Release in Praise

Guidelines for Group Bible Studies

The gospel records of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem tell the story of a whole crowd of disciples who began to praise God in loud voices. They were simple-hearted and guileless people who acknowledged the kingship of Jesus, praising God in the open air. Afterwards we read of children shouting their hosannas in the temple area. It is obvious that these folk were not inhibited in their praises by the presence of unbelievers or religious traditionalists. The Pharisees wanted them rebuked, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were indignant, but Jesus quotes from Psalm 8:2, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength..." (cf. MATT 21:16). If praise had its origin in man we would have a right to question it, but the commendation of Jesus shows that it has its origin in God. Not only did God originate it, but Jesus identifies with it (HEB 2:11,12).

Praise is Important

It is not just a charismatic fad or a new "in thing." David was so convinced of the power of praise that he had no less than 4,000 people employed to do it (1.CHR 23:5). Note also his last instructions (vs. 30,31). God inhabits the praises of His people (PSA 22:3). Praise is an essential part of keeping filled with the Spirit ( Eph 5:18,19). True praise will always lead to worship (REV 5:11-14).

Praise is Right

It is Fitting

It is Proper

"Praise is comely for the upright." says the Psalmist (PSA 33:1). It is appropriate in the presence of the unsaved (PSA 109:30). As we sing the new song in praise to God, "many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." (PSA 40:3). Praise has its place in world evangelism. The Psalmist again says, "I will sing praises unto thee among the nations." (PSA 108:3) - cf. Psalm 57:9. We must deliberately put on the garments of praise (ISA 61:3). Read the inscriptions to Psalm 3, 34, 51, 52, 56, 57, 59 and see in what circumstances David praised the Lord.

Praise has a Vital Place in Public Worship

We are to "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise." (PSA 100:4). We are to "exalt his name together" (PSA 34:3). We must not think of coming to God without our sacrifice of praise (HEB 13:15). Praise prepares the way for God to bless us (PSA 50:23). Find examples of this in Scripture. Let members of the group give testimony to this in their personal experience.

Praise Prepares us for Spiritual Warfare and Victory

Study carefully Psalm 149, noting especially verses 6 to 9. Judah was born with praise (GEN 29:35). That fact had tremendous social and historical consequences. Judah became the supremely victorious tribe (GEN 49:8,10); always first on the march (NUM 2:9; JUD 1:2). "In Judah is God known:" declares the Psalmist (PSA 76:1); "...our Lord sprang out of Judah..." (HEB 7:14). Read carefully Judges 1:2,4,8,9-11,17-19. Study also 2.Chronicles 20. As God's army praised, the enemy fell into insane, hysterical panic and became self-destructive.

When Should We Praise the Lord?

From sunrise to sunset (PSA 113:3).
In the early morning (PSA 57:8,9).
Late at night (PSA 149:5).
Seven times a day (PSA 119:164).
All day long (PSA 71:8).
At all times (PSA 34:2).
In everything (EPH 5:20).
Always, continually, again and again (PSA 70:4).

Note Psalm 84:4 in the Amplified Bible: "Blessed (happy, fortunate and to be envied) are those who dwell in Your house and Your presence; they will be singing Your praises all the day long. Selah [pause, and calmly think of that]!"

Where Should We Praise the Lord?

In our homes. Psalm 118:15 L.B.: "Songs of joy at the news of our rescue are sung in the homes of the godly." Praise in the assembly should be just an extension to praise in the home.

In the assembly of God's people. "Open to me the gates of righteousness:" says the Psalmist, "I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord." (PSA 118:19). If everyone enters God's house with those sentiments, what wonderful meetings we would have.
In God's universe, we are to praise God in His sanctuary. We are to praise Him in His mighty heavens (Psa 150:1). There is nowhere where praise is inappropriate.

**Why Should We Praise the Lord?**

We praise God for all He has done for us: He has forgiven our sins; He has healed all our diseases; He has redeemed our life from the pit; He has crowned us with His love and compassion; He has satisfied our desires; He has renewed our youth (Psa 103:1-5).

We praise Him for His goodness and for His enduring love; for His redemption and for His care of us (Psa 107:1,2).

We praise Him for His acts of power and for His surpassing greatness (Psa 150:2) - not only for what He does, but supremely for who He is. Psalm 48:1 declares that He is greatly to be praised. Why? - because He is great.

**How Should We Praise the Lord?**

The final psalm in the book of Psalms gives us some valuable suggestions - with the sounding of the trumpet, with the harp and lyre, with tambourine and dancing, with strings and flute and with the clash of cymbals (Psa 150:3-5).

Other psalms add the clapping of hands (Psa 47:1) and the raising of hands (Psa 134:2) for good measure.

There is no reason to believe that New Testament saints were any less demonstrative than those of the Old, especially as they had so much more to praise God for. Some of the words used to express praise in the New Testament are interesting:

1. Zechariah's tongue was loosed and he began to speak, praising God (Lk 1:64). The word used is the word from which we get our word "eulogise". It is not a bad idea to eulogise the Lord.
2. The early church converts were found "praising" - speaking in praise of "God" (Acts 2:47). Ordinary people find no difficulty in speaking in praise of the things they find good. Let us speak in praise of Jesus.
3. To "sing praise" is the word from which we get our word Hymn (Heb 2:12). Thank God for hymns of praise.
4. The merry are to sing psalms (Jam 5:13). The word describes singing with a musical instrument.

"Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."  

by Alfred F. Missen

Source: 'Redemption Tidings'