He fills my life with good things” (NLT), which is true enough but that might leave the impression that God promises certain material benefits—money or status or promotion or some sort of earthly prosperity if we will only serve him. *But the emphasis is not on what we possess but on what possesses us.* Eugene Peterson captures this nicely in *The Message*: “He wraps you in goodness—beauty eternal.”

LIVING A LIFE OF PRAISE

It is vitally important to live in an attitude of praise toward God. But what can you do if you are having difficulty maintaining a life filled with praise?

1. Commit your life to Christ. First, be absolutely sure that you have placed your complete faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of your life. The Bible says that “if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved” (Romans 10:9). The life of praise begins here, with the confession of your mouth that “Jesus is Lord.”

2. Confess sin and repent. Sin, including prideful self-reliance, separates us from God and from His love and protection. But we have the assurance of forgiveness if we come to Him in repentance (1 John 1:9). Confess any known sin and ask God to search your heart. Then, receive His forgiveness.

3. Praise God anyway! Despite your present feelings, it is important to offer praise to God, what Hebrews 13:15 calls a "sacrifice" of praise. Despite our feelings or circumstances, God often asks us to take the first step, especially when He is trying to help us grow in our faith (James 1:2-4).

4. Join together with other believers. Sharing your struggles with another brother or sister in Christ is not only good idea (Ecclesiastes. 4:9-10), it is commanded (James 5:16). Uniting with other believers in regular worship is also a key to being able to praise God (Hebrews 10:24-25).

CONCLUSION

Each one here has a God. You serve a God. What benefits does your god offer? There is but one God. His benefits are:

1. Forgiveness
2. Healing
3. Deliverance
4. Coronation
5. Satisfaction

Psalm 42:3-8 (Message)

Why are you down in the dumps, dear soul? Why are you crying the blues? Fix my eyes on God— soon I'll be praising again. He puts a smile on my face. He's my God. When my soul is in the dumps, I rehearse everything I know of you, from Jordan depths to Hermon heights, including Mount Mizar. Chaos calls to chaos, to the tune of whitewater rapids. Your breaking surf, your thundering breakers crash and crush me. Then God promises to love me all day, sing songs all through the night! My life is God's prayer.

God is pressing you to release your praise today! He longs to hear your love song to Him today! Celebrate God! Make your life a "God prayer," no matter how

bad the circumstances appear, and you will release God's Magnificent Cover of His Glory over your everyday existence.

Release your praise today and experience all that is available in the presence of God! He will "love you all day every day and sing over you."

Allow your faith to flourish and push aside doubt and unbelief and release your praise! In return, your life will never be the same. You will be forever changed at the sight of His glory!