

How Women Lead the Way in Reaping the Reward of Praise and Worship

Women have led the way in praise and worship for the past century, and their work is far from over. God has a special place for women so that they can lead the way in this area. The men will eventually catch up, but you cannot wait for them and jeopardize the reward God wants to give you for your role in the game. Keep the praise and worship flowing because it is the very foundation for the revival that is already underway in the spirit realm. There are some assignments that can only be carried out by you, so you must stay the course and worship God through praise at every opportunity that comes your way.

“Praise and worship” has become a household phrase in charismatic religious circles. When I was growing up in the church, it was called devotional service. Popular Christian music has spiraled upward to the point where it rivals secular music. During the average praise and worship setting, the audience is being entertained by the praise team as opposed to ushering in true worship. When the music and the singing override the worshippers, it becomes a show and not worship. A good worship leader will not allow the music to dominate to the point where the praise team is trying to become stars. There is far too much flesh being flaunted in the presence of God.

When we think of praise and worship, the two words are generally used in the same context, but there is a distinct difference between praise and worship. We worship God for who He is, but we praise Him for what He does. Our heritage of praise and worship comes to us from the ancient Hebrew nation of the Old Testament. The act of praise and worship is found throughout Scripture. This is especially true in the Psalms.

There are 150 psalms divided into five sections. The divisions are as follows: 1-42, 43-79, 80-89, 90-106 and 107-150. The book of Leviticus gives the order of worship, and psalms are focused on praise.

A true worshipper is one who lives a devoted life on a continual basis. The brief period that we share with others in a worship service is just a public expression of our daily practice. In the words of Jesus, "Those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

What Is Praise?

Praise can be defined as "an act of worship or acknowledgement by which virtues or deeds of another are recognized and extolled." This is expressed when we give praise to one another for a noble deed. When we praise God, it is an expression of our gratitude and appreciation to Him for what He does in our lives. As servants of God, this is the highest form of our expression to Him. We praise God for what He does, and we worship Him for who He is. We are called to praise God at all times and in all things. Praise is another way of expressing our faith in His ability to effectively handle those areas in our lives that we have no control over.

We are to praise God both for who He is and for what He does. The entire book of Psalms is a book of praise and worship. Praise is also expressed through adoration and thanksgiving. When the Hebrew nation praised God, it included songs and prayers. Many of the psalms were uttered both individually and corporately. The Israelites worshipped with the full intensity of the body, emotions and will. Psalm 150 describes an all-inclusive act of the entire being.

When I praise, it actually takes me into another zone with God. The Holy Spirit visits my praise session, and it seems like I have an angelic host camping out around me. Until you really learn the secret of praise, your life in Christ will

only be half of what it could be.

The Hebrew language has many words that its speakers use to express their praise. For example, *Halal*—"shout with a loud noise," *Yadah*—"hold out or extend the hands in worship," *Zamar*—"praise with instruments of music."

When Moses was in the wilderness, he told God he would not leave unless His presence went with him. Moses was expressing the heart of every true worshipper. I don't want to live without having the presence of God in my life. I would be too afraid that I would get so far off track that I would lose my soul. If everybody had reverential fear for God, we would not need external forces to keep our communities in control.

Judah was one of the 12 sons of Jacob. The name Judah literally means "to praise." Whenever Israel was forced into battle, the tribesmen of Judah would go first because they knew how to praise God before the battle began. Whatever you do, don't ever let anybody or anything keep the praises of God from your lips. {eoa}

This article is an excerpt from God's Superior Woman: Conquering Her World Through Love by Edward Lee Johnson Sr. Copyright 2007 by Edward Lee Johnson Sr.

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