

## **Praise and Worship**

By Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam

God is certainly reviving the ministry of Praise and Worship in the churches. He is pouring out His Spirit and leading the people to worship Him in spirit and truth. The Word of God that deals with Praise and Worship is coming alive and is becoming even more meaningful to all who believe.

There were many questions that I used to ask with regard to Praise and Worship. I have found adequate answers in the Bible. I would like to share them with you.

### **Who Can Praise the Lord?**

1. The people of God (Psalm 67:3, 5).
2. Everything that has breath (Psalm 150:6)
3. All His angels (Psalm 148:2)

### **Why Should We Praise The Lord?**

1. He is the Lord (Psalm 149:1)  
He is the ultimate authority, the highest power, the King of kings and Lord of lords. We praise Him for who He is (Psalms 48:1; 96:4)
2. He has blessed us (Psalm 103:1-3)
3. God dwells in the praises of His people. We can surround ourselves with God's presence and therefore, be conscious of God's power rather than of our problems and difficulties. (Psalm 84)
4. Praising God precedes victory (2 Chronicles 20).  
King Jehoshaphat led God's people into battle by first sending the choir before the army. The people who know why they should praise the Lord will experience His presence and His power.

### **When Should We Praise The Lord?**

1. At all times (Psalm 34:1)
2. In everything (Ephesians 5: 20).
3. As long as we live (Psalm 146:2).

### **Where Shall We Praise Him?**

1. In the congregation (Psalm 149:1)
2. In the sanctuary (Psalm 150:1)
3. Among the people (Psalm 108:3)

### **What Hinders Praise?**

We may know that Praise and Worship is scriptural, right and good. But we still find it hard to do and sometimes give excuses. The fact is, the Bible does not excuse anyone. The Bible says, "Praise ye the Lord" (Psalm 149:1). It is a command, not a request or a suggestion. It also says. "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord" (Psalm 150:6). "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Psalm 115:17).

There are some definite hindrances to praise. God wants us to deal with them and overcome them. We can overcome them through Jesus Christ.

1. **Sin** – This is why the unconverted do not praise God. Unconfessed sins inhibit us in the presence of God. We do not feel free or comfortable in God's presence.
2. **Condemnation** – It is not so easy to accept forgiveness and to give ourselves, even though God has said He has forgiven us. This gives us a sense of unworthiness. This attitude is wrong and it stems from self-consciousness instead of God-consciousness. The Bible commands us to "look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2).

Looking unto Jesus does two things:

- It gets our thoughts and attention off ourselves and on to Jesus.

- The more our thoughts and meditations are on Him, the more will our hearts be filled with the desire to appreciate and praise Him. We become aware of His worthiness and our mouths will be filled with words of praise.
3. **Worldliness** – Worldliness is anything that takes us away from Christ, His Word and His Church. Worldliness is the opposite of spirituality. Worldly-minded people find praising God extremely embarrassing. It is contrary to their carnal sense of dignity. They are more concerned about what people think. The opposite is true of spirituality. Being spiritual, we are concerned about what God thinks. We please God rather than man. We must love God and if we love God, we cannot love the world (1 John 2:15).

### Scriptural Ways to Praise God

1. Praise God with your voice:
  - “My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee...” (Psalm 71:23)
  - “My tongue shall also talk of thy righteousness...” (Psalm 71:24)
  - “... with the voice of thanksgiving...” (Psalm 26:7)
  - “... His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” (Psalm 34:1)
2. Singing – there are many references to singing. Here are a few:
  - “... come before His presence with singing” (Psalms 100:2)
  - “I will sing unto the Lord...” (Psalm 13:6)
  - “... so will we sing and praise thy power” (Psalm 21:13)
  - “... singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord” (Eph 5:19)
  - “... singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3: 16)

### There Are Physical Expressions of Praise

1. Standing – To stand erect is always a sign of respect. Standing in worship is an act of reverence before the Lord.
  - “... Stand in awe of Him” (Psalms 33:8).
  - “Praise ye the Lord, ... ye that stand in the house of the God” (Psalm 135:1, 2).
2. Raising Your Hands – Raising of the hands is a universal sign of surrender. When we raise our hands, we are saying that we are unconditionally His. People find this a problem because they are not ready to make unconditional surrender to God. But once they have done this, they have no trouble raising their hands to the Lord.
  - “Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.” (Psalm 143:6)
  - “I will stretch forth my hand unto thee...” (Psalm 47:1).
3. Clapping Hands – We are commanded to clap our hands to the Lord. “O clap your hands all ye people...” (Psalm 47:1).
  - It is a sign of admiration and approval. It is also a sign of gladness and joy.

### Worship

To praise is to speak well of; to express admiration for; to compliment; etc. But to worship is to express reverence; to have a sense of awe; to bow low before the object of worship. Worship is the highest form of praise.

The word ‘worship’ is derived from the Old English Word, ‘worth-ship’, meaning to esteem the worth of and to respond to that worthiness.

Worship is first an attitude of the heart. It is an inner sense of awe and respect for the Almighty.

Secondly, it is a spontaneous overflow of that inner sense of awe and respect. David said, “My cup runneth over joyfully” (Psalm 23:5).

Thirdly, it is the outpouring of the soul in deep expressions of reverence, of awe, wonder and adoration.

The first Biblical mention of worship is in Genesis 22:5. Abraham said to the young man, who accompanied him and Isaac to Mount Moriah, “...I and the lad will go yonder and worship.” The word used here is ‘Shachah’ (pronounced as ‘shaw-kaw’), meaning to prostrate oneself before, to bow down and make obeisance to. This story itself can teach us what worship implies:

1. God commanded Abraham to go and worship. Again worship is a command.
2. Worship is costly one. A life of worship demands everything we are and have (Rom 12:1, 2). David said, "Shall I offer to God that which cost me nothing?" (2 Sam 24:24).
3. Worship is an act of faith. Every step that Abraham took was a step of faith. Abraham believed that God would provide. (Genesis 22:8).
4. We are blessed through worship. God's response to Abraham's act of worship indicates His desire to bless every worshipper (Genesis 22:16-18).

Let us come and praise the Lord! Let us come to worship the King of kings!

---

CALVARY NEWS

Issue No.4, July-September 1986