

9 Reasons Why Praising God Does Wonders For Your Health

When in the midst of struggle, the last thing we feel like doing is praising God. Our emotions and programmed responses pull us to do the exact opposite. So often we move away from relationship with God in our pain, rather than moving closer to the power He is within us.

In 2003-2004, God began to do a remarkable renovation in my life. Little did I know that everything, literally everything, would begin to change. How I saw God and myself went into what I call a “spiritual upgrade.” My heart, thinking and relationships all went through a major series of changes and transformation. I was open for it, especially because my spiritual and emotional state was such a mess. I was ready for a change.

Yet in the beginning of this transformational journey, God spoke to me about the practice of praise in my life. I felt Him saying, “Mark, I want to teach you the power of praise and worship.” Now, I have always been a lover of God’s presence, but little did I know what kind of encounters I would be headed into.

I was actually frustrated in sensing God say that. I wanted Him to help me with my anxiety, depression and daily struggles of defeatism. I’m thinking, “God, can you help me get back to wanting to live? Can I just get through the day a little better?”

But God was forming something in me that was incredibly important. He wanted to shift my life from performing for Him into a lifestyle of engaging relationship with Him. This shift caused my life to become more about connecting with Him rather than trying to just do stuff for Him.

At the time, I didn't see how much upgrading my praise would help my journey. I was more focused on God "fixing" me. Yet what I didn't see was that enhancing the experience of praising Him was going to make shifts in every area of my life, not just the struggles I was focused on. Learning to praise God with great freedom set so many things in motion.

Many people want radical change, but they don't want to take radical steps to do so. I've found that so many people are filled with fear and shame to praise God with exuberance, yet that is what we were designed to do. Praise is physical action with a spiritual activation connected to it. I have found it to be one of the most powerful weapons I possessed in my arsenal, and one if we exercise, our lives will never be the same.

1. Genuine praise cannot be done without thanksgiving. The Bible says that we enter into the realm of praise, beginning with thanksgiving (Psalm 100). When I pastored a church for a number of years, we never started a service without establishing thanksgiving out loud. Otherwise, people would struggle to engage God with authentic praise. Ingratitude prevents us from manifesting authentic praise. We enter the gate of thanksgiving first, then we move into the realm of praise.

When God is praised, we acknowledge Him for who He really is. Our obedience to praise welcomes who He is in our midst. Thanksgiving recognizes His nature and connects us to our Creator in personal ways. Thanksgiving is one of the most powerful ways of thinking God has given us, and when executed, give great life and health to those who practice it. Most of all, it creates a red carpet of welcome to the One who deserves our praise.

2. Praise involves remembering (Ps. 143:5, 1 Sam. 17:37). When I praise God, I cannot do it effectively without focusing on who He is and all that He has done. This trains my mind to

focus on gratitude and contentment. My eyes become focused on hope—everything that God has done now becomes the foundation for what He is going to do today. The enemy loves to pervert our ability to remember by training us to be resentful, ungrateful and unbelieving. Authentic praise turns my attention to the greatness of God and His power over everything I face.

3. Praise declares who God is (Ps. 91:2). When I make known with my mouth who God is, my world hears and the heavenlies hear. Through my praises, I make declarations to welcome who God is to the very place I am assigned. Wherever I go, I need a revelation of who God is inside of me, so that I am not molded by my surroundings. I set the atmosphere with the presence of God that I carry. The more I declare who He is, the more I am mindful of His nature in every place I go.

4. Praise involves encouraging ourselves in the Lord (1 Sam. 30:6). When I praise God, I actually encourage myself. I know that the goal of praise is not ourselves. But that doesn't negate the fact that there are incredible blessings we receive in our act of praise. I have never truly praised God from my heart and not gained spiritual strength to face my life's circumstances. Sometimes the biggest battle is simply taking the time to invest in this habit. Our lives, busy living and heartaches keep us from passionately engaging God with our highest praise.

5. Praise involves words spoken out loud to God (Heb. 13:5). Years ago when I was a worship leader, someone said to me, "I can worship God quietly in my seat." My response was "What you are describing is meditation. We are praising God right now, not meditating on Him."

There's nothing wrong with meditation, but it cannot be confused with praise. Praising God is an action, especially one of verbal declaration of who He is and all that He has done. Biblical praise is not quiet. In fact, heaven is pretty

noisy with praise.

I chuckle when people say, “I am not charismatic or Pentecostal in my personality.” But I have yet to have anyone show me a Scripture that supports this. Every believer was made to praise God! It’s in our spiritual DNA! I think that our praise has mostly been stolen and then hidden behind our religious training and lies about our personality.

I think many people may be disappointed in heaven to see the loud and exuberant praise that all present will give themselves into.

My point is, praise is an outward expression from a heart desiring to magnify and lift up the Living God in our midst. You cannot just think this. There must be action and declaration involved. It’s the “fruit of our lips.”

6. Genuine praise to God needs to be spoken to each other (Eph. 5:19–20). The practice of praise can be contagious. Ever have someone sing a song or hum a melody in the office next to you, only to find yourself singing that same tune moments later? That’s because encouraging melodies are meant to be contagious. Words and songs of praise are meant to spread like wildfire. That’s why most moves of God are also marked with dynamic worship music, because God loves to mark His work with songs that remind us of what He is doing. Next time your office staff is down, start humming a praise with your lips that catch on to everyone there.

7. A heart of praise looks for things to praise God about (Phil. 4:8). When I have a heart of praise, my thinking changes. Praise sets my thought-life into the right direction—of course, because it sets my thoughts on Him!

Sometimes the best thing we need to do is get our eyes off of ourselves, our pain and our situation and let His greatness put it all into perspective. Our minds so often lean to what is possible and manageable in the natural. Praise raises our

expectation to what God can really do!

For my thoughts to remain in the life-giving power of God, I know that cultivating praise keeps me there.

8. Praise sets the stage for powerful worship and intimacy to grow (Ps. 95:1–7). We all long to be near to God and live with an ongoing sense of His presence in our lives. Practicing praise helps set the stage for authentic worship in our lives. Worship connects our hearts to God in a deep and personal way. Praise makes the way by setting the stage in our hearts for relational connection.

9. The cells in your body awaken to the praises of God. I like to survey people who live longer lives and don't seem to prematurely age. I am a student of learning what makes people tick who are healthy. Quite often, those who maintain youthfulness often have a practice of thanksgiving, praise and worship in their life. They see every experience as an opportunity to thank God and praise Him.

The words we express and the songs we sing, echoing who God is, send a cascade of powerful effects into our bodies. Endorphins kick in. Our joy muscles awaken. Optimism heightens.

You cannot have real praise and do it with a bad attitude.

Our bodies respond well to praises of God, especially considering our physiology was made to live in regular praise of who God is. Most spend their day activating this praise muscle by looking at the great feats of man or, conversely, giving attention and awe to the negativity around them. This is our praise muscle used in reverse.

The fact is, you and I were meant to live in an intimate relationship of praise and worship unto God. It blesses Him, but it also set you into the right direction. {eoa}

Mark DeJesus has been equipping people in a full-time capacity since 1995, serving in various roles, including teaching people of all ages, communicating through music, authoring books, leading and mentoring. Mark's deepest love is his family: his wife Melissa, son Maximus and daughter Abigail. Mark is a teacher, author and mentor who uses many communication mediums, including the written word, a weekly radio podcast show and videos. His deepest call involves equipping people to live as overcomers. Through understanding inside-out transformation, Mark's message involves getting to the root of issues that contribute to the breakdown of our relationships, our health and our day-to-day peace. He is passionately reaching his world with a transforming message of love, healing and freedom. Out of their own personal renewal, Mark and Melissa founded Turning Hearts Ministries, a ministry dedicated to inside-out transformation. Mark also founded Transformed You, a communication platform for Mark's teachings, writing and broadcasts that are designed to encourage people in their journey of transformation.

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