

Title: Prayer That Leads to Praise

Scripture: Philippians 4:4-9

Speaker: Josh Maness

Event: Sunday Evening Service

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Philippians 4:4-9 *“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*”

Prayer that leads to praise is the type of prayer that gets you through life’s ruts. We want to praise God but we fail to realize that we can’t praise him until we talk to him or else it’s all in vain. It is a true fact that we cannot pray if we are worrying. We have reasons to be joyful. Paul wrote the book of Philippians while in prison, and he makes the statement *“rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.”* Joy is the state of contentment. This only comes from Christ. Joy is not going around miserable and pretending to be happy. It is accepting what life hands you. Philippians 4:12 says *“I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”* Paul was saying that no matter what comes up in his life, he knows that he is to be content. Paul said to rejoice always. It’s not just during your good times and because you have everything you want. Rejoicing is not just done on Sundays during church. It is done on our knees during times of prayer. The thing is, how often are you on your knees in prayer?

The Lord is our joy because he holds our future: In verse 5 Paul says *“the Lord is at hand”*. This means that the Lord is near. He’s right here waiting for us to come to him. We need to give God our worries, our fears, our concerns, and everything else that bothers us. God has a plan for all of us and he knows everything that we are going to go through. Verse 6 says *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”* We are commanded not to worry. There’s only one way to get over the things in our lives and that is by prayer. We need to lay everything at the feet of Jesus. When we are down there’s only one person who can pick us up and that is Christ.

For many of us we’d rather have a “Sweet Hour of Prayer” than to spend our time “praying without ceasing”. We go through the week never speaking to God and then try to cram it all in on Sunday mornings. This one day spent saying a 5 minute prayer isn’t going to give the adequate communication with God that we need in order to develop the right relationship that we are supposed to have with Him. Hebrews 11:6 *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God [prays] must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* Faith moves. It does something. We need to listen to God more and people less. Proverbs 3:5 *“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”* Just as Paul said we are to rejoice always, Solomon said we are to trust always. We aren’t supposed to go on our own way because our ways are not God’s ways. It said trust the Lord.

Reasons we need to act:

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

- a. Whatsoever things are true – we need to get down to the truth of our actions
- b. Whatsoever things are honest – Our lives need to be void of immoral things

Title: Prayer That Leads to Praise

- c. Whatsoever things are just – It's our duty and responsibility to seek out what is right
- d. Whatsoever things are pure – Embrace purity in every aspect of our lives.
- e. Whatsoever things are lovely – Fill your life with anything that produces love. Be agreeable with others.
- f. Whatsoever things are of good report – Do things that are admirable

If you are going to come to God and you say that you want to praise him, examine your life and the way you live. We need to rid our lives of all the things we would be ashamed of if God came in while we were doing it. The truth is that God is right beside us now – he's with us all the time. We need to live in a way that would be pleasing to God all the time. Our lives are more than just moving from one disaster to the next. The way we make it more than just getting through it is to talk to God and pray. Keep the lines of communication open constantly.