

## Praise: Breaking Through The Darkness

Praise /prāz/

*verb:* To express **approval** or **admiration** of.  
The opposite of **complain** or **grumble**.

### **Praise is a decision that:**

Luke 1:46-56, 64-69, 2:13-14, 25

Changes our **perspective**.

Allows us to see the **bigger picture**.

Starts the process of **joy**.

Brings new **energy and life**.

Points to new **solutions**.

Scares the **hell** into our **enemy**.

### **How do we start?**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Exodus 15:2, 2 Samuel 22:4, 1 Chronicles 16:28, Jeremiah 20:13, Ephesians 1:1-10, Psalm 32, 73, 91, 95, 117, Hebrews 13:15, Revelation 4:11

- Praise has to be **practiced** before it becomes a **habit**.
- We praise God for his:  
**Power** – **Promises** – **Provision** – **Protection**

## Food for Thought for the week of December 9, 2018 (Questions and Scriptures for further study)

It's no secret the holidays can bring a unique mix of emotions and experiences - friends, generosity, parties, isolation, stress and failed expectations. The good news is that as followers of Jesus we can remain hopeful even when nothing seems to be in the "Christmas Spirit." (Philippians 4:6-7) The foundation to our hope, as we heard this weekend, is practicing praise for who our God is and what he's done for us. The questions below will help you celebrate Christmas and not just get stuck in the holidays.

*Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)* <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Two Minutes on You** – Take two minutes and write down everything you're thankful for. If you have a hard time coming up with anything, maybe start with just today, as well as everyone and everything you have that you can be thankful for (there's a lot!).

**Two Minutes and More on God** – Take two minutes and write down everything you're thankful God has done for you. When you're done, read Psalm 104 and see what else you can add to your list of praise and thankfulness.

*Psalm 104 (NIV)* <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD, my soul. LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty. <sup>2</sup> The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent <sup>3</sup> and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind. <sup>4</sup> He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants. <sup>5</sup> He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved. <sup>6</sup> You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. <sup>7</sup> But at your rebuke the waters fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight; <sup>8</sup> they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys, to the place you assigned for them. <sup>9</sup> You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth. <sup>10</sup> He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. <sup>11</sup> They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. <sup>12</sup> The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. <sup>13</sup> He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work. <sup>14</sup> He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate— bringing forth food from the earth: <sup>15</sup> wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts. <sup>16</sup> The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. <sup>17</sup> There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers. <sup>18</sup> The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax. <sup>19</sup> He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down. <sup>20</sup> You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl. <sup>21</sup> The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God. <sup>22</sup> The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens. <sup>23</sup> Then people go out to their work, to their labor until evening. <sup>24</sup> How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. <sup>25</sup> There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number— living things both large and small. <sup>26</sup> There the ships go to and fro, and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there. <sup>27</sup> All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. <sup>28</sup> When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things. <sup>29</sup> When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. <sup>30</sup> When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground. <sup>31</sup> May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works— <sup>32</sup> he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke. <sup>33</sup> I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. <sup>34</sup> May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD. <sup>35</sup> But may sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more. Praise the LORD, my soul. Praise the LORD

**Seven Days of Praise** – Looking back at what you wrote, put a star next to your top seven things that are the most important for you to remember and give thanks for. Create a way to thank God for one item each day of this next week (post it on the mirror, in your calendar, text with a friend, etc.).