



Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020

Hello and welcome to our first Sunday service together in our own homes!

**Worship** - *(Just click the links):*

Leeland - The Lion and the Lamb - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBrrWPw5bW4>

Chris Tomlin – How Great is our God - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHAZGXsVF1k>

**Word** – *(Assign someone to read/share the word with your household/family):*

In our current national and international crisis, as the sons and daughters of the King, we need to arm ourselves with the weapons He has given us – Faith, the Word, Truth, Love, Compassion, Holiness – but to name a few. This morning however, let's take a look at a hugely effective weapon we have been given which is PRAISE and WORSHIP!

**Acts 16:22-40**

22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. 27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. 33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. 34 The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

35 When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." 36 The jailer told Paul, "The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace."

37 But Paul said to the officers: "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out."

38 The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. 39 They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. 40 After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left.

## **1) Praising God takes the focus off ourselves.**

Sometimes when all we can see are our circumstances we can become overwhelmed by them! We only have to watch or read the news every day to be swamped with negativity and facts of hopelessness from our troubled world.

Praising God causes us to lift our eyes from the problems and gaze upon the problem solver, take our eyes from human intellectual surmising and focus on a God whose ways are much higher than our ways and thoughts so far above our thoughts.

Sometimes praising God makes the way for the miracle – the big answer to the circumstances – like Paul and Silas in prison, praising God through torture and chains to see freedom and salvation for the whole prison!! However, often praising God is more a case of a change in perspective – WE CHANGE as we praise God – we change from hopeless to hope-full, from unbelieving to faith filled, from being the victim to being the overcomer! Jesus said “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!” (John 16:33) – Trouble happens – We experience good times and bad times BUT God never changes – he is always worthy of our praise – He always has the answer!

## **2) Praising God clears the Skies - Warfare**

### **Eph 6:12**

*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

### **Cor 10:3**

*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

- We tell God, ourselves, the enemy, our circumstances and anyone else willing to listen that God is in charge!
- It is a supernatural phenomenon that undermines every effort of the enemy to sow his lies! – We are effectively declaring the truth of God in spite of the facts around us!
- Humans naturally have a rhythm of life – BUT when we praise God we enter the rhythm of heaven.
- Praising God has incredible power to change the way we believe (perceive, understand) and as a result how our family believes.
- You can not praise God and remain hopeless – it’s just not possible!
- Praising God is part of our duty as Soldiers in the Army of God

## **3) Praising God creates an environment for Miracles**

Like Paul and Silas in prison, bad stuff can happen! The temptation is to question God “Why me”, “Do You even care” and such like thoughts – however - remember Job? He lost everything yet he fell down and worshipped – keeping his heart pure:

### **Job 1:20-22**

20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21And he said:

“ Naked I came from my mother’s womb,  
And naked shall I return there.  
The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away;  
Blessed be the name of the LORD.”

22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

- Praising God is a decision – not a default pathway.
- Paul writes – ‘walk in the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature’ – Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you all the time.
- ‘Call things that be not as though they were’
- Praising God and Prayer prepared the way for God to show his Glory – Solomon’s priests praised and the Glory came – a symbol/blue print for all time for those who want to see Him move – Paul and Silas Praised and God moved!!
- Praising God brought Salvation.
- Praising God brought encouragement for the believers!
- Praising God melts mountains like wax

#### **4) Praising God is fun.**

You can't get enough fun –

**Nehemiah 8:10** ‘the joy of the Lord is your strength’.

**Proverbs 17:22** ‘A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones’

Many times I have gone to meetings feeling negative, down etc – praising God is fun and His spirit lifts you up!

#### **Application:**

PRAISE PRAISE PRAISE !!! -            Everyday – On your own, as a family, in the car, in the bath!!!

Finishing worship song (You may not know this one but listen and let it bless your socks off !!!):

Raise a hallelujah – Jonathan David Helser

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awkO61T6i0k>

Stay Blessed !

Ste x