

Devotional Thoughts :: Praise Changes Things

Praise Changes Things - posted by followthelamb (), on: 2021/5/26 13:48

A booklet bearing the title Prayer Changes Things was written by Dr. S. D. Gordon. It has made a deep impression on multitudes of Christians. In many homes these words may be found as a motto. We are all aware that prayer, believing prayer, does change things. We know also that many times the enemy has not been moved one inch from his stronghold, although we have persisted in prayer for days, months, often years.

Such was my own experience when passing through a time of great pressure. Prayer did not change things. Then I came into the possession of a wonderful secret: after we have prayed and believed, praise changes things. We discovered that two wings were necessary to mount the soul Godward: prayer and praise. Prayer asks. Praise obtains the answer.

I fancy that some who read these lines may say, "I, too, have prayed and prayed, but I do not feel like praising God. Praise when my heart is bleeding and torn? Praise when the pressure is greatest? Praise when walking through the valley of the shadow? No! Tell me rather to weep. How can I praise God at such a time?"

In Psalm 107:22, we find these words: "Sacrifice . . . the sacrifice of thanksgiving." What is a sacrifice? It is an offering to God. A "sacrifice of thanksgiving" is to praise God when you do not feel like it when you are depressed and despondent, when your life is covered over with thick clouds and midnight darkness. This is acceptable to God, a "sweet smelling savor" to our Lord and King. While we are admonished to "pray without ceasing," are we not also commanded to "rejoice evermore"?

When shall I praise God? When I feel happy, and when everything is moving along smoothly? When there is no trial crossing my pathway? It would be no sacrifice to praise God at such a time as this.

The book of Jonah contains a very precious truth, which throws a great deal of light upon this subject. No one could have been in a place where the outlook was darker: Jonah was at the bottom of the sea with the weeds wrapped about his head. What a desperate situation! Humanly speaking, every ray of hope was gone, and he said, "My soul fainted within me." But listen! In his trouble he also said, "I will look again toward thy holy temple."

He did the best thing when he took his eyes off the discouraging surroundings, put them in the rightful place, and began to pray. He then went a step further, and determined to praise, saying, "I will sacrifice with the voice of thanksgiving." What a place for a praise meeting! And what a song! "Salvation (deliverance) is of the Lord!" As he sang and praised, the great whale began to rise toward the surface of the water, and move toward the shore, and Jonah soon found himself upon the dry land.

Praise has a wonderful lifting power! We need not be anxious about the outcome of things if only we begin to praise. When Jonah's soul fainted within him, he deliberately looked right away from his impossible surroundings and uttered these wonderful words: "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."

Let us note this lesson: when Jonah was hemmed in on every side, everything that he could see which suggested disaster he called a "lying vanity." If he had not taken his eye off these "lying vanities" he would have forsaken the mercy that God offered him. We never get faith by looking at ourselves, our surroundings, or our difficulties.

We read in 1 Samuel of Saul being tormented by an evil spirit. David was sent for, and the record says, "When David played upon his harp the evil spirit left Saul and he was well." Isn't this a splendid way of getting rid of the enemy when he attacks us with mental depression?

... The marvelous experience which Paul and Silas had while in prison is another example of the result of praise at midnight. They were bound in an inner prison, their feet fast in the stocks. There was no earthly way of escape for them... The God of the impossible can make ways where there are no ways. Do we hear Paul and Silas complaining of the hardness of the way? Are they grumbling, weeping, wondering why the Lord has allowed them to get into this peculiar predicament? We do praise God that no sound of murmuring came through those prison walls. In that uncomfortable position, their backs bleeding from the wounds inflicted by the thongs, they praised God, offering unto Him the "sacrifice of thanksgiving."

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As they sang, the miracle was wrought! The foundation began to tremble, the building rocked and swayed, the doors burst open and they were free! "Everyone's bands were loosed."

Beloved, is it a midnight time in your life? Are you in a dungeon? Your feet held fast in the stocks? Have you given up in hopeless despair, thinking that escape is impossible? Begin, right now, to praise God! "Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving, glorifieth Me, and prepareth a way that I may show him the salvation of God" (Ps. 50:23, margin, RV). God's Word is true! When you begin to praise, He will send the earthquake and set you free!

... A missionary in dark China was living a defeated life. Everything about him seemed to be touched with sadness. Although he prayed many months for victory over depression and discouragement, no answer came. His life remained quite the same. He determined to leave his post and go to an interior station where he could be quiet and spend long hours in prayer till victory was assured. Upon reaching the place, he was entertained in the home of a fellow missionary. On the wall of his bedroom hung this motto: "Try Thanksgiving."

The two words gripped his heart, and he thought within himself, "Have I been praying all these months, and not been praising?" He stopped and began to praise God and was greatly uplifted. Instead of hiding away to agonize in prayer, he returned immediately to his waiting converts to tell them that praise changes things. Wonderful blessing attended his simple testimony and the bands that had bound others were loosed through praise.

I wish to add my own humble testimony to that of my fellow-missionary. It was a dark, dark night in my life when the words "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion" (Ps. 65:1) were impressed upon my mind. I had been waiting in prayer for months. The months were now stretching on into years piled up, as it were, before God.

Could not I now wait in praise before I saw the answer? God was waiting for me to take this final step in faith, and when I began to praise Him for the answer, began to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him," He began to answer in a manner that was "exceeding abundantly above all" that I could ask or think. The possession of the secret of victory has transformed my life and filled it with unutterable gladness.

The story is told of Sir Michael Costa, that he was holding a rehearsal one night with his vast array of musicians and hundreds of voices. The mighty chorus rang out with thunder of organ, sounding of horns, and clashing of cymbals. Far back in the orchestra one who played the piccolo said to himself: "In all this din, it doesn't matter what I do." Suddenly, all was still! The great conductor had stopped, flung up his hands. Someone had failed to take his part! The sweet note of the piccolo had been missed.

Is your "praise note" missing from the heavenly choir? Are you waiting, waiting, yearning, for God to answer your prayer? He is waiting to answer. Try thanksgiving!

â€ Mrs. C. Cowman

Re: Praise Changes Things - posted by docs (), on: 2021/5/26 20:39

You would not believe how relevant all this is for me right now. If God is not sovereign in having you post it, then I don't know who is! Thanks much.

Re: - posted by followthelamb (), on: 2021/5/27 16:16

Thank you for sharing that! Praise God \o/

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Re: - posted by mama27, on: 2021/5/27 23:24

And for me as well! Bless you!

Re: - posted by followthelamb (), on: 2021/5/29 8:39

Love you! Praying for everyone here on the forums...lets lift eachother up in Christ and may His Name be exalted in this place!