

# The Power Of Your Praise: 4 Things To Take Into 2022

Sunday Morning  
Pastor Jim Lowe III  
Sunday Morning, 9:30am Stream  
12/12/21 (2nd Sunday Message)

**{All scriptures are NIV84 unless stated}**

We are talking about praise today.

What you have available to you when you praise.

Your praise to God does so much...

We will be talking about the opportunity we'll be giving tonight.

Tonight will be a special night...

But to know HOW special,

We need to know what's available to us.

Setting the story up.

**Acts 16:16-17**

**16 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. 17 This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."**

Paul, Silas and the rest of the group were headed to the place of prayer.

-they were minding their own business.

-they were met by someone who began to antagonize them.

They didn't meet the girl...

They were MET by the girl....

She was waiting on them...

She came up to them...

## Sometimes Trouble Comes Looking For You!

How many times are you minding your OWN business and someone starts something with you?

-she's not talking TO them, she's following them talking ABOUT them!

*Isn't that how people do? They always have your name in their mouth talking to others!*

But why Paul, Silas and the group???

Why's she following them?

What was the difference between these men and others in the area?

She said it:

**"These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."**

Looking at it...this is true.

But there is also a lie in here.

"who are telling you THE way to be saved."

-In the Greek, the word "THE" wasn't present here.

-So the spirit is saying they're saying they are preaching "a way" and not "the way."

-There are "many ways" to God and this is one.

But this was the reason trouble followed them and is the reason trouble can follow you.

## **You Represent Light In A Dark World, And Many Won't Like That**

Just like then...people are going out of their way to make sure we know there are alternative ways...

But Jesus said I am THE way.

-No one gets to the Father except through him.

This woman had a spirit on her that didn't like that.

The spirit on this woman had to use her influence to make sure people knew this was "A way."

But what about her?

-she **EARNED** a great deal of money for her owners by fortune telling.

-she is now following Paul talking about him.

#### **Acts 16:18-19**

**18 She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her. 19 When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities.**

So what really happened here?

-the woman was a fortune teller.

-she made a "GREAT deal" of money for her owners telling fortunes.

The bible also says that she followed Paul for "many days."

If she's following Paul:

-she's not making a "great deal" telling peoples fortunes.

Then Paul gets tired of it and calls the spirit out of the woman.

-no she's not telling anyone's futures anymore.

-she won't make any more money for her owners.

-and now her owners care.

#### **Verse 20-21**

**20 They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar 21 by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."**

"throwing our city into an uproar?"

"advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice?"

The things greed will cause people to do.

#### **Verse 22-24**

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

People who have money have influence...

They can influence those in authority.

They can influence those around (the crowd).

Paul and Silas weren't given a fair trial.

They weren't asked any questions.

They were stripped...

They were beaten.

They were thrown in jail.

The jailer was COMMANDED to guard them like the criminals they were!

They were put in the "inner cell."

Fastened by their feet.

That's where the worst criminals were.

#### **Verse 25**

**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 everybody's chains came loose.**

This is where we see character of Praise.

#### **Things Our Praise Does:**

### **1. Praise Brings God's Presence!**

So much happened in this short amount of time.

But when Paul and Silas began to sing praise to God...

Their situation began to change.

Why?

Because God LIVES in our praise!

#### **Psalm 22:3 (AMP)**

**3 But You are holy, O You Who dwell in [the holy place where] the praises of Israel [are offered].**

*"he inhabits the praise of his people..."* (KJV version of this scripture)

### **God Is Where Your Praise Is!**

**Deuteronomy 10:21**

**21 He is your praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes.**

He IS your praise!

He IS your God!

## **No Matter How Bad The Situation, God Can Find You!**

Paul and Silas were thrown in the inner cell...

Chained to the wall...

UNDER guard!

Yet God found them!

**Jeremiah 17:14 (MSG)**

**God, pick up the pieces. Put me back together again. You are my praise!**

*{When you come tonight...}*

Remember God is your praise!

**Things Our Praise Does:**

## **2. Praise Shows The Health Of Our Relationship**

A quote:

**“Praise is inner health made audible.” - C.S. Lewis**

This isn't just with God.

We offer praise for so many different things.

To our children.

To our friends.

To our sports teams.

-We talk TO them about their accomplishments.

-We talk ABOUT their accomplishments.

This shows the health of our relationship.

Why?

Because we believe in them!

We get excited when we see them do something!

It should be the same with our God!

If you know know, God is worthy of praise!

**Psalm 145:3**

**3 Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.**

Great is the Lord!

Worthy of praise!

His greatness...

NO ONE Can Fathom!

## **However Great You Think God Is...He's Greater Than That!**

If you think God is the greatest thing...He's greater than that!

The more we know of our God...the less we can hold it in!

## **The Stronger Your Relationship, The More You've Got To Get It Out!**

Remember the next time you get to praise.

You are allowing what's inside to get out.

**Things Our Praise Does:**

### **3. Praise Brings Freedom!**

Because praise brings God to you...Everything that comes with his presence comes when you praise!

**Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)**

**11 You will show me the path of life;  
In Your presence is fullness of joy;  
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**

## **God Can Bring Freedom In The Darkest Of Times!**

**Acts 16:25-28**

**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 everybody'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!"**

These men were having church in the inner jail.

They were SO at peace...

When everything fell off...

When the prison doors opened...

All they wanted to do was to be in the presence of God.

They were FREE but didn't leave.

## **True Freedom Is Wherever God Is!**

3 Hebrew Boys didn't leave the fire until they were CALLED out.

Why?

Because God was there with them.

### **2 Corinthians 3:17**

**17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.**

*Affirmation:*

**"God Will Give Me Freedom In The Middle Of This!"**

Remember the next time you get to praise God...

You are getting freedom in it!

### **Acts 16:27-31**

**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."**

**Things Our Praise Does:**

## **4. Your Praise Serves As A Testimony To Others!**

The story continues and Paul and Silas are released the next morning.

So what was it all for?

There was someone who was saved.

The Jailer, the one who was instructed to guard them.

- he saw what they were accused of.
- he knew what they went through.
- he SAW the Lord loose everyone in there.
- he also saw the peace these men had.
- he saw the praise they would give God.
- he saw the respect they would give God.
- THIS became what he needed to want to know God.

**Psalm 34:1-2 (NCV)**

**I will praise the Lord at all times;  
his praise is always on my lips.  
2 My whole being praises the Lord.  
The poor will hear and be glad.**

Sometimes we go through for the sake of others...

**Paul and Silas Beaten -> The Jailer Was Saved!  
Peter Almost Drowned -> The Disciples Saw God's Power  
Joseph Enslaved For Decades -> The World Was Saved  
Lazarus Died -> A Crowd Of People Saw God's Power**

**God Can Use Your Story To Touch Others!**

God can be changing us AND the lives of others through our story.

**Side Note:**

**Even If You Can't Praise, Get Around Others Who Will!**

**Acts 16:24-27**

**24 Upon receiving such 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 everybody'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.**

Paul and Silas were put in the "Inner Cell."

Feet chained in stocks.

They were surrounded by "criminals."

#### **Verse 25**

**25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.**

Paul and Silas were praying and singing.

The prisoners were listening.

They weren't participating!

#### **Verse 26**

**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 everybody's chains came loose.**

Paul and Silas were having church.

Paul and Silas brought the presence of God down so heavy...

Even those who didn't know God were set free.

Even those who didn't participate were set free.

## **When You Go Through Your Trials, Make Sure You Have Someone Around Who Knows How To Praise God!**

If you don't know someone who knows how to pray...

...how to praise...

You need a new group!

#### **Things Our Praise Does:**

- 1. Praise Brings God's Presence!**
- 2. Praise Shows The Health Of Our Relationship**
- 3. Praise Brings Freedom!**

## **4. Your Praise Serves As A Testimony To Others!**

The next time you get an opportunity to praise...you have POWER.

*{rapid fire scriptures:}*

**Psalm 139:14**

**14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.**

**Psalm 18:3**

**3 I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies.**

**Psalm 66:4**

**4 All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praise to your name.”**

**Psalm 150:1-6**

**1 Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. 2 Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. 3 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, 4praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and flute, 5 praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. 6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.**

Your praise is important.

There is power in your praise!