

"PRAISE YE THE LORD"

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights."
Psalm 148:1.

Have you ever stopped to think how little praise to God there is in the life of the average Christian? How much time do you give to praising God? Go where you will, enter any church you please, you will find little time given to actually praising God. It isn't long before someone begins to ask God for things. It is so natural and so easy to ask God for things. When God answers our prayers we are so often like the lepers Christ cleansed. There were ten of them, they started off after they were cleansed, but only one came to Christ to thank Him for healing.

I don't know of anything which will dispel the blues and drive away the clouds of despair like praising God. Notice how often David praised the Lord. Of course he got down in the dumps, but he didn't stay there. He began counting His blessings and before long he was shouting the praises of God. If you are blue and discouraged sit down and start counting your blessings.

I. Praise The Lord For Physical Blessings.

Have you ever praised God for the physical blessings you enjoy? You have a strong, healthy body, but have you ever thanked God for it.

1. Have you praised the Lord for your fine eyesight?

What would you take for your eyes? You wouldn't take anything for them. Perhaps you have never realized what blessings you enjoy and how rich you are. You can enjoy the beauties of an autumn sunset when the sky matches the woods in its riot of color. Who can describe the beauty of those snow-capped peaks in the moonlight or a sunrise over the ocean or the glory of a storm upon the deep, or the fairy land in which you revel when you fly above the clouds.

2. Have you praised God for your hearing?

Think of the joy of going for a walk on a beautiful spring morning when the larks are filling the air with music and all nature responds to the warmth of spring! And it is all free. Think of the pleasure of hearing the greatest music man has produced -- heavenly symphonies of harmony that thrill your soul. You can sit by your radio and hear the best the world has to offer, all because God has given you two ears with which to hear.

3. Have you praised God for your appetite?

Suppose you had no desire to eat when a good meal was placed before you. There are thousands who have no appetite for food and would give plenty of money for good appetites in order to enjoy good meals. Some of you do not have this trouble because God has blessed you.

4. Have you praised God for a good taste?

5. Have you praised God that you can smell?

Think of the enjoyment you get out of smelling a good roast turkey dinner or a good fried tee-bone steak, or a wonderful country ham dinner. Think, too, of the enjoyment you get from the perfume of a rose garden or a field of new mown hay or the odor of a pine forest. Money cannot buy these physical blessings, yet God has freely given them to you to enjoy.

6. Have you praised God that you can sleep?

Your greatest trouble is not in sleeping but in having to get up. Yet, there are plenty of people who cannot sleep. Many lie on beds of pain, suffering hour after hour. They hear the clock strike regularly and it seems that morning will never come.

II. Praise The Lord For Material Blessings.

You have a good bed in which to sleep, plenty of wholesome food to eat, and comfortable clothing to wear. You also have congenial companions for associates and enough money

to meet your needs. You do not have to worry about the financial needs of your family. God has showered every one of us with material blessings beyond our comprehension.

What have we done in return for these blessings? Too often we have forgotten God. Time and again God has warned us not to put our trust in the material. He has promised to supply all our needs, and He has made good His promise. He told us that if we would seek His kingdom and His righteousness then all the other material things -- food, shelter, clothing -- would be added, and this promise has always been kept. Do your part and God will do His.

III. Praise The Lord For Spiritual Blessings.

The spiritual blessings God has given us far exceed the physical and the material. The only limit to the spiritual blessings God has for us is our lack of faith. "The Lord God is a Sun and Shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalm 84:11. God is a Sun to give light and life, a Shield for protection. Think of the promise, He will give grace and glory -- grace is His free gift, glory always follows. Let me enumerate just a few of the spiritual blessings which are ours, and when you get blue and down-hearted just go over them one by one.

1. Christ's death on the cross will save you.

John 6:37. There is not a person anywhere but can be saved if he will come to Christ in faith believing and trust fully in His finished work. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." All means just what it says. He wipes out all the past and you become a new creation.

2. Christ's love will keep you.

Of course you will be tempted, but if you will commit your life into His hands, He will keep you. Nothing can separate you from the love of Christ. Romans 8:35, 37-39. It matters not where I go nor what may come, Christ is with me. He is my life and my strength and my protection. Psalm 27:1-3, 5, 6.

What more can any of us ask than this? Christ saves us, Christ keeps us, Christ protects us. All these spiritual blessings are yours if you will take them. But remember, they are a gift, they must be received, God will not force them upon you. Do you want life? You will find it in Christ who said: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Do you want peace? You will find it in Christ who came "to guide our feet into the way of peace." Do you want power? Look to Christ who said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." Do you want pleasure? You will find it in Christ when you commit your life to Him. Listen to this promise: "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore." Do you want victory? You will find it in Christ. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Let us praise Him for He is our life, our light, our strength, our peace and our protection.

"I have found a friend in Jesus, He's everything to me,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul;
The Lily of the Valley, in Him alone I see
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole.
In sorrow He's my comfort, in trouble He's my stay,
He tells me every care on Him to roll:
He's the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.

He all my griefs has taken, and all my sorrows borne;
In temptation He's my strong and mighty tower;
I have all for Him forsaken and all my idols torn
From my heart, and now He keeps me by His power.
Though all the world forsake me, and Satan tempt me wore,
Through Jesus I shall safely reach the goal:
He's the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.

He will never, never leave me, nor yet forsake me here,
While I live by faith and do His blessed will;
A wall of fire about me, I've nothing now to fear,
With His manna He my hungry soul shall fill.
Then sweeping up to glory to see His blessed face,
Where rivers of delight shall ever roll:
He's the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul."