

## Praise Ye the Lord!

By Pastor Reimar Schultze

### *“Praise Ye the Lord!”*

Praiselessness is the birthplace of all unrighteousness.

There are well over 100 admonitions in the Bible telling us to *“Praise the Lord.”* I remind you, however, these calls to praise are not just requests for thoughts of praise or for whispered or mumbled expressions of gratitude. Rather, they are, as a whole, calls for hearty, verbal expressions of thanksgiving toward him who made us, who saved us, and who keeps us. Indeed, **verbal** praise is what the writer of Hebrews had in mind when he wrote, *“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name”* (Heb. 13:15 emphasis added).

Now, if the church would pay as much attention to the many calls to praise as to the few clear passages on the rebirth, what kind of a church would we have? Or let’s put it this way: if there were over 100 biblical references to the rebirth, would scholars miss it? I believe it is obvious that there is a problem of attitude, scholarship, and spiritual blindness relating to the doctrine and practice of praise. Now, in this message, I intend to set forth four things: 1) that God commands us to praise him, 2) that much of our praise should be audible, 3) what praise does to help us, and 4) why it is obnoxious to some people to hear praise.

### **God Commands Praise.**

Let’s look at the biblical history of praise. All of creation is in praise to God. God said to Job, *“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”* (Job 38:4, 7). The angels, observing the creation of the universe, shouted for joy, the stars began their songs at creation and have never ceased. Psalm 148, my friend, puts the creation story into a symphony of praise:

*Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.*

*Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.*

*Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light* (Ps. 148:1–3).

Oh, can you observe that everything that God placed into the universe was commanded to praise him from the inception of its existence? Can you see the Genesis 1 creation order in Psalm 148? Hallelujah! Let’s continue:

*Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:*

*Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:*

*Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:*

*Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:*

*Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:*

*Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children;*

*Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent;*

*his glory is above the earth and heaven* (vv. 7–13).

Hallelujah! All creation is praising God and does praise the Lord—except for most men. How many theologians, Christian scholars, ministers, deacons, and church members do you know who fulfill their daily duty to praise God and who teach others to do likewise? How many of these precious persons do you know who will teach the necessity of praising the Lord with the same ardor and thoroughness as they preach the doctrine of salvation?

Listen, the apostle Paul brilliantly traces *all* sins, *all* perversion, and *all* spiritual decay to the neglect of praise. In Romans, Chapter 1, he tells us that every single problem of the human heart has its beginning in the neglect of praise. Here Paul says that all men begin with the knowledge of God through creation but *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (Rom. 1:21–22). Everyone who sees God’s marvelous creation should break out in praise to God—everyone, saved or unsaved. If this is not done, the cancer of sin will take over every area of our lives.

Notice the list of sins given to us from verse 26 to 32, coming out of praiselessness: fornication, homosexuality, rebellion, murder, deceit, envy, criticism, jealousy, bitterness, impatience and lust. Homosexuality is not the result of genetic, social, hormonal or chemical abnormalities, but the consequence of man refusing to praise God frequently! Have you ever seen people who praise the Lord frequently indulging in homosexuality, deceit or bitterness? My friend, if we stay in praise to God, we stay out of trouble. That’s Romans, Chapter 1! Oh, can you hear the depths of the cry of God from Psalm 107, where it says, *“Oh that men would praise the LORD...”* (vv. 8, 15, 21, 31)? How deep is that *“Oh”*?

God gave us the Praise Psalms so that we would be continually encouraged to exalt his holy name. He wants us to use them all the time, not just on occasional Sundays. Paul is not just talking when he says, *“Rejoice evermore...In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you”* (I Thess. 5:16, 18)?

## **Praise Must Be Audible.**

By audible, I mean that praise must be audible to the human ear, the angels' ears, the devil's and the demons' ears. That is why the Scripture is not short in admonishing us to LOUD praise, such as we find in the Psalms: make a loud noise, rejoice and sing praise, and make a joyful noise unto the Lord. In the Gospels, there was loud praise by the angels at the birth of Jesus. In Luke, as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, it says, "*the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice.*" Some of the Pharisees asked Jesus to rebuke his disciples, but Jesus said, "*I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*" (19:37, 40).

Jesus liked the loud praise he heard. He lived in it before he became flesh. He had it in heaven all the time, and he missed it on earth. Loud praise had been his dwelling place in heaven! It made him feel at home, even while away from home, to hear the children praise him out loud.

"Well," you say, "it disturbs the meeting!" If that is your only excuse, then, how much do you praise God out loud alone, at home, in your car, etc.? And if you think that loud praise disturbs the meeting—whatever meeting you go to—what will you do in heaven where praise **IS** the meeting?

The early church was born in loud praise! So we find praise in the book of Acts. Luke said that the first Christians were "*Praising God, and having favour with all the people*" (2:47). How did Luke know that the Christians were praising God? Because it was audible.

The Revelation reverberates with loud praise, because John heard it! Friend, the closer John got to the throne, the more loudly was the praise he heard. There John *heard* four creatures in and around the throne saying, "*Holy, holy, holy...*" (Rev. 4:8). He *heard* the 24 elders saying "*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power...*" (4:11). He *heard* the voice of many angels "*saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power...*" (5:12). He *heard* "*every creature in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth, in the sea, and all that are in them, saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*" (5:13 paraphrased).

Where is your praise—your *daily, audible* praise? You say that you believe everything in the Bible, but what do we call someone who believes everything in the Bible and does not do it?

It is a tragedy of my own life that from my conversion at age 16 until age 35, I don't recall ever having praised God out loud. My most noble response to any blessing of God was to say, "That's good." Of all the teachers, ministers, church men, scholars and theologians, none, not a one ever taught me of the necessity of praising God out loud. So then, at age 35, I attended a meeting where people praised God out loud with their arms uplifted for *forty-five consecutive minutes*. I thought they were crazy. As a man out of Germany, steeped in rational thinking, suspicious of all emotionalism and self-proclaimed prophets, and educated in science, philosophy and theology, I held at arms length everything you could not prove in a test-tube or by a rational equation. Praising God out loud was foolishness to me, irrational, unnecessary, unscriptural, and unproductive. But, when my six-foot-five-inch stature allowed me to look around and behold the faces of these "crazy" people praising God, I made a rather irrational discovery. They all reflected the Shekinah glory of God on their faces. I imagined the pitiful, resentful, disgusted, proud look on my own face, and I decided that if THIS produces THAT, let pride and logic go. My arms went up, and my lips opened to give that audible sacrifice of praise; and I have kept it up ever since through these last three decades. My daily, protracted times of praise have become my greatest friend in keeping the victorious life.

## **How Does Praise Help Us?**

First of all, praise makes us feel better in our souls. Whenever we do what God tells us to do, we feel better. Dozens of people have accused me that my teaching makes them feel condemned or

miserable. The trouble is not my teaching. The trouble is that when people don't obey God and don't believe God, they feel condemned and miserable. Jesus said, "*He that believeth not is condemned already*" (John 3:18). Belief never brings condemnation—but unbelief does. If we would simply believe that we need to do what God tells us and do it, we will have joy unspeakable and full of glory. Obey God, praise God, and you will feel better, and any spirit of condemnation will leave you.

God inhabits the praises of his people (Ps. 22:3). Don't you want God to inhabit you? If you want God's presence in your daily life, praise him!

Praise drives away anxiety and the fear of man. It destroys self-pity, squelches unbelief, drives away criticism, murmurings, and jealousies. Praise rejects sadness, brings gladness, and ends madness. Praise starves the old man and feeds the new man. Praise prevents us from saying things that we otherwise would but shouldn't say. Praise multiplies mercy, stops covetousness, chokes stubbornness, simplifies submission, cancels condemnation, builds up the good, tears down the evil, purifies, restores, and keeps our vision, and brings sanctified attachments. Praise places God's armor upon us and shines it. It ushers in the cross and removes the dross, and builds confidence in Christ. Praise keeps us close to the men of God and keeps out coldness toward our spouses. It increases our burden for the lost, the unsanctified, and the needy. Praise destroys our confidence in the flesh and helps us to believe God's promises. Praise prevents us from polluting, diluting, amending or misinterpreting God's revelations. Praise sharpens our discernment, brightens our hope, and aids us in understanding the Scriptures. Praise brings us to brokenness, yieldedness, poverty of spirit, and meekness of heart. It builds a defense against temptations. Praise is the breath of trust and the milk for new converts to get fat on. "*Oh, that men would praise the LORD!*"

### **Why Is Praise So Obnoxious?**

Praise is obnoxious because all of hell is against it. People that have had "out of body" experiences and who have looked down upon the earth have seen it covered with multiplied millions of demons. Earth is the devil's domain. He is the prince of the world. Earth is his last stand! The demons are in every place where audible praise is not frequented! They are in cars, in homes, and in churches. They congregate to create misunderstanding, division, doubt, unbelief, and jealousy whenever men gather. They feed lies and gossip. They plant wickedness, lust, greed, adultery, and fornication in people's hearts. They are everywhere where praise is not heard! But Satan and the demons cannot stand praise!!! When men praise God, the devils flee.

Oh, my friend, let people call you what they may. Stop your rationalizations and just simply *do what God tells you to do*. God's character demands praise. God deserves praise because he is perfect; and he will dwell where praise is found. So just keep on praising the Lord. It will keep you out of trouble and open the gates of blessing to your heart.

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