

“The Power of Praise”

Pastor Dale Campfield - June 26th, 2011

Intro:

Matt 28:19 “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Upcoming Sermon Series: “God Pleasers” – 49 Days of Faith

Theme Verses: Hebrews 11:6 “Without faith, it is impossible to please God.”

Sermon Topics

Expecting the Best, Taking Risks in Faith, Following God’s Directions
How to Keep on Believing, Taking the Initiative. Stretching My Imagination
Persisting in Faith

How do you get God's approval? By being more good than bad? No. By keeping the Ten Commandments? No. By promising to be perfect? No. By being religious and going to church? No. The Bible says there's only one way to get God's approval. There's only one way to get God's smile on your life. In Hebrews 11:6 it says, “*Without faith it is impossible to please God.*” The only way you can get God's approval is by faith in Jesus Christ, His Son. You may be a great person but without faith it's impossible to please God. You may do all kinds of great things in your life but without faith it's impossible to please God.

Would you say that faith is a pretty important issue? Yes, it is. It is vital that you learn how to live by faith. That you strengthen your faith. If you want to make an IMPACT in life; being a God pleaser – you've got to have faith!

For the next forty-nine days, between July 3 and August 14 2011, we'll be entering into a seven week or 49-day series called “God Pleasers – 49 Days of Faith.” In this series we're going to stretch your faith, we're going to challenge your faith, we're going to deepen your faith, we're going to strengthen your faith and you're going to see all kinds of amazing things happen in your life as your faith grows.

TODAY: “The Power of Praise”

You've heard me say it time and time again, "When the Praise Goes Up, the Power Comes Down." It was true before I said it, and it'll be true after I've said it. With praise comes strength. With praise to the Lord, He gives us power. When we lift Jesus up; all men are drawn unto Him; and as we are drawn unto Him, He gives us strength.

Praise gives us relief in the midst of living life.

Illus: Whales needing air in the ice.

I recently heard about a scene that captivated audiences around the globe a few years ago. It was where three gray whales, icebound off Point Barrow, Alaska, floated battered and bloody, gasping for breath at a hole in the ice. Their only hope was to somehow be transported five miles past the icepack into the open sea. Rescuers began cutting a string of breathing holes about twenty yards apart in the six-inch-thick ice. For eight days they coaxed the whales from one hole to the next, mile after mile. Along the way, one of the whales vanished and was presumed dead. But finally, the other two whales made it to safety, and swam to freedom.

And in a way, worship is one of the breathing holes that the Lord gives us along the way. And even in the ocean of worship itself, there will be a string of breathing holes that we must rise up to in order to stay alive. Battered and bruised in a world frozen over by sinfulness and callousness, we rise for air along the way, and that's one reason why some have come here today. The church should be a place where we can come breathe again, to be loved and encouraged, until the day when the ice cap of sin and it's melted away in the light of His awesome glory!

We should worship God every day. But the Lord's Day is a special day when we come together for fellowship together, to pray together, to learn together, and also to worship together. And so, even this day, the Lord's Day, is a type of a breathing hole. And I think that's why the devil fights us in services, in preparation, in various ways. He is trying to hold us under the ice and keep us from getting our breath. More than that, he doesn't want us to catch GOD'S BREATH! And so, what must we do to win this battle, this warfare over worship? What must we do to keep breathing properly?

2 Chr. 5: 11 – 14 (the opening of Solomon's Temple)

11 And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to their divisions),

12 and the Levites who were the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets –

13 indeed it came to pass, (oh...let it come to pass in Cincinnati) when the trumpeters and singers were as one, (they were in unity, no pride, no showmanship, humble) to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,"

...that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, 14 so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

Today's English Version says:

As the priests were leaving the Temple, it was suddenly filled with a cloud shining with the dazzling light of the LORD's presence,

LET IT BE SO IN CINCINNATI!**CLOUD**

ʿanan OT:6051, "cloud; fog; storm cloud; smoke." Cognates of this word appear in Aramaic and Arabic. Its 87 appearances are scattered throughout the biblical material.

Exod. 13:21 "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way..."

Ex 34:5 "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him [Moses] there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord."

1 Kings 8:10-11 When the ark of the covenant was brought into the holy place, "The cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord".

Thus the "cloud" evidenced the presence of God's glory. So the psalmist wrote that God was surrounded by "clouds and darkness" **Ps 97:2**; God appears as the controller and sovereign of nature.

This description is somewhat parallel to the descriptions of Baal, the lord of the storm and god of nature set forth in Ugaritic mythology. The "cloud" is a sign and figure of "divine protection" in **Isa 4:5** and serves as a barrier hiding the fullness of divine holiness and glory, as well as barring sinful man's approach to God in **Lam 3:44**. Man's relationship to God, therefore, is God-initiated and God-sustained, not humanly initiated or humanly sustained.

ʿAnan can represent the "smoke" arising from burning incense: "And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not..." **Lev 16:13**. This "cloud of smoke" may represent the covering between God's presence (above the mercy seat) and sinful man. If so, it probably also symbolizes the "divine glory." On the other hand, many scholars feel it represents the human prayers offered up to God.

Today I want to share with you about the [**Breakthrough Power of Praise**](#).

Let's stand and read together out loud: Psalm 150.

Psalm 150 NKJV

1 Praise the LORD!

Praise God in His sanctuary;

Praise Him in His mighty firmament!

2 Praise Him for His mighty acts;

Praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet;

Praise Him with the lute and harp!

4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance;

Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!

5 Praise Him with loud cymbals;

Praise Him with clashing cymbals!

6 Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD!

What is praise?

“Oh, that’s easy. Praise is the three fast choruses we sing to start the meeting, and then worship is the three slow ones we sing after that!” Is that right? No it’s not.

Greek Word: “Doxa” = GLORY!

Did you realize that in the New Testament the words praise, worship, glory, and honor are ALL translated from the same one Greek word?! It’s true; the word is “doxa”, and its base meaning is GLORY. How it is translated depends solely on the context.

If there is any difference between praise and worship it is simply that:

WORSHIP is how we **esteem** God - it’s the attitude of **adoration** in the heart.

You can worship God without a sound.

PRAISE, however, is the **articulation** of that **adoring** heart.

When we praise God we give vent and voice to our heart of worship.

Worship has to do with **ESTIMATION**.

Praise has to do with **ARTICULATION**.

But both mean to give God esteem - to commend Him highly.

So, when the Bible tells us to “PRAISE” Him, it’s calling us to give vent to our adoring heart. Worship can be silent, but praise NEVER is. Whether the song is slow or fast, or even if it’s not a song at all but perhaps a shout or applause, it’s irrelevant, but we are called to ARTICULATE the adoration of our hearts.

“MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE TO THE LORD!”

So don’t say: “I’m praising silently”. You can’t “praise” silently. You may be worshipful - you may be adoring - but “PRAISE” requires action or voice!

Illus: Praising my children.

When my son does something great, I can sit there and in my heart say, “that’s my boy.” But when I want him to hear it, I shout it out, “Great Job Son!” We need to shout it out to the Lord, “Great job God! I love you, you are incredible! I give you all honor and praise.” Then, at times, we just sit back and reflect upon God’s awesomeness in our hearts without saying a word. We esteem God in the adoration of our hearts!

There is power in praise. When the Praise Goes Up...The Power Comes Down!

Breakthrough takes place!

There is power in lifting your voice in a song or a shout or a prayer of praise. Something happens when we applaud and magnify God. Today, we're going to look at many different scriptures that deal with "BREAKTHROUGH PRAISE".

Here are four things that happen when we begin to praise the Lord.

4 Benefits of Breakthrough Praise

1. BREAKTHROUGH PRAISE SECURES GOD'S MANIFEST PRESENCE.

2 Chr. 5: 11 – 14 (the opening of Solomon's Temple)

11 And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to their divisions),

12 and the Levites who were the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets –

13 indeed it came to pass, (oh...let it come to pass in Cincinnati) when the trumpeters and singers were as one, (they were in unity, no pride, no showmanship, humble) to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,"

...that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, 14 so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

Today's English Version says:

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There are certain times in your life when you just need God's manifest presence to show up. We all know that He is an Omnipresent God; everywhere at the same time. So that's not what I'm talking about. We know He's here. But there are times when I need Him to be manifest before me. When I can truly feel, see, smell, taste, observe His presence in a very tangible way. When I need a visible miracle. When I need hope. When I'm at the end of my rope and I need a sign from God that everything's going to be okay.

When I praise Him, it secures His manifest presence. He shows up. When I lift my voice to Him, He shows up. I need God to show up at work. I need God to show up in my house. I need God to show up here at Eastgate Community Church! The glory of God in His House! Now I can preach for that, and we can pray for that - but there comes a time when we've just got to BREAK THROUGH. In this passage we read that the coming of the shekinah glory - GOD'S MANIFEST PRESENCE - is linked with His people praising Him.

PSALM 22:3 - "God dwells in the praises of His people."

But You are holy, O You Who dwell in [the holy place where] the praises of Israel [are offered].
AMP Praise secures God's manifest presence.

2. **BREAKTHROUGH PRAISE SECURES VICTORY.**

2 CHRON. 20:15-30 (Jehoshaphat v Moab and Ammon).

15 And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. 16 Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. 17 You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you." 18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. 19 Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high. 20 So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper." 21 And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: "Praise the LORD, For His mercy endures forever." 22 Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated. 23 For the people of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly kill and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. 24 So when Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; and there were their dead bodies, fallen on the earth. No one had escaped. 25 When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them an abundance of valuables on the dead bodies, and precious jewelry, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away; and they were three days gathering the spoil because there was so much. 26 And on the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the LORD; therefore the name of that place was called The Valley of Berachah until this day. 27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies. 28 So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the LORD. 29 And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. 30 Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

On this occasion, "Praise became the song of the supernatural".

You need a victory in some area of your life?! Instead of focusing all the time on that situation, on that mountain, **START TO PRAISE HIM!** God inhabits praise!

Psalm 149:5-9

Here we see the PRAISE, coupled with the declaration of God's Word, binds the enemy in chains.

5 Let the saints be joyful in glory; Let them sing aloud on their beds.
6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,
And a two-edged sword in their hand,
7 To execute vengeance on the nations, And punishments on the peoples;
8 To bind their kings with chains, And their nobles with fetters of iron;
9 To execute on them the written judgment -- This honor have all His saints.
Praise the LORD!

Did you know that PRAISE is a very good way to resist the devil?!

(The Bible says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you!") The devil's most common methods of attack are to bring discouragement, negativity, hopelessness, despair into our lives - to paralyze us from within - to get our eyes off God. If that's what he's about in your life, then the best way to deal with him is to START PRAISING THE LORD. Get your eyes back on the greatness of God and declare His praises. Sing and shout of His love, and His faithfulness, and His goodness, and His mighty power. And you watch the enemy flee. His power of discouragement - HIS LIES - will be broken! Hallelujah!

Praise secures victory! You want to get the devils attention: start to praise!

Illus: You...listen...(point someone out)

3. BREAKTHROUGH PRAISE SECURES AN UNBURDENING.

ISAIAH 61: 1 - 3

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are
bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our
God; To comfort all who mourn,
And...

3 To console those who mourn in Zion,
To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

There are people here today carrying a burden. Weighed down by a crushing load. You're living with a "spirit of heaviness". Did you ever see that cartoon character (I can't remember who it was) but everywhere he went there was a rain cloud over him. You know WE can get into a defeated attitude that we feel like that.

The Bible tells us, "put on the garment of PRAISE for the spirit of heaviness". OR, in other words, "EXCHANGE THAT SPIRIT OF HEAVINESS FOR PRAISES!"

Oh, I've had times when I've felt heavy - downcast - had that "gnawing" know in the pit of my stomach because of fear, worry, stress, anxiety. But I've know what it is to have it LIFT as I've begun to PRAISE!

Sometimes, in those difficult hours of being burdened with something, praise feels like it's just a sheer act of the will in determination. David knew that experience - he had to stir himself: "Bless the Lord oh my soul, and all that is within me bless His Holy Name."

But once you start to do it, PRAISE SECURES AN UNBURDENING. You exchange that heavy spirit for a garment of praise!

Illus: Pocket Praise

All of us need to carry in our back pocket, our purse, our wallet, something that we can read or sing out loud that will give God praise. What's your Pocket Praise Tune? Pocket Praise Scripture? Do you have one?

4. BREAKTHROUGH PRAISE SECURES RELEASE.

Acts 16:25-26

But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed...

Again, the #1 lesson of this story is that the circumstances we find ourselves in ought to be irrelevant in our determination to praise God.

Whatever the prison may be that you find yourself in today. . .

- A business enterprise you should never have taken on.
- A relationship you should never have entered into.
- Some habit or addiction from your past - you've given your life to Christ, but that thing is like a monkey on your back.
- The pressure of your finances.
- The stress in your marriage or difficulties in your family.
- The uncertainty of your future and not knowing what's going to happen next.

. . . WHATEVER it may be - begin to praise the Lord. Get your eyes off the prison bars and onto Jesus! Praise Him! Exalt Him! Testify of His goodness and power.

PRAISE SECURES RELEASE. Hallelujah!

Joel 2:1 the blowing of the Shofar.

Blow the trumpet in Zion,
And sound an alarm in My holy mountain!

Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble;
For the day of the LORD is coming,
For it is at hand:

1 Peter 2:9-10

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

CONCLUSION:

Breakthrough!

We've broken through in intercession;
The Lord has heard our cry,
For the vision that was instilled in us
Refused to lay down and die.

With a burst of advanced knowledge--
A revelation from our Lord--
He compels us to go forward
By the Spirit of God and His Sword.

Every line of Satan's defense,
The Lord will propel us through.
Like Perez*, we're called to be breakers;
Our birthing is long overdue.

With breakthrough prayers
And with breakthrough praise,
We've held onto our God-given vision;
With breakthrough faith in our glorious God,
We will see His abundant provision.

For the Lord is not like men who lie;
His Word is faithful and true.
If He said He will do it, it's as good as done;
Let us all do our part--He'll come through.

And the land that now dwells in darkness
Will burst forth as a fruitful tree,
'Cause we're breaking through
By God's power within
And setting the captives free!

*Genesis 38:29: "But he drew back his hand, and behold, his brother was born first. And she said, 'What a breaking forth you have made for yourself!' Therefore his name was called Perez [breaking forth]. . . ."

*Elsie Cuevas
Selden, NY*

Now...Let's praise the Lord, and experience Breakthrough in our lives!
It usually happens in the supernatural first, then begins to manifest itself in the natural.

As you praise Him today, don't say, "well, nothing happened." If you could see into the supernatural, you'd know that something is happening!

It's Time for Breakthrough Praise

And as you do.... You wait, you watch, you'll see!