

Recap

The Power of Praise: Rekindling Our Spiritual Desire

In the ebb and flow of our spiritual lives, we often find ourselves longing for a deeper connection with God. Sometimes we feel incredibly close, sensing His presence in every prayer and hearing His voice in every scripture. Other times, we struggle to feel that connection, and our spiritual lives feel dry and distant. But what if there was a way to rekindle that spiritual fire and deepen our relationship with God?

The key may lie in the power of praise.

At its core, praise is not just about singing songs or lifting our hands in worship. It's about remembering who God is, evaluating His worth in our lives, and expressing our adoration for Him. Let's explore these three elements of praise and how they can transform our spiritual journey.

1. Remembering

Praise begins with remembering - recalling who God is and what He has done for us. It's about reflecting on His attributes: His power, His glory, and most importantly, His unfailing love.

In the Bible, we see this unfailing love described by the Hebrew word "hesed." This rich term encompasses love, faithfulness, loyalty, mercy, grace, and kindness. It's the kind of love that doesn't waver, even in the face of our failures or shortcomings.

We see this love beautifully illustrated in God's covenant with Abraham. God promised to make Abraham into a great nation and to bless all peoples through him. Even when circumstances seemed impossible - Abraham was old, his wife was barren - God remained faithful to His promise. This covenant love ultimately found its fullest expression in Jesus Christ, who gave His life on the cross to fulfill God's promises and extend His hesed to all of us.

When we remember God's hesed, it stabilizes us. No matter what we're facing, we can say with confidence that we have everything we need in God's faithful love.

2. Evaluating

Once we remember who God is, the next step is to evaluate what that means for our lives. It's not enough to simply list God's attributes; we need to appraise their value and implications for us personally.

This is what King David did when he declared, "Your love is better than life." He wasn't just acknowledging God's love; he was asserting that this love was more valuable than anything else in his life.

This process of evaluation transforms how we view God and how we live our lives. Just as discovering the true value of an object changes how we treat it, recognizing the supreme worth of God's love changes how we approach Him and our daily lives.

Praise, then, is an act of ascribing ultimate value to God. It's seeing what He's worth and living in response to that worth in a way that encompasses our entire life.

3. Expressing

The final element of praise is expression. True praise cannot remain internal; it must be expressed outwardly. This expression can take many forms - singing, shouting, clapping, kneeling, dancing - but the key is that it must be manifested somehow.

Why is expression so important? Because praise is the completion of our joy in whatever we're praising. Think about it: when you experience something truly amazing, you can't help but tell someone about it or try to get others to experience it too. Our delight isn't fully realized until we express it.

If we're truly experiencing the beauty and goodness of Jesus Christ, it should be impossible for us not to praise Him. Our praise is evidence that we've tasted and seen that the Lord is good.

For those who struggle with expressing worship, it's important to recognize that this difficulty doesn't stem from who you are at your core. As children of God, we are all created to be worshippers. If praise doesn't come naturally, it may be because something - tradition, pride, guilt, sin - is hindering your true identity as a worshipper.

The Satisfaction of Praise

As we engage in these elements of praise - remembering, evaluating, and expressing - something remarkable happens: we find deep satisfaction in God. Just as describing why we love someone draws us closer to them, articulating our love and appreciation for God's qualities brings us into His presence in a profound way.

This satisfaction is multiplied when we praise God together with others. Each person's unique perspective on God's goodness adds to and magnifies the collective praise, creating an experience of God's presence that we couldn't achieve alone.

In the end, this is the goal of worship: to find our ultimate satisfaction in God. As the theologian John Piper famously said, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him."

A Call to Praise

So, how can we apply these insights to our daily lives? Here are a few practical steps:

1. Set aside time each day to remember God's attributes and His faithful acts in your life and in scripture.
2. Regularly evaluate what God's love and faithfulness mean for your current circumstances.

3. Find ways to express your praise, whether through singing, prayer, journaling, or sharing with others.
4. Seek opportunities to praise God alongside other believers, recognizing the power of corporate worship.

As we cultivate a lifestyle of praise, we may find that our spiritual thirst is quenched, our passion for God is rekindled, and our joy in Him is deepened. May we all learn to declare with conviction: "Your love is better than life, and my lips will glorify you."

Icebreaker: Share a time when you felt particularly close to God. What led to that experience?

- 1 The sermon mentions that our passion for God can ebb and flow. What factors contribute to feeling distant from God in your experience?
- 2 David remembers God's attributes (power, glory, love) as he praises. What attributes of God do you find yourself most drawn to when you worship?
- 3 How does understanding God's hesed (covenant love) impact your view of His faithfulness, especially during difficult times?
- 4 The sermon states, "Praise is the completion of your joy in whatever you are praising." How have you found this to be true in your life, both with God and in other areas?
- 5 Discuss the statement: "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him." What does this mean to you practically?
- 6 What are some barriers that might prevent people from expressing praise openly? How can we overcome these?