

Sacrifices of Praise

by Joyce Meyer

My husband always seems happy. Within five minutes of waking, Dave is humming, singing or listening to music as he gets ready for the day. He is definitely a "morning person."

But years ago, I didn't want any music on in the morning. I didn't want singing or humming or noise of any kind. I wanted silence so I could think. The morning was definitely not my favorite time of day.

Back then I didn't realize how important the morning is—especially those first moments after we awaken. God is eager for us to wake up and talk to Him.

The psalmist David talked a lot about mornings, saying, "This is the day that the Lord has made; I will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118:24, paraphrased). David didn't always feel like rejoicing, but he decided to rejoice in God's new day.

It is never good to give in to grumpiness. An irritable attitude can keep us from enjoying God's presence. Psalm 100:4 says that we are to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Without thanksgiving, we can't even get through the gate!

If we want to enter God's presence, we must lay aside all

murmuring and
complaining. We must offer ourselves to Him every day with
joyful hearts and
mouths full of praise, even if we don't feel like it!

Satan tries everything he can to capture our thoughts early in
the morning.

He wants to get us thinking about all the wrong things as soon
as we wake up.

His intent is to steal our peace and joy by upsetting us as
soon as our
alarms go off. That is why it is important to learn how to
defeat the devil
early each day. Every morning is a new opportunity to start
your day right.

The Bible says, "Through Him, therefore, let us constantly and
at all times
offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of
lips that
thankfully acknowledge and confess and glorify His name" (Heb.
13:15, The
Amplified Bible).

God is greatly pleased with our sacrifices of praise, and our
prayers rise
before Him as a sweet-smelling fragrance. Nothing makes Him
happier than when we
bring ourselves to Him each morning and say: "God, here I am.
I want to be a
living sacrifice to You."

Even in the Old Testament, God's people brought freewill
offerings to Him
(see Ex. 35:29). They all had various sacrifices such as
animals, grains and
cereals. The Bible tells us that Moses rose early in the

morning, built an
altar, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to God.
Then he prayed
and read the Book of the Covenant (see Ex. 24:1-7).

Thankfully, God no longer asks us to build an altar out of
rocks, slaughter a
bull, drain its blood and build a fire in order to honor Him
with a burnt
sacrifice. But He does want us to offer our lives each day in
dedicated service
and praise to Him.

There are countless opportunities to praise God throughout the
day. If
thankfulness for your many blessings suddenly rises in your
heart, stop right
then and tell the Lord how grateful you are for all He has
given you. Say: "I
worship You, Lord, for You are worthy to be praised. I need
You, and I just want
to tell You that I love You. Thank You, Father, for
everything."

Today I still need a little more quiet than Dave does in the
morning. But we
both have found the way to start our day out right.

Each morning we set our hearts and minds to follow God and
choose to practice
1 Chronicles 16:10-12: "Let the hearts of those rejoice who
seek the Lord! Seek
the Lord and His strength; yearn for and seek His face and to
be in His presence
continually! [Earnestly] remember the marvelous deeds which He
has done, His
miracles, and the judgments He uttered."

God doesn't want a dead sacrifice anymore. He wants us to be living sacrifices, full of zeal to seek His face and serve Him every day. All we have to do is wake up and say: "Thank You, Lord. I give You a sacrifice of praise. I give You myself, a living sacrifice, ready to live for You today."