

How to Make Your Praise an Intercessory Weapon

How can we keep our perspective set on God in the midst of everyday life circumstances and times of spiritual warfare?

What Not To Do When Dealing With Darkness

First, let me tell you what *not* to do ... *don't* focus on the seemingly overwhelming forces of darkness coming against your life. This is not being spiritual; it's actually giving the devil an advantage. How? We inappropriately start to see a defeated foe as a bigger threat than he actually is.

Yes, we have an enemy. Scripture tells us to "Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). Note how Peter describes that the devil walks about *like* a roaring lion, seeking whom he *may* devour. This tells me two things: 1) The devil, in classic deception mode, masquerades as an intimidating roaring lion (when he is actually defeated and disempowered) and that he is 2) seeking whom he *may* devour, which implies that we have the right to tell him: "No, you may *not* devour my life!" The enemy wants to build strongholds in our minds that say "Yes" to his barrage of deceptions. However, strongholds come tumbling down when we change our agreement.

How do we exercise this Biblical right to change our agreement? One key way is through God-centered praise.

1. Praise agrees with the unchanging nature of God and disagrees with the lies of the enemy.

"Let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and two-edged swords in their hands" (Ps. 149:6).

While there is a time to sing warfare songs, the most effective declarations of praise against the enemy are those that *focus entirely on God*. True praise is a response to His very nature and agrees with who the Bible declares Him to be.

Consider it for a moment. In the Old Testament, when the enemy armies were coming against the people of God, what song did they sing?

“And he consulted with the people and then appointed singers for the Lord and those praising Him in holy attire as they went before those equipped for battle saying, ‘Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever’” (2 Chr. 20:21).

The people of Judah did *not* sing about conquering the enemy; instead, their God-centered declaration represented a supernatural level of faith that already saw the enemy as defeated in the spirit realm. Their praise revealed their perspective: They agreed with God and disagreed with the destructive battle plans of their enemy. Result? Miraculous victory!

Praise breaks our agreement with the enemy because it makes a bold declaration of agreement with the unchanging nature of God. Praise shifts atmospheres because it is a powerful expression of faith in Jesus, who is the same *“yesterday, and today, and forever”* (Heb. 13:8).

Praise, when offered as a sacrifice in the midst of times of confusion, disappointment and hardship, actually carries the supernatural ability to invade and change your circumstances!

2. Praise elevates your perspective, causing you to see from God’s vantage point.

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth” (Ps. 121:1-2).

Praise is not a formula; it's an authentic, intentional lifting of the eyes to the One who is *above* all things. Praise demands a decision to say "No" to the consuming influence of our present problems, and say a resounding "Yes" to the Word of the Lord.

Praise does *not* call us to deny our situations; on the contrary, it enables us to stare conflict in the face with boldness. Why? Genuine, Bible praise is the overflow of a heart *set* on beholding the character, nature, ways and personality of God. When we start to measure the plans of a defeated enemy and the circumstances of life beside the majesty of who our God truly is, we begin to fortify a faith-perspective. We begin to see from Heaven's perspective.

3. Praise brings us into the safety of God's Presence. While Thanksgiving responds to the acts and works of God, Praise takes it a step further. Scripture confirms this in the famous passage, Psalm 100:4, which says:

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise."

Somehow, praise takes us *deeper*. It ushers us closer towards God's manifest presence. Thanksgiving opens up the gates; praise escorts us towards the Person. They actually work together!

Thanksgiving is a boisterous "thank you" for the miracle, the breakthrough, the blessing, the healing, the restoration, and the situation that was turned around. I've heard Pastor Bill Johnson say it this way: "Thanksgiving responds to God's acts, praise responds to God's nature, and worship responds to God's nature."

Praise, on the other hand, is not content to linger in the outer courts of thanksgiving when *more* is available. Thanksgiving is a response to the works of God, which are wonderful and always worth celebrating. However, someone can

actually receive a miracle *while* never intimately knowing the Miracle Maker. There are people who are *not* Christians who can recognize the miraculous work of God in someone's life ... but never accept the invitation to go deeper and actually know God. It's like they live at a distance, admiring God's handiwork, but not allowing His work to bring them into an experiential revelation of His nature and ways.

Consider the contrast in Psalm 103:7: *He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the people of Israel.* In the Old Testament, Israel had seasons of divine visitation, significant breakthrough, miraculous intervention and supernatural deliverance. Yet, in many instances, they remained content to simply applaud the miracles while never going the extra mile that Moses did. He went up into the mountain to meet God, while the rest of the people choose to stand back. The Scripture says that "*The people stood a distance away as Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was*" (Ex. 20:21).

The safest place in the world is the life lived in constant awareness and experience of God's presence. Does this mean we will *never* experience difficulty? No. It does mean that in the midst of difficulty, we are assured of the constant presence of the Greater One who is with us, in us and for us!

Final Thoughts

Don't stand at a distance; *enter in.*

Refuse to agree with the circumstances of life and the deceptions of the enemy; bring your voice into agreement with the unchanging Word of the Lord.

Choose this day that you will lift your eyes and enter into God's presence using the password of *praise.*

Truly, some of the greatest weapons of warfare that you can

ever put into action are the *high praises of God* in your mouth!

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