

Encounter Church
Sunday July 20, 2025

The Power of First
Praise First

Psalms 149:1 (TPT)- “Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! It’s time to sing to God a brand-new song so that all his holy people will hear how wonderful he is!”

Psalms 150:1-6(MSG)-“Hallelujah! Praise God in his holy house of worship, praise him under the open skies; Praise him for his acts of power, praise him for his magnificent greatness; Praise with a blast on the trumpet, praise by strumming soft strings; Praise him with castanets and dance, praise him with banjo and flute; Praise him with cymbals and a big bass drum, praise him with fiddles and mandolin. Let every living, breathing creature praise God! Hallelujah!”

INTRODUCTION: The most common word for Praise is Halal which means “to be clear, to shine, to boast, show, to rave, celebrate, to be clamorously foolish”.

All of the Hebrew words for Praise are meant to take us out of our comfort zones and experience God in a fresh way. Too take a step of faith and praise God!

WHY SHOULD I PRAISE FIRST?

1. Praise shifts my focus to God.

The struggles and disappointments of life are really good about capturing all of your focus.

If I'm focused on the difficulties and disappointments, I'm not focused on God!

In the Old Testament David is running from Saul who’s trying to kill him. He goes to Gath which is the hometown of Goliath the giant he killed and he goes before the King. They recognize David so he becomes afraid and acts like a madman to get away and then escapes to the cave of Abdullah where he writes the following.

Psalms 34:1 (NLT) “I will praise the Lord at all times. I will constantly speak his praises.”

I’VE GOT TO GET MY FOCUS BACK ON GOD!

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I PRAISE?

Psalms 145:2 (NLT)- “I will praise you every day; yes, I will praise you forever.”

Hebrews 13:15-16(NLT)- “Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name. And don’t forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God.”

WHY SHOULD I PRAISE FIRST?

2. Praise is where God lives.

Praise is His permanent address. Praise is His home element. God is at home in praise.

(Jack Taylor- “The Hallelujah Factor”)- “This settles one of the vast mysteries which accompanies praise. Why is it when we praise the Lord things change so rapidly? Why does healing come on the wings of praise? Why do human emotions undergo such transition when praise is the choice? How are we to account for those things which accompany praise? The simple answer is: While God is everywhere, he is not everywhere manifested. He is at home in praise and, being at home, he manifests himself best as God! When you or I choose to make God at home through praise, we invite him to act “at home.” When God is “at home” in praise He does what He wants to do.”

Psalms 100:4 (NLT)- “Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name.”

Psalms 48:1 (MSG)- God majestic, praise abounds in our God-city!”

Praisers always get God’s attention because God now has your attention!

3. Praise is a weapon against our spiritual enemies.

2 Chronicles 20:21-22(MSG)- “After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the Lord and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang: “Give thanks to the Lord; his faithful love endures forever!” At the very moment they began to sing and give praise, the Lord caused the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir to start fighting among themselves.”

Acts 16:25-26 (TPT)- “Paul and Silas, undaunted, prayed in the middle of the night and sang songs of praise to God, while all the other prisoners listened to their worship. Suddenly, a great earthquake shook the foundations of the prison. All at once every prison door flung open and the chains of all the prisoners came loose.”

Paul and Silas were in prison but the prison was not inside them. What was inside them was prayer and praise!

Psalms 149:6(NLT)- “Let the praises of God be in their mouths,

and a sharp sword in their hands—“

Ephesians 6:17(NLT)- “.....and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

Sword in the Greek- ***machaira- a razor sharp Roman sword used in close combat.***

Some of you the battle you're fighting seems like close combat. It really hits home. It's personal!

Let Praise and the Word of God fill your mouth and your victory is at hand!

WHY SHOULD I PRAISE FIRST?

4. Praise is a Choice.

Habakkuk 3:17-19 (MSG) “Though the cherry trees don't blossom and the strawberries don't ripen, Though the apples are worm-eaten and the wheat fields stunted, Though the sheep pens are sheepless and the cattle barns empty, I'm singing joyful praise to God. I'm turning cartwheels of joy to my Savior God. Counting on God's Rule to prevail, I take heart and gain strength. I run like a deer. I feel like I'm king of the mountain!”

WHY SHOULD I PRAISE FIRST?

5. Praise Acknowledges That God is God

I praise you because YOU ARE GOD!

You are the one and only true God! There are no other god's before You!

Psalms 30:11-12- “You have turned my mourning into joyful dancing. You have taken away my clothes of mourning and clothed me with joy, that I might sing praises to you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever!”

You are not only God but you are my God!

CONCLUSION: Praise First! Praise shifts my focus from the battle to God. Praise is where God lives. Praise is a weapon against our spiritual enemies. Praise is a choice. Praise acknowledges that God is God!

When He walks into the room everything changes!

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this message?