

Change the Atmosphere With Praise

Praising the Lord has ever been to me one of the most inspiring and exalting of themes. Oh! How I love to praise Him and hear Him praised.

It has been my privilege, on several occasions, to witness the never-to-be-forgotten scene of 1,000 saints standing on their feet with uplifted hands, tears streaming down their faces, praising the Lord with all their might until the great volume of thunderous praises blended into a sound like rushing mighty waters as it rolled majestically heavenward. It went up as one voice, of one people who were one in heart and adoration of the most high God and His glorious Son, Jesus Christ.

It is when praising the Lord in this way, as at no other time, that my spirit catches the greatest revelation—the greater vision of the mighty, omnipotent King of the Ages, high and lifted up. It is then that the very atmosphere seems electric, charged with the mighty power of the great God, and I catch the sound of His chariot wheels leaping over the mountains, ever coming nearer as His saints continue to adore Him, till I hear the stately steppings of the King in the midst of His holy tabernacle—then, as the cloud of glorious adoration still rises from the hearts of the people, I see Him robed with honor, crowned with glory, seated upon the jewelled throne of adoration that His people have built for Him by their praises.

The Lord inhabits the praises of His people. Where real praise is, there God is.

It is impossible to overestimate the power, victory, blessing, healing, encouragement and inspiration embodied in this wonderful secret of praising the Lord.

PRAISE THE LORD AT ALL TIMES “Oh! but you know that I could never put anything on, I could never praise the Lord unless I feel like it,” someone exclaims.

Unless you feel like it! Oh! Is that the gauge by which you measure your offerings of praise? Is that the foundation upon which your Christian experience is based?

My dear sister, feelings are a poor and very uncertain guide upon which to rely when it comes to praising the Lord or any other Christian experience. Only one man in the Bible that I know of went by feeling; that was dear old Isaac, and you remember how he felt the hands and arms of Jacob, his son, and how deceived he was.

Oh, dear hearts, I encourage you to praise Him at “all times” and let His praise “be continually in your mouth,” not because you happen to feel like it, but because He is worthy. Praise Him whether you feel like it or not, and you soon will feel like it.

Why, it is impossible for me to lift up my hands and begin to praise and adore my Master without a downpour of His blessing that is as rain to the thirsty fields and flowers or as the anointing oil upon my head, running down to the borders of my garments.

“Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.” Why, according to David, the only excuse you have for not praising the Lord is being out of breath!

Some may claim, “Oh, Sister, I praise Him in my heart. I could never shout aloud or be demonstrative. It is not my make-up or disposition.”

Beloved, when you have put on your beautiful garments of praise, you are lifted above your own “make-up” and “disposition” and swing far out into the realm of the Spirit. As for praising the Lord in your heart, why, your heart is no

different from anyone else's. When it gets full of glorious praises and adoration and He becomes so real, so fair as to be altogether lovely, the chiefest of 10,000 to your soul, your heart will run over, and you will shout His praises, and your voice will be blended with the voices of all the other redeemed ones and soar upward to the Lamb who sits upon the throne.

THERE'S POWER IN PRAISE Besides blessing you and ministering to the Lord, your praise has the potential to clear the spiritual atmosphere in a meeting. Let's look at an example. Two saints attend the same meeting. One enters with a long face, takes her seat, looks solemnly about, and if the meeting seems a little stiff, in need of a blessing, lacking in praise or "tied up," this dear one begins to be burdened and sigh:

"Oh, Lord, what is the matter here? There is such a binding spirit, such a power of darkness. It seems as though the room were filled with demons. Help us, Lord!" Immediately every eye and every thought are directed to the devil, to darkness and to binding spirits and are no longer on Jesus.

When we advertise and meditate upon the strength of the devil, we underestimate the power of the great I AM, the Mighty Conqueror who never lost a battle. Such despondency and burdened agonizing is contagious, and soon everyone is moaning and crying and miserable, and it is not until someone begins "seeing and praising Jesus" that the cloud lifts.

The other saint enters the same meeting, where it seems that not one breath of heavenly gales is stirring, feels the same pressure upon the meeting, and refusing to look at or recognize the enemy, says:

"This is the time to praise Jesus. This is the time to see God arise and scatter His enemies. He has told us that we will do great and mighty things if we will but praise Him, and we know that the enemy cannot lodge or abide in an atmosphere that is

filled with the praises of the Lord." This saint straightway begins to shout:

"Hallelujah! We rejoice in You! We glory in Your might, O King! Victory and honor ever attend Your troops. Power and dominion envelop You. Your glory and presence fill the heavens and the earth. It fills my heart just now. It overflows and fills the room. Why, glory to Jesus! Beloved, the Lord is in our midst. Do you not feel Him? Why, this atmosphere is like that of heaven!"

Such faith and praise is contagious. The fire of unwavering confidence in God that burns within this temple soon leaps over its parapets, spreads first to those in the seats nearby, then on to the farthest corner of the room, inspiring, encouraging, lifting up drooping heads and strengthening feeble knees, and in a moment every eye is fixed on Jesus, His praises fill the tabernacle, souls are blessed, vessels are filled to overflowing, the Latter Rain is heard pattering on the roof, the dry ground is saturated and the wilderness and the desert places are blossoming as the rose!

What was the difference in the two saints? The one recognized and saw the power of the devil and began to bemoan the sad state of affairs, depressing everyone who listened, while the other saw only Jesus in His all-conquering, invincible might and splendor, riding on to sure and certain victory.

VISION OF DEMONS AND ANGELS The Lord taught me a wonderful lesson some time ago that demonstrated the majesty and power of praise. I was seated on the rostrum in my tent during the evening meeting. Every seat in the big tabernacle was filled, the aisles were packed, and outside the tent hundreds and hundreds stood closely packed together.

It was one of the first days of the camp meeting, and conviction had not yet taken the place of curiosity. A great many of the onlookers were Roman Catholics, and the balance

were unused to any demonstration of the power of God, so the air was filled with unbelief, skepticism, scoffing and ridicule. The people would listen as long as we sang. But as soon as anyone endeavored to speak, the whisperings and the murmurings would begin until another song was started.

As I stood there on the platform with my eyes closed, I saw the entire tent surrounded by great black demons, with huge, bat-like wings. Each demon seemed to stand about 10 feet tall, and as they stood in a circle, completely surrounding the tent, they were so close together that their wings touched, tip to tip.

With my eyes still closed, I began to cry out silently to the Lord, "Oh, Lord, what shall I do?" He replied, "Just begin to praise Me. I will do the fighting. You do the praising." So I began to praise Him.

"Praise the Lord!" The first time I said it I noticed the demons seemed to tremble.

"Praise the Lord!" The second time I shouted it. I am sure my voice was heard above every other sound, and I saw each demon take one step backward, away from the tent.

"Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" Each time I said, "Praise the Lord," the demons took a step backward until I lost sight of them in the distance.

"Praise the Lord!" The next time I said it I saw in the distance a circular band of angels standing around the tent.

"Praise the Lord! PRAISE THE LORD!" Each time I praised Him they took one step nearer, another step nearer, still another step nearer, till at last they stood at the very border of the tent—such tall, wonderful-looking angels, with their beautiful, white wings spread so wide that the wings of each touched, tip to tip. Father had sent one of His legions of angels to guard the tent.

Perhaps not another person in the tent saw the vision of this great shining band of angels, yet everyone inside and out must have sensed the presence of the divine, for not only did a great peace steal over my soul, but the whole audience was hushed. When I opened my eyes I could see only the people watching in rapt attention, but when I closed them again I could see the angels just as plainly as I could see the people.

Is it any wonder I believe that the power of praise drives back the enemy and brings down the blessing?

Read a companion devotional.

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