
Come Into the Presence of the Lord

Jack Hartman

The Bible gives us an excellent example of God honoring praise in the face of adversity in the biblical account of what the apostle Paul and his friend Silas did when they were put into a prison in Philippi because they had told the people of Philippi that Jesus is the Messiah.

“The crowd [also] joined in the attack upon them, and the rulers tore the clothes off of them and commanded that they be beaten with rods. And when they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. He, having received [so strict a] charge, put them into the inner prison (the dungeon) and fastened their feet in the stocks” (Acts 16:22-24).

How did Paul and Silas react to being attacked by a crowd of people, having their clothes torn off, being beaten with rods and being put into a dungeon with their feet fastened in stocks? This passage of Scripture goes on to explain that Paul and Silas prayed and sang words of praise.

A great miracle occurred as a result of their prayer and praise. “...about midnight, as Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the [other] prisoners were listening to them, suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the very foundations of the prison were shaken; and at once all the doors were opened and everyone’s shackles were unfastened” (Acts 16:25-26).

Paul and Silas refused to feel sorry for themselves because of the adversity they faced. Instead of complaining, they praised God continually.

Their faith in God was shown by their praise in the face of extremely adverse circumstances. They released their faith in God by “praying and singing hymns of praises to Him.”

Your Father wants you to follow the example of Paul and Silas. If you are sick and tired, He wants you to speak His Word boldly with absolute faith. He wants you to speak the name of Jesus again and again. He wants you to praise Him and thank Him. He wants you to sing songs of praise even though singing praise may be the last thing you feel like doing.

The Bible gives us another explanation of the enormous power of praising the Lord in the face of adversity in the account of what took place when King Jehosaphat and the Israelites faced overwhelming opposition from the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Meunites. The Israelites heard from God as they prepared to face their mighty opponents. God said, “...Be not afraid or dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God’s” (2 Chronicles 20:15).

God instructed King Jehosaphat and his followers to “be not afraid of this great multitude.” God told them that He would fight the battle. He said, “You shall not need to fight in this battle; take your positions, stand still, and see the deliverance of the Lord [Who is] with you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Fear not nor be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you” (2 Chronicles 20:17).

You can learn from these instructions. When you are fighting sickness you should not be afraid because of your absolute certainty that “the Lord is with you.” “And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshiping Him” (II Chronicles 20:18).

The Israelites did what your Father wants you to do when you face severe adversity that is caused by sickness or by anything else. He wants you to “worship Him” just as the Israelites did when they “...stood up to praise the Lord,

the God of Israel, with a very loud voice” (II Chronicles 20:19).

Are you sick? Are you full of anxiety? Does your future look bleak? You should “praise the Lord with a very loud voice.” Do not be timid with your praise. Praise the Lord boldly.

“When he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers to sing to the Lord and praise Him in their holy [priestly] garments as they went out before the army, saying, give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy and loving-kindness endure forever!” (2 Chronicles 20:21).

You should “sing to the Lord.” You should “give thanks to the Lord.” Do you really believe that God’s “mercy and loving-kindness endure forever?” If you do, why wouldn’t you sing to Him, praise Him and thank Him regardless of the symptoms of sickness in your body?

If you will continually praise the Lord and sing to Him and worship Him, you will see that God responds to this praise as He did for King Jehosaphat and his followers. “...when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the men of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir who had come against Judah, and they were [self] slaughtered” (2 Chronicles 20:22).

You must not be overwhelmed by the sickness in your body. You should praise God and thank Him because you have enormous gratitude in your heart. You should praise Him and thank Him because you have chosen to live for Him and trust Him with every area of your life, including healing.

You should praise Jesus and thank Him for paying the price for your healing. You should thank Him for the horrible bloody stripes on His body that give you conclusive evidence that the price has been paid for your healing. You should thank Jesus for taking your sickness so that you will be made well because He bore the sickness in your body for you (see Isaiah 53:10).

If you really trust Jesus and you comprehend the magnitude of what He has done for you, you will praise Him continually. The psalmist David said, “The Lord is my Strength and my [impenetrable] Shield; my heart trusts in, relies on, and confidently leans on Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song will I praise Him” (Psalm 28:7).

You can be certain that “the Lord is your Strength and your impenetrable Shield.” He will give you the strength you need when you are weak from sickness. You can do all things through His strength (Philippians 4:13). The psalmist told you what will happen when your “heart trusts in, relies on, and confidently leans on the Lord.” He said, “I am helped.” You should have the same certainty that the Lord will help you. Your heart should “greatly rejoice” because of your deep faith in the Lord. You should praise Him by singing songs to Him.

You must not give in to sickness. If you continually fill your heart with the Word of God, you will have a song in your heart at all times regardless of how you feel. Songs of praise and worship will pour out from deep down inside of you regardless of your physical symptoms. You will be like the psalmist who said, “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is steadfast and confident! I will sing and make melody” (Psalm 57:7).

Is your heart “fixed” on God instead of being focused on the sickness in your body? Is your heart “steadfast and confident?” If you really believe what God’s Word says about divine healing, songs of praise will flow out of your mouth.

“Then [Israel] believed His words [trusting in, relying on them]; they sang His praise” (Psalm 106:12).

You should follow this example that Moses and the Israelites gave you when they faced a seemingly impossible situation at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:1-31 & Exodus 15:1-19). Even though they were pursued by a large Egyptian army and the Red Sea was before them and high mountains were on either side of them, they showed their

absolute faith in God by praising Him in song. God honored their faith in Him by miraculously parting the Red Sea so they could pass through safely.

You should sing songs of praise because you believe in Jesus Christ your Healer more than you believe in the power of sickness in your body. If you truly trust the Lord, you will rejoice. "...let **all** those who take refuge and put their trust in You rejoice; let them ever sing and shout for joy, because You make a covering over them and defend them..." (Psalm 5:11).

Please highlight or underline the word "all" in this passage of Scripture. This word includes you. Your Father wants you to "take refuge and put your trust in Him." He wants you to "rejoice and sing and shout for joy" because you trust Him completely. "It is a good and delightful thing to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises [with musical accompaniment] to Your name, O Most High" (Psalm 92:1).

The amplification of this passage of Scripture tells you to sing your praise to the Lord "with musical accompaniment." I have found that it is much easier for me to sing praise to the Lord when I have anointed Christian music to accompany my songs of praise. I often put some good praise music on my CD player or cassette player when I am tired and weary and I am tempted to be discouraged. I boldly sing along with this inspired music. As I continue to sing praise music in the midst of my weariness I find that a surge of energy rises up from deep inside of me.

Some of the greatest times of praise and worship I have experienced have been in my car when I play anointed praise and worship music. I often lose myself in worshipping the Lord. I drive along in absolute ecstasy. This glorious praise music takes me right into the heavenlies. My heart sings with joy. The problems of the day melt into insignificance. No health problem or stress or any other problem in this world can stand up in the face of continued praise and worship.

You should sing songs of vibrant praise to God instead of being tired of feeling sick and tired. Find the best praise music you can and join your voice with that anointed music.

"...ever be filled and stimulated with the [Holy] Spirit. Speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices [and instruments] and making melody with all your heart to the Lord, at all times and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father" (Ephesians 5:18-20).

Do you want to constantly "be filled and stimulated with the Holy Spirit?" You will be filled with the Spirit if you "offer praise with voices and instruments and make melody to the Lord with all of your heart at all times." You will be stimulated by the Holy Spirit if you continually give thanks to God in the name of Jesus Christ.

There is no better place to be when you are sick and tired than to be in the presence of the Lord. If you praise the Lord continually, you can be certain that you will come into His presence. "...You are holy, O You Who dwell in [the holy place where] the praises of Israel [are offered]." (Psalm 22:3).

This passage of Scripture says that God lived in the praises of the Israelites. He will live in your praise today. You will come into God's presence if you continually praise Him and thank Him. "Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving..." (Psalm 95:2).

When you are sick you must draw as close to the Lord as you possibly can. The Bible repeatedly tells you how to enter into God's presence. You come into His presence by thanking Him and praising Him continually. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and a thank offering and into His courts with praise! Be thankful and say so to Him, bless and affectionately praise His name!" (Psalm 100:4).

This passage of Scripture is filled with encouraging promises from God. You should be unreserved in your expression of love to God. You will enter into the "gates" of God's courtyard "with thanksgiving" if you continually

offer up a sacrifice of thanksgiving. You will come into His courts if you praise Him continually. If you really are thankful, you should “say so to God.” You should “bless and affectionately praise His name.”

**You cannot boldly sing praise to God and worry at the same time.
Continual songs of praise always will drive anxiety out of your mind and heart.**

You are in dangerous territory when you are outside the presence of God. You are right where your loving Father wants you to be when you come into His presence and stay there. He will reveal Himself to you as you worship Him more and more.

When you are in the Lord’s presence you will understand that you do not have to struggle and strain to do everything yourself. You will see your precious Lord more and more as He truly is. You will be able to comprehend His tremendous healing power. You will learn to live in His presence and His supernatural anointing where miracles take place.

You will always experience the joy of the Lord when you are in His presence. Joy will rise up inside of you as you continually thank Him and praise Him. “Consider it wholly joyful, my brethren, whenever you are enveloped in or encounter **trials of any sort**” (James 1:2).

Please highlight or underline the words “trials of any sort.” These words include the sickness in your body. These words include the depression in your mind. What are you instructed to do when you encounter any kind of adversity, including sickness? You are told to “consider it wholly joyful.”

You must not allow the sickness in your body to pull you down. Your faith in God should be so strong that you will rejoice in Him continually regardless of this sickness. “Be happy [in your faith] and rejoice and be glad-hearted continually (**always**)” (I Thessalonians 5:16).

Please highlight or underline the word “**always**” in the amplification of this verse of Scripture. The word “always” certainly includes the sickness that is in your body now. How are you instructed to react to this sickness? You are instructed to “be happy in your faith.” You are instructed to “rejoice and be glad-hearted continually (always).”

If you wholeheartedly believe that Jesus Christ already has paid the price for your healing and deliverance, your heart will sing with joy. Rejoicing will come naturally to you if you really believe this great spiritual truth and do not doubt. “They who sow in tears shall reap in joy and singing...” (Psalm 126:5).

Sometimes the pain in your body and anxiety in your mind may be so severe that tears will pour down your cheeks. You must not give up hope even if you hurt this much. You should praise the Lord and sing to Him continually. You should “sow in tears.” You will “reap” a harvest through “joy and singing.” This harvest will come because you sowed seeds of praise when you faced a very difficult challenge with your health.

You should not give in to weariness because of the sickness in your body. You should praise the Lord and thank Him for bringing you through such a difficult time. The Lord will give you the strength you need if you praise Him continually and rejoice in Him. “...the joy of the Lord is your strength...” (Nehemiah 8:10).

Where will you receive the strength you need when you are sick and tired? You will receive this strength from “the joy of the Lord” Who lives in your heart. Our precious Lord never is tired and weary. He never gives up His joy. You will come into His presence and be strengthened by His joy if you praise Him and worship Him continually.

**Continual words of doubt and unbelief block the mighty power of God.
Continual praise and thanksgiving bring you into the presence and power of God.**

Some Christians either block or delay God’s answers to their prayers because they do not obey His instructions to
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praise Him and thank Him continually. Praise often provides God with the connection that touches His mighty power. Healing is not something you will receive. Healing is something you already have. Praise and thanksgiving often will bring you into the healing presence of the Lord.

You have learned that continual praise brings you into the presence of the Lord. If you praise the Lord continually, you will be in His presence continually. You should be like the psalmist who said, "My mouth shall be filled with Your praise and with Your honor all the day" (Psalm 71:8).

Worshipping the Lord as part of a congregation in church is good, but worshipping the Lord continually when you are by yourself and your body aches with pain is exactly what your Father wants you to do. You do not have to be in a church to worship God. Your "mouth should be filled with praise" throughout "all the day."

You can praise the Lord when you are taking a shower, driving your automobile, walking or doing odd jobs. You can praise the Lord if you are confined to your bed by the sickness in your body. The opportunities to praise the Lord are endless if you really have a heart to praise Him. "From the rising of the sun to the going down of it and from east to west, the name of the Lord is to be praised!" (Psalm 113:3).

How often does God want you to praise Him? He wants you to praise Him "from the rising of the sun until the going down of it." He wants you to praise Him continually throughout every day and night of your life. He wants you to praise Him "from east to west," no matter where you are.

You should praise the Lord from the moment you wake up in the morning until the moment you drop off to sleep at night. You can and should walk in the presence of the Lord continually. Your loving Father wants you to come into His presence early each morning and remain there throughout the day and night. You then should pray and ask Him to guard you and be with you while you sleep.

Continual praise should be a way of life for you. You should do exactly what your Father instructs you to do whether you feel like it or not. You should praise the Lord continually when you are on the mountaintops of life. You should praise Him continually when you are in the depths of valleys in your life. You should be consistent in your praise.

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"Receive Healing from the Lord"