

Challenge your current thoughts and feelings about praise by examining what scripture says about it.

A. IT IS AN ATTITUDE

- Jesus said that God is seeking worshipers, those who will choose to worship Him in spirit and in truth: Jn 4:23-24 TM – Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is looking for: those who are simply and honestly themselves before Him in their worship.
- In spirit – we don't just go through the motions of praising God, but we actually engage our inmost beings in it.
- In truth – we are honest about the reality of where we are, where we've failed, what we are feeling.
- Pray that you would be a worshiper in everything you do, not just in so-called "spiritual" activities.

B. IT IS AN ACTION

- Praise is a great way to practice seeking God with your whole heart: Ps 111:1 – I will praise the Lord with all my heart . . . in the assembly
- Jesus opened the doors of heaven for us by His death on the Cross, but we must enter those doors. We do this whenever we praise the Lord: Ps 100:2, 4 – Come before His presence with singing...enter His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise
- Study the different words that the Bible uses for praise and the scriptures referenced. Look for ideas on how to express worship to God:
 - Barouch -- to bow in God's presence; to kneel in adoration; to be overwhelmed by the favor and majesty of the Lord. (Used 325 times) (Ps 72:15, 95:6)
 - Halell -- to praise, boast of, celebrate; to be clamorously foolish; to dance; the root word for "hallelujah". (Used 166 times) (Refs: Ps. 69:30, 150:4, 149:3)
 - Yadah -- to worship with raised hands; *yad* means hands; hands lifted in response to what God has done; to throw out the hands to give thanks to God; an outward expression of what's on the inside. (Used 114 times) (Refs: Ps 9:1, 67:3)
 - Zamar -- to praise God with any instrument; to pluck the strings of an instrument with song. (Used 42 times) (Refs: Ps 30:12, 2Sam 30:12)
 - Towdah -- to corporately worship God with raised hands; praising God despite the circumstance, pushing through walls that have been built; praise that is lifted to heaven in time of need; possibly palms up in position of expectancy of receiving from God. (Used 32 times) (Ref: Ps 50:23)
 - Shabach -- a shout; praise that is given before the answer comes about; a public testimony that drowns out noise. (Used 11 times) (Ref: Ps 63:3)
 - Tehillah -- an elaborate expression that combines all the other words for praise. (Used 57 times) (Refs: Ps 149:1, 78:4)
- Incorporate these expressions of adoration in your personal and corporate worship times.

C. IT IS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- In worship, we acknowledge that God is holy and worthy of our praise: Ps 99:5 AMP – Extol the Lord our God and worship at His footstool! Holy is He!
- Holiness is that aspect of God that guarantees that He will never be less than Who He is. He is whole and complete, lacking in nothing and will never stop being faithful, true, good, loving, and powerful.
- Worship strengthens our sense of connection between our holy heavenly Father and us, His flawed, favored, and forgiven children.
- As we wholeheartedly seek God in worship, He infuses us with His holiness. This is one of ways that we can fulfill God's commandment: 1 Pt 1:16 – Be holy, for I am holy.

D. IT ALLOWS ACCESS TO OUR INNERMOST BEINGS

- Although entering God's presence through worship gives us a greater awareness of our unholiness, opening to God in worship invites Him to transform us to become more and more like Him:
 - Is 6:5 NIV – “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”
 - 2 Cor 3:18 KJV – But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.
- Take a moment to ponder this amazing opportunity. Use your spiritual journal to record any positive or negative thoughts that come to mind.

E. IT IS AN ACT OF THE WILL

- By an act of our will, we choose to invite God's presence as we sing His praises: Ps 22:3 NAS – You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.
- Singing spiritual songs gives us the opportunity to rehearse what God says to be true and to agree with it in every part of our beings.
- Sometimes our choice to praise God requires us to push past our current comfort zones. It is the same with any exercise, physical or spiritual – we are required to stretch in order to grow stronger.
- As we make the choice to articulate and meditate on scriptural truths, God's word will dwell in us richly and make us wise: Col 3:16 NLT – Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his words to teach and counsel each other. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.
- Pray, asking that, no matter where you are in your life of worship, God will take you deeper in desiring to know our Lord Jesus through the avenue of praise.