



PRAYER FOR NORMAL PEOPLE: UPWARD PRAYER

Sermon Notes

Text: Philippians 4:4-7

Intro:

You can't fully praise God in silence and stillness.

Philippians 4:4-7

Praise

Many words for praise - Rejoice, bless, sing, dance, clap, etc.

Praise and thanksgiving are both a response to God's grace.

1. Praise completes our joy

"I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment" ~C.S Lewis

2. Praise transforms us

A key to overcoming sin is not just to try to stop sinning, but to start praising.

3. Praise liberates us

Acts 16:25-28

1 Thessalonians 5:17

The key is to praise even when you don't feel like it

Thanksgiving

A lack of thanksgiving is an act of plagiarism.

Philippians 4:6

Life Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. Have you ever thought of prayer as something you need to train for? What other things have you trained for before (sports, job skills, etc). What principles can be transferred into your effort to get better at prayer?

Study & Discussion:

1. What resonated with you from the sermon? What challenged or surprised you?
2. Read Psalm 103:1-5. Why does David seem to be trying to convince himself to praise the Lord in v. 1? Is praise sometimes hard to do? Why? Does it help to “forget not all his benefits”?
3. Read Acts 16:16-34. What do you notice in this story? What role did praise play? Why didn’t Paul and Silas leave when the prison walls fell? How can this story inform our response to current events?
4. Read Philippians 4:4-7 & 1 Thessalonians 5:17. What do you notice? Why should we rejoice even when circumstances are bad? What is there to thank God for when times are tough? Why make our requests “with thanksgiving” (Phil. 4:6)? Why not wait until God answers our prayer?

Practicing the Way of Jesus: Daily Praise and Thanksgiving

Take time each day this week for praise and thanksgiving. Below are some ideas to help.

1. Ways to Praise God Daily

1. Praise God by singing along to a worship song
Psalm 150:6 "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."
2. Praise God by listing his attributes, and speaking them out loud as though you're giving him a compliment.
e.g. "God you are good. You are Holy. You are beautiful..."
3. Praise God by playing an instrument or dancing
Psalm 149:3 "Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp."
4. Praise God by reading Psalm 103 out loud
Psalm 103 "Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name..."
5. Praise God by raising your hands while you pray or sing
Psalm 28:2 "Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place."
6. Praise God by going outside and marvelling at creation
Psalm 19:1 "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

2. Daily Thanksgiving

Every day this week write down at least 1 or 2 things you are thankful for. Here are some ideas to get you started:

1. Salvation
2. The Holy Spirit (the presence of God in your life)
3. Creation
4. Your church
5. Your country/province/city & it's leaders
6. Friends & Family