

Miraculous Divine Intervention Birthed by Thanksgiving and Praise

Read Time: 4 Minutes 2 Seconds

When I first became a believer in 1970, my mother was one of my first “converts,” giving her heart to Jesus as soon as I shared with her the beauty, the power and the opportunity of making Jesus the Lord of her life. However, my father was quite the opposite: very reluctant about receiving my newfound insights about being “born again.”

He had been committed to a Catholic belief system for most of his life. As the commander of a destroyer in the Navy, he even chose as the ship emblem the popular picture of Jesus standing behind a sailor at the helm. But something must have happened to discourage him. He stopped attending mass and seemed to internalize his belief system, however it evolved. Most likely, he still had faith in God, but church attendance and denominational affiliation went out the window.

Moreover, he just did not want to discuss with me the biblical beliefs I had come to embrace. For 12 years, my mother and I kept interceding for him. My mother even went on a 40-day fast in his behalf. Then God intervened—remarkably, powerfully and undoubtedly.

God is in the business of making all things work together for good when we incline our hearts toward Him—and sometimes that promise overflows to our family members. My dad began suffering a serious physical problem: a vertebra slipped in his neck and for seven days, his head was locked in a bowed position.

Did you get that? His head was locked in a bowed position (God

certainly does have a sense of humor.) After agonizing for a week, he finally checked into the hospital, hoping for a resolution to the problem that would bring some relief. Little did he know that within the next few hours, he would arrive at the most important pivotal point in his entire life—a monumental moment that would be retold again and again.

Late that night, he called me and shared what happened. He explained, “I was laying there in the hospital bed with nothing to do, so, I thought to myself, ‘My head’s already in a bowed position; I might as well pray.’” (My response to that statement was, “Subtle hint from heaven, Dad!”)

He continued, “I decided to go back to my earliest memories and thank God for every blessing, every beneficial thing, that had ever happened in my life.” It took him two hours. Then he decided to just praise God because He is God. When he got to that point in the story, I blurted out, “Dad, that’s a biblical concept. Psalm 100 commands God’s people to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.” He responded, “I don’t know about all that; all I know is the powerful thing that happened to me next.” I was rapt with attention.

Dad explained, “As I was praising God, a golden cloud swept into the hospital room and the face of Jesus, beaten, bloodied and crowned with thorns appeared in the cloud. Then the cloud shifted from a golden color to a crimson red and waves of red light began pouring over me.” He excitedly concluded, “I knew I was being bathed in the blood of Jesus and I knew I was being born again.”

I was awestruck. My father wasn’t even asking to be saved—but when He approached God with a grateful heart, the windows of heaven opened and our heavenly Father granted him a transformational experience that drastically changed the whole trajectory of his life. For about a month, every time he tried to relate what happened, tears of rejoicing would flow.

He was a changed man from that day forward. He eventually became an adult Sunday school teacher in an interdenominational church in the little town of Canton, North Carolina, where he and my mother had built a retirement cabin. So, from the beginning of his walk with God, my father learned the power of exhibiting a thankful heart—a concept that was reconfirmed to me all the more when I witnessed the miraculous change that came to him.

I encourage you to do something similar. Find a place to be alone and spend quality time thanking God for every good thing that has ever happened in your life and thanking Him for all the ways He has healed you of bad things that have happened—and even redeemed those negative things and brought forth positive outcomes. Then just praise God because He is God; exalt His name—just for the sake of worship—not asking Him to do anything else!

I have often said that if there was a ninth beatitude it could easily be, “Blessed are the grateful, for God often manifests the miraculous in their lives.” If it worked that powerfully for a man who wasn’t yet in a surrendered relationship with God, how much more should this be the case for those who are submitted sons and daughters of the Almighty God!

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