

PRAISE

PUT ON THE GARMENT OF PRAISE
The Practice of Praise, The Power of Praise

If you look for bad, you will surely find it. If you look for good, you will surely find it. What is it you choose to look for? Praise is a choice. Praise is a habit. Praise shapes perspective and encourages hope. Praise confirms God present.

It is probably hard to pinpoint the beginning of a habit. It is easier to recognize a trend, easier to identify the fruits or the consequences of a habit. I like to explore the meanings of words. Although all of the truth is not found in the dictionary, I often begin there as I study an idea and work for insight.

What is a habit? One surprise emerged from the first two definitions: 1) dress, garb, attire; 2) particular costume. After that, the dictionary says that a habit implies settled disposition or tendency due to repetition. Then the Holy Spirit whispered in my ear, “Garment of praise.” So I went looking in the Bible.

The “garment of praise” is found in Isaiah 61:3 King James Version. The book of Isaiah is named for a great prophet who lived in Jerusalem in the latter half of the 8th century B.C. Chapter 61 was addressed to people who had been threatened by a powerful enemy, exiled far from their home, and by chapter 61 were back in Jerusalem. Isaiah spoke to a people who needed reassurance that God was going to fulfill his promises to them. Notably, these words of Isaiah 61:1-2 were also used by Jesus at the beginning of his ministry to express his calling (Luke 4:16-20, esp. 18, 19).

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” Isaiah 61:1-3 KJV

“The Sovereign Lord has filled me with his spirit. He has chosen me and sent me to bring good news to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to announce release to captives and freedom to those in prison. 2 He has sent me to proclaim that the time has come when the Lord will save his people and defeat their enemies. He has sent me to comfort all who mourn, 3 to give to those who mourn in Zion joy and gladness instead of grief, a song of praise instead of sorrow. They will be like trees that the Lord himself has planted.” Isaiah 61:1-3 Good News

What is praise? The dictionary tells me this word, earlier from Latin meaning *to prize*, means to express approbation. What is approbation?? The obsolete definition is *proof*.

Name what you value. Express proof of God present and at work in your life.

We know that practice is the repetitious performance of an action.

The Practice of Praise is repeatedly identifying, naming, and proclaiming the ways you acknowledge God’s presence in your life and God at work in your life.

Hear what the Scriptures say: Moses is speaking to Israel after delivering a second time the Ten Commandments. *“Praise him—he is your God, and you have seen with your own eyes the great and astounding things that he has done for you.”* Deuteronomy 10:21 Good News

On his own faith journey, David speaks in the assembly, before the people. Jesus also speaks Psalm 22:22 as he begins his public ministry. This is recorded in Hebrews 2:12.

"I will tell my people what you have done; I will praise you in their assembly; 23 'Praise him, you servants of the Lord! Honor him, you descendants of Jacob! Worship him, you people of Israel! 24 He does not neglect the poor or ignore their suffering; he does not turn away from them, but answers when they call for help.' 25 In the full assembly I will praise you for what you have done; in the presence of those who worship you I will offer the sacrifices I promised." Psalm 22:22-25
Good News

All the world, all the earth.....

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."
Psalm 100 KJV

Power means the possession of sway. Power means a controlling influence.

The Power of Praise is the controlling influence of identifying, claiming, receiving the presence of God in our lives and proclaiming God at work in our lives.

Power is exerted energy, force, might.

The Power of Praise is the strength and force of naming, claiming, proclaiming God's presence, God's work.

As Paul writes to the church at Philippi, so also is my prayer for you, for us all.

4 "Always be full of joy in the Lord; I say it again, rejoice! 6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs and don't forget to thank him for his answers. 7 If you do this you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.

8 And now, brothers, as I close this letter let me say this one more thing: Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely, and dwell on the fine, good things in others. Think about all you can praise God for and be glad about." Philippians 4: 4, 6-8 Living Bible

Let us put on "the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," that we might be called "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Amen.

Written by Nancy Denison and used with permission