

Equip
Session 1

The
Sacrifice
of Praise

Updated: June, 2013

FOCUS: In this session we discover one of the key Spiritual Tools which will bring us into joyful victory in our walk with Christ.

THANKSGIVING IS THE BEGINNING ACT OF WORSHIP

* In Thanksgiving we express our gratitude for all He has done for us.

Illustration:

The Ten Lepers

* God expects and anticipates our Thanksgiving

* Since God responds well to a Thankful heart, we will discover that our Thanksgiving ushers us right into His very presence.

PRAISE TAKES US DEEPER INTO WORSHIP

* In Praise we rehearse before Him all the ways He has benefited us; we express compliments to our Lord for who He is and for what we admire about Him.

Illustration:

Charlie Shedd, pastor and
columnist, admonishes:
*Give your spouse one compliment each day,
and one new one each week.*

* Surely, we can do at least this much for the great God who loves us, inspires us and so richly benefits us!

* The more we get to know about God, by walking with Him and by meditating upon His Word, the richer our praise becomes.

* We express these compliments in song, in exaltation and in prayer.

A THANKFUL HEART LIFTED UP IN PRAISE IS THE KEY TO WORSHIP

THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE:

*Enter His gates with thanksgiving and
His courts with praise;
give thanks to Him and praise His Name.*

Psalm 100:4

The Psalmist directs us to enter the gate or door of the gathering place of God's people with thankfulness.

IN THANKSGIVING — we express our _____ **gratitude** _____ to the Lord

— for all he has done.

— for all the benefits He has given.

*I will give thanks to you in the great assembly
I will praise You among many peoples.*

Psalm 35:18

A thankful heart realizes it owes everything, even its very life to the Lord our God, Creator and King.

IN PRAISE — we express our _____ **compliments** _____ to the Lord.

In addition to the thing He has done, there are many things about God that inspire us, things we admire, and we tell Him so.

*Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good...Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?
Who can declare all His praise?*

Psalm 106:42

We express these compliments in song, in exaltation and in prayer.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be glad in the Lord.

Psalm 104:33-34

I. PRAISE IS THE BELIEVER'S NATURAL ELEMENT

1. All creation is made to survive and function best within a certain element

- A fish out of water is a fish in trouble. God created fish for water.
- A set of bearings in grease or oil
- A human being needs the earth's atmosphere. It has just the right components; as long as we don't pollute it, it serves us well.
- For a Christian, praise is to be our "Natural Expression." We function best when we are filled with and surrounded by praise.

2. Praise is not optional

- At All Times - During all waking hours, praise the Lord!
- In All Things - In every circumstance, all day long

Illustration:

One summer when all our children were still young we climbed into our '98 Oldsmobile, with way too many miles on it, and left Michigan for New York city and the Worlds Fair. We stayed in a friend's accommodations in the suburbs. It was already climbing into the 90's the next morning as we eased into four lanes of traffic and headed into the city. All of a sudden the car started sputtering and losing speed. All I could picture for a moment was the seven of us stranded beside the road in sweltering heat with no money. Then it came to me that I had been teaching on the "Sacrifice of Praise." Maybe we should put it into practice. "Come on kids, Let's praise the Lord" I encouraged with as much faith as I could muster.

We began to sing and the engine picked right up and purred along. As soon as we stopped praising, the car began to buck and sputter. We sang all the way into 113th St. where we caught a shuttle to the Fair. After a glorious day we headed home with the same results, sputtering and praising. The next day the mechanic to whom I took the care informed me that threads were stripped and the gas was leaking out of the engine instead of running into the carburetor. You can't drive this thing, he said. I told him we had gone into the city and back with it yesterday and his response was, "Oh, sure you did!" — total disbelief.

"Always be thankful no matter what happens, for that is God's will for you who belong to Jesus Christ"

I Thessalonians 5:18

I. PRAISE IS MEANT TO BE THE BELIEVER’S “ELEMENT”

1. All creation is made to survive and function best within a certain element

— a fish in water.

— a set of bearings in oil.

— a human being in the earth’s atmosphere.

— a Christian in praise.

I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth
Psalm 34:1

I will sing praise to Your name for ever, that I may daily perform my
vows. Psalm 61:8

2. Praise is therefore not “optional” for God’s people. It is His will that we express praise to Him:

— At all times

Rejoice in the Lord always . . . Philippians 4:4

From the rising of the sun to its going down . . . Psalm 113:3

II. GOD REQUIRES A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

1. There are three spiritual sacrifices God requires

(1) Our bodies Romans 12:1; I Corinthians 6:13, 19-20

(2) Our substance Hebrews 3:16

Don’t forget to . . . Share with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased
Hebrews 13:16

(3) Our hearts and lives in praise as we minister to Him in worship and 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

II. GOD REQUIRES A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

1. There are three spiritual sacrifices God requires

- (1) **Our bodies** – I made this commitment long ago
- (2) **Our substance** – I crossed this threshold early. I tithe and even more
- (3) **Our hearts and lives in praise** – To think praise and to give praise even when I am not at all inclined to do so - now, that is tough!

* How can I praise when my head aches, my stomach is sick, I am losing my job, my boss is bugging me, my kids are driving me crazy, and everything seems against me? That's when praise becomes a sacrifice! (Hebrew 13:15)

* It's easy to give money and time, but not so easy to give a Sacrifice of Praise when things are not going well. Yet that is what God requires.

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WE MINISTER TO GOD AS WE OFFER HIM OUR **“SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES”**

- * Catch the significance here: most of the time we center attention on ourselves

What is God doing for us? Is He making us happy? Is He helping us?

- * It all revolves around “us.” We expect God to do this and that. We come to God if feels good. We serve Him if He blesses us.

ALL NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS HAVE BECOME “PRIESTS” (I Peter 2:5).

- * In the Old Testament there was a special tribe who served as priests, but now we all have become priests. Our primary purpose, then, becomes the offering of spiritual sacrifices unto Him.
- * In fact, St. Paul declares that we have actually become “Gifts” to God (Ephesians 1:11)
- * God really desires and receives great pleasure from our company, from our love, and from the Sacrifice of our Praise. If we don’t offer ourselves to God in these ways, He is missing His heart’s desire.

CONSIDER YOUR OWN CHILDREN

When our children are grateful, appreciative, happy and respond to us in loving ways, it sets our hearts to singing. When they are ungrateful, when they don’t realize how we are laying down our lives for them day by day, when they don’t express appreciation, it grieves and saddens us.

Illustration:

How when our children climb on our lap, love and kiss us, then it’s great to be a Daddy.

OUR MINISTRY UNTO GOD!! As we love to be with our children, somehow that’s the way it is with God. These actions add to His pleasure; He loves it when we snuggle up close and:

- take time and trouble to praise and honor Him
- tell Him how much we appreciate Him
- tell Him how grateful we are to Him
- tell Him how much we love and trust Him
- tell Him how we know He is on the throne, working out His will in our lives, even in the darkest and most desperate circumstances
- there is something that adds to His pleasure. I don’t know how it does, but the Scripture tells us that is the way He chose it to be

OFFERING PRAISE TO GOD IS ONE OF THE HIGHEST CALLINGS ON OUR LIVES

2. God has always taken more pleasure in the “Sacrifice of Praise” than in the sacrifice of animals and other “forms” of worship.

I will praise the name of God with a song and will magnify Him with Thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bull.

Psalm 69:30-31

Whoever offers praise glorifies me . . .

Psalm 50:23

3. We minister to God as we offer to Him—“**spiritual sacrifices**”

You...are...a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

I Peter 2:5

We actually are declared to be “gifts” to God

Moreover, because of what Christ has done we have become gifts to God that He delights in, for as part of God’s sovereign plan we were chosen from the beginning to be His

Ephesians 1:11 (*Living Bible*)

4. A sacrifice is anything that is consecrated
(set apart for Him)

The sacrifice of praise always involves self-denial and the surrender of all to the will of God.

- (1) A true sacrifice is costly

I will surely buy it from you for a price, nor will I offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God with that which costs me nothing.

II Samuel 24:24

- (2) It is offering praise continually even when we do not feel like it at all.

Job 1: 2 - 21

- (3) It is saying “yes” to everything God sends or requires of us

Father, if it is your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will but Yours be done.”

Luke 22:42

- (4) It is believing that God is in control of all of our circumstances.

Romans 8:28

- (5) It is blessing God in circumstances too big for us but not too big for God.

4. A sacrifice is something that is **CONSECRATED** (“set apart just for Him.”)

The sacrifice of praise will always involve these elements:

(1) The sacrifice of praise will be COSTLY

The Old Testament sacrifices were never to be from the lame, spotted or deformed

- David at the Threshing Floor of Arauna: “...*I will not sacrifice to my God of that which costs me nothing*” II Samuel 24:24

- Principle: if our praise is a true sacrifice, many times it will cost us something like:

- * self-denial
- * time and effort
- * inconvenience
- * finances
- * the surrender of our will
- * ridicule in the eyes of others

(2) The sacrifice of praise will mean offering praise CONTINUALLY

Read the incredible account in Job 1 and 2.

* Job’s response was “*Lord, no matter what you do, I know you are a righteous, holy, loving God. You have the right to give, to take away, to order the circumstances of my life ---- and I will bless you, Oh Lord.*”

* He lost his family, his goods, his health, his home – his wife found him sitting in the middle of an ash heap and said “Job, Curse God and die!” “No way!” he said, “*I know who God is! And, I will bless the Lord continually at all times.*”

* Everything in his life militated against praising! But still he did it!!

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God.

(3) The sacrifice of praise will always say “YES!”

- * Jesus flinched from the cup of suffering: “If in any way this can be taken away, nevertheless, not my will but yours be done.”
- * He was saying in so many words, “Father, if this is absolutely your will, I’ll say “Yes” to it and I’ll take it from you. But, I won’t take it from the Jews who hate me, the Romans who want to crucify me, Satan who is trying to destroy me. I’ll refuse. But if You say so, Lord, then I’ll take it from You.
- * This is the secret behind our ability to offer the Sacrifice of Praise. If we rebel and say, “No way, Father,” then it will be impossible for us to offer the Sacrifice of Praise in those circumstances.

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4. The sacrifice of praise will believe that God is in control

- * God has a plan for our life and He is never ambushed!
- * The sacrifice of praise rests upon the conviction that God is in control regardless of our present circumstances.
- * But, you say, what about the young mother who is dying with cancer, the husband who is unfaithful and leaves his family, all the tragedies which we see around us, all the suffering which abounds in our world?
- * These manifestations of evil are not caused by God, but neither is He surprised or baffled by them. They wouldn't be happening if we were in heaven. But we're not in heaven yet, we're part of a fallen world

SATAN'S TERRITORY

- * We are presently living in Satan's territory.
- * Man gave his position of dominion here on earth to Satan when he sinned.
- * So now "the world lies in the lap of the evil one."
- * In accordance with His decision to bestow free will on both men and angels, God allows Satan to do his evil best in many circumstances.

SATAN'S AGENDA

- * Satan's power and malevolence are very real.
- * Satan is ultimately responsible for the bad things that happening to us.
- * He has not been bound in the pit yet; he is free to lie, to deceive, and to destroy.
- * His prime target is man, the highest of God's creation.
- * He seeks to destroy us, and sometimes we help him by responding improperly and suffering the consequences.

PRAISE GOD

In the midst of it all, though, we can continue to Praise God because He provides options for every initiative Satan takes against us. He will help us deal with it, help us come through it, and bring us into victory over it. (Romans 8:28; I Cor.10:13)

JOB TRUSTED GOD

Read Job again carefully. There were overriding circumstances – beyond what was happening to Job – which caused God to allow him to be put to the test. But in the midst of it all, Job knew God was still sovereign. He knew that his Redeemer was alive and well and that in the end he would stand with Him and before Him.

When we believe this in the depth of our being – that He is in control – then we can offer the Sacrifice of Praise.

2. God has always taken more pleasure in the “Sacrifice of Praise” than in the sacrifice of animals and other “forms” of worship.

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Romans 8:28

- (5) It is blessing God in circumstances too big for us but not too big for God.

Illustration:

Judson Cornwall. Oldest child, but the runt of the family.
 Father and brothers all 6 feet tall and athletic.
 Judson could only be a cheer leader or water boy because he stood at barely 5 ft.9.

One day he was reading Isaiah 43:1. The Lord said, “Judson, I made you short and gentle.”
 Up to that time he thought that God had made a mistake and then corrected it with the rest
 of the family. “My son, I not only made you, I remade you; not only formed you in the
 womb of your mother, I have formed you in the womb of the Spirit and I have recreated
 you so that you are becoming what I have chosen you to be from the foundation of the
 earth. Nothing that has happened is a mistake.”

- * What confidence this gives! If God knows us, sees us, plans for us, and even arranged for us long before we were in the womb, surely we can praise Him for what’s happening in our life right now!

(5) It will bless God in circumstances TOO BIG FOR US but not too big for God.

- * If this was not true, if it was possible for Satan to get the upper hand some times, or if God gets distracted, or if sometimes things spin out of control, or if some things are just too big for even God to handle, then it would be cruel and heartless for God to ask for a Sacrifice of Praise at all times and in all circumstances.
- * But if God is bigger (even though the things we’re facing may be way to big for us), then we can come before Him and say, “God, I’m going to offer you a Sacrifice of Praise right in the midst of all this because I know You can and will handle it.”
- * The Bible says “if we trust we do not worry,” but instead praise and honor Him.

Illustration:

Merlin Carothers, “Power in Praise,” p. 4, Go-Go Dancer (hear the CD)

SOME WHO ARE NEWER IN THE FAITH MAY NOT FULLY REALIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD IN THE LAST 15 MINUTES OR SO.

But you will not hear many things that are more important for your victorious Christian walk than this — **PRAISE IS THE SECRET**

2. God has always taken more pleasure in the “Sacrifice of Praise” than in the sacrifice of animals and other “forms” of worship.

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III. PRAISE IS THE KEY TO BRING GOD'S PRESENCE

* The Lord “inhabits” the praises of His people.

- II Chronicles 5: Elaborate preparations for dedicating the temple. Worship and praise brought such a heavy presence of God’s glory
- Some Sunday mornings, I don’t always feel like praising, but I command my soul to praise the Lord, and when I do, He shows up!
- Are your devotions dry as toast? Begin to offer a “Sacrifice of Praise;” soon you won’t have to force yourself any more

* The Lord will visit with His presence a “praising heart”

- If you’re down and it seems God has forsaken you, or life’s circumstances are turning bad, or you don’t know how you’re going to make it, here’s the secret: begin to offer the Sacrifice of Praise.
- His presence will be released in your heart.

PRAISE WILL ALSO RELEASE GOD'S POWER in your circumstances.

* As we speak to the Lord in the Sacrifice of Praise, He can speak to our circumstances. Change takes place.

1) JONAH

- Marinating in gastric juices (what a pickle) what did Jonah do?
- Jonah (2: 9- 10) “*with a song of thanksgiving, will I sacrifice to you, O Lord.*”
- Was God pleased? He tickled that fish’s belly so that it burped Jonah right up on land.

III. PRAISE IS THE KEY

TO BRING GOD’S PRESENCE

—*The Lord inhabits the temple of Solomon* II Chronicles 5:11-14

—*The Lord inhabits the praise of His people* Psalm 22:3 (KJV)

—and—

The Lord will visit with His presence a “praising heart”

TO RELEASE GOD’S POWER

As we speak to the Lord through the sacrifice of praise, the Lord can speak to our circumstances. Change takes place.

— Jonah _____, by an act of will again set the Lord God in His proper place, sang to Him with the voice of Thanksgiving, and was Delivered
Jonah 2:9-10

his — Jehosaphat _____, obediently set the praising choir at the head of army and God miraculously routed the enemy.
II Chronicles 20:20-26

pain — Paul and Silas _____, praised in the midst of darkness, filth, and injustice and God delivered them from prison and prosecution.
Acts 16:22-26

IV. PRAISE CALLS FOR TOTAL EXPRESSION

In a Lifestyle of Praise we present our total being to God and cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the following ways:

- 1. Rehearsing _____ before Him our past benefits.
Deuteronomy 6:10-12

Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me bless His holy name....and forget not His benefits. Psalm 103:1-2

Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders and the judgements of His mouth. Psalm 105:5 (NIV)

2) **JEHOSAPHAT**

- A huge army of Ammonites and Moabites came up against Judah.
- God said, “Lead with the choir (not the sling shot artists, or the archers, or the Cavalry, but with the choir!!)
- As the choir marched into battle singing “of the splendor of His holiness” the army didn’t even have to fight; God completely confounded the enemy.

If we’d just learn this secret, half of the things we struggle against we wouldn’t even have to touch – God would do it!! We think we have to do it, so we get all hot and bothered. God will do it, if we’ll just offer our “Sacrifice of Praise.”

Illustration:

(refer to our ‘98 Oldsmobile episode) God wouldn’t always bail us out. We had to keep the car in repair. But in that instance, He was using those particular circumstances to show us the power He will release in response to our Sacrifice of Praise.

3) **PAUL AND SILAS**

- Falsely accused with their rights as citizens totally disregarded.
- Back split opened, muscles cramping in those stocks, the reeking filth; to be honest, I’d probably have been complaining
- But as they praised God came down, added His bass notes to their praises and it shook the place apart.
- Their praise released the power of God even in the most unthinkable circumstances.

IF ONLY WE COULD RECOGNIZE THE WEAPON GOD HAS GIVEN

- * Praise counteracts the negatives which so easily creep in and take over.
- * With each positive step of faith in praise, it becomes easier the next time. Our reactions are cumulative.
- * Situations that once were hopeless are now only new opportunities for God to release His strength and power.

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IV. PRAISE CALLS FOR TOTAL EXPRESSION

1. REHEARSING before Him our past benefits

Illustration:

Years ago my wife wrote a Psalm of Praise growing out of the circumstances of her own life. It became one of the high points of her devotional experience. It was so strengthening to “rehearse” before Him what God had done in her life – those things that were meaningful and formative for her.

Let’s try an Experiment: fold a blank sheet of paper length-wise.

Step One:

On left side of the fold “note” five of the experiences in your life for which you are grateful. They could be events, situations, relationships, people, circumstances, etc.

Step Two:

On the right side make a “note” or two about how God:

- (1) blessed you through each event, circumstance, relationship, etc., or
- (2) what He taught you in each case.

Step Three:

Across the bottom of the page try to put together in a short paragraph an expression of praise to God based on the five things about which you made notes above. (this will be a “Mini-Psalm of Praise” growing out of your own life’s experience with God)

Explain the “Psalm of Praise Worksheet”

This “worksheet” is just for making notes, for doing the research in preparation for writing your own Psalm. See if you can note 40 or 50 (or more) different items to be included in your own Psalm. The actual writing of a full-fledged psalm based upon your own life’s experience will be for another week.

III. PRAISE IS THE KEY

TO BRING GOD’S PRESENCE

—*The Lord inhabits the temple of Solomon* II Chronicles 5:11-14

—*The Lord inhabits the praise of His people* Psalm 22:3 (KJV)

—*and*—

The Lord will visit with His presence a “praising heart”

TO RELEASE GOD’S POWER

As we speak to the Lord through the sacrifice of praise, the Lord can speak to our circumstances. Change takes place.

— Jonah, by an act of will again set the Lord God in His proper place, sang to Him with the voice of Thanksgiving, and was Delivered
Jonah 2:9-10

— Jehosaphat, obediently set the praising choir at the head of his army and God miraculously routed the enemy.
II Chronicles 20:20-26

— Paul and Silas, praised in the midst of darkness, filth, pain and injustice and God delivered them from prison and prosecution.

IV. PRAISE CALLS FOR TOTAL EXPRESSION

In a Lifestyle of Praise we present our total being to God and cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the following ways:

1. Rehearsing before Him our past benefits.
Deuteronomy 6:10-12

Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me bless His holy name....and forget not His benefits. Psalm 103:1-2

Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders and the judgements of His mouth. Psalm 105:5 (NIV)

OTHER EXPRESSIONS OF PRAISE WHICH THE BIBLE REFLECTS:

2. **Rejoicing** – in the midst of present circumstances
3. **Giving** – sometimes extravagantly (illustration: the widow’s mite)
4. **Singing** – making melody to Him with our whole being
 - Psalms = scripture songs
 - Hymns = statements of our beliefs or our testimony
 - Spiritual songs = spontaneous songs which the Holy Spirit generates within our hearts. They can be sung in our native language (not memorized or on the overhead) or we can sing spiritual songs in the language which the Spirit gives each one.

Illustration:

“Word of God” experience in Ann Arbor

 - *Teaching and admonishing one another with hymns and spiritual songs with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*
Colossians 3:16.
 - James Beall states: “Those standing next to you should be strengthened, edified and uplifted just by your praising the Lord.”
 - All of us ought to participate in singing spiritual songs; otherwise we’ll be less honoring to Him and we will miss out on spiritual blessings.
5. **Playing** – tambourines, trumpet, lute, harp, horn, clashing cymbal (Psalm 150)

Assignment—Building our own “Psalm of Praise”

- 2. Rejoicing _____ in the midst of present circumstances.

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

I Thessalonians 5:18

- 3. Giving _____ our regular tithes, and at times, extravagant offerings.

Matthew 26:6-13, Luke 21:1-4

- 4. Singing _____ with our whole heart psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16

Come before His presence with singing.

Psalm 100:2

Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Colossians 3:16

Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:19

- 5. Playing _____ musical instruments.

Psalm 150:4-5, Psalm 98:5-6

- 6. Clapping _____ our hands

Oh clap your hands, all you people.

Psalm 47:1

—A “ten-stringed” instrument—clap offerings

- 7. Lifting _____ up of our hands in adoration

Psalm 63:4, 141:2,

Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven

Lamentations 3:41

Lift your hands in the sanctuary and bless the Lord

Psalm 134:2

I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting

I Timothy 2:8

6. **Clapping** – clap offerings are in order

* *Come everyone, and clap your hands for joy*

Illustration:

Mike Secor (Chula Vista) Padres pitcher, throws a one-hitter

* Clapping can be like playing a 10 string instrument. Become skillful.

* Clap offerings vs. applause:

- Clap for the Lord but not for people in the worship setting

Sometimes at the end of a presentation we applaud because we are caught up in honoring the Lord, but most of the time it feels like our applause is saying: “you did good,” “that was nice.”

If what has happened has led me into the presence of God, that’s one thing. But if it is to make the presenter feel good, that’s another.

(Commend the presenter privately following the worship service.)

7. **Lifting** - lift your hands

* *Lift your hands in holiness and bless the Lord.* Psalm 134: 2

* *Lift our hearts and our hands to Him in heaven* Lamentations 3:41

* Down thru history kings, emperors and those in exalted positions have received the adoration of their subjects by the raising of hands

- “Hail, Caesar. We will die for you”

* Why should we not salute and honor our King of Kings?

- I found it to be a freeing thing to one’s spirit (sometimes in stages)

- *I will that men everywhere lift up holy hands, without wrath, without doubting.* I Timothy 2: 8

- All as part of the total expression of our being before the Lord.

Assignment—Building our own “Psalm of Praise”

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In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
I Thessalonians 5:18

3. Giving our regular tithes, and at times, extravagant offerings.
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with grace in your hearts to the Lord.* Colossians 3:16

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Lamentations 3:41

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Psalm 134:2

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and doubting* I Timothy 2:8

8. **Dancing** – Using the whole body as part of our expression of honor before our God

- * Rehearsed dances sometimes but also those spontaneous expression of our love and honor before the Lord. (David)

It's amazing as you look into the scriptures – how God was blessed as His people exuberantly danced before Him.

9. **Laughing** – *How I laughed and sang for joy*

10. **Shouting** cries of victory and exaltation.

- * *Let the earth and all those living in it shout glory to God*
Psalm 98:7

- * In Psalm 47:1—All nations are commanded to clap their hands and to shout triumphantly unto God. Sense the indication of energy and enthusiasm here. Formal religion seeks to discourage this kind of worship; but God has built into us humans an almost instinctive urge to clap and shout when victory is experienced.

- * There has to be a certain decorum and order, of course; we don't shout when everyone else is quiet. (One person all by themselves – draws attention)

- * There are times when God moves in the midst of His people in such as way that it would be totally inappropriate not to shout.

Illustration:

Easter at Cantrick (Bob Laura, "Life Giver")
All were really caught up in blessing the Lord
I believe God is pleased with that.

Illustration:

4,600 Pastors at Kansas City Conference

ISAIAH'S VISION

- * He was certainly blasted out of his comfort zone when he saw:

- God high and lifted up on His throne
- His train filling the temple
- The Heavenly beings crying out
- The door posts shaking and the house filled with smoke

8. Dancing before the Lord.

Let them praise His name with dance Psalm 149:3

9. Laughing

Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.
Psalm 126:2

10. Shouting cries of victory and exaltation.

Shout to God with the voice of triumph! Psalm 47:1

*With the trumpets and the sound of a horn; shout joyfully before the Lord,
the King* Psalm 98:6

V. PRAISE PREPARES US FOR THE ETERNAL SCENE

After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in Heaven shouting “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are His judgments because He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her formocaction, and He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.” And again they shouted “Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.”

The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: “Amen, Hallelujah!” Then a voice came from the throne saying: “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear Him, both small and great!”

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory!” (NIV)

Revelation 19:1 - 6

REVELATION – pulls back the curtain on Heaven a little bit

- * Revelation 5:11 10,000 X 10,000 The roar of a great multitude
- * Revelation 19:1 Shouting, “Hallelujah, Salvation and glory belong to our God”
- * Revelation 19:6 Great multitude like the roar of rushing waters, loud peals of thunder, shouting “Hallelujah, for the Lord our God the Almighty reigns”
- * There is nothing placid or comfortable about being in God’s presence:

<i>Ecstatic? Yes!</i>	<i>Fabulous? Yes!</i>
<i>Exuberant? Yes!</i>	<i>Incomprehensible? Yes!</i>
<i>Terrifying? Yes!</i>	<i>Overwhelming? Yes!</i>
<i>Intense? Yes!</i>	<i>Supernatural? Yes!</i>

Ordinary? NO!

- * When you come into the presence of God with your whole being and all God’s people have gathered together; when the Holy Spirit brings His anointing and God enthrones Himself in our praises, Man! Heaven Breaks Out on earth!!
- * We need to have these experiences because we are actually rehearsing, we’re practicing, getting ready for what we are going to do throughout all eternity. Hallelujah!
- * We need to be together. We need to be regularly worshipping God and allowing the Holy Spirit to help us to participate fully and completely.

CLOSING

I want to say this in closing. We are all different in personality and in the way we respond to things. It doesn’t mean that because we may not be shouting our lungs out, clapping and lifting our hands, jumping up and down and waving our arms all around that we aren’t spiritual.

As long as we are using our body and our voice as best we can in giving honor and praise to God and feel good about it, as long as our worshipping heart is enthralled and enraptured with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, then we are in the right place for us and our Father is pleased with our Praise!

There may be a wide variety as to how we express ourselves in all of this, but the goal for each of us as we gather together as His Holy Priests on a regular basis is that we truly offer up a spiritual Sacrifice of Praise unto Him.

8. Dancing before the Lord.

Let them praise His name with dance Psalm 149:3

9. Laughing

Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.
Psalm 126:2

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Revelation 19:1 - 6

“PSALM OF PRAISE” WORKSHEET

The events which have been significant in shaping,
Guiding, protecting, and blessing my life.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

SUB-TEEN YEARS

HIGH SCHOOL

YOUNG ADULT YEARS

MARRIED YEARS (use the back please)

FIRST

Explain the “Psalm of Praise” worksheet which will be part of their assignment. All they are asked to do this week is just list the various happenings, people and lessons which were significant in some way during the various stages of their life.

NOW

Discuss the teaching from this session. These questions might be helpful.

- Have you had times when Praise brought the Presence or Power of God into your life? Share.
- Why is it hard to praise continually?

FINALLY

Let your prayer time especially reflect praise and thanksgiving. Encourage each one to participate and to rehearse before the Lord the specific benefits and blessings that He has brought into their life.

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

1. “Eat” Philippians 4:4-9.
2. Complete your “Psalm of Praise” worksheet.
3. Read carefully the chapter “The Gift of the Discernment of Spirits” on pages 89—96 of your manual.