

Drawing closer to God - Praise / Proclamation / Peace

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Foundation Scripture

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV) “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

You really don't get and can't experience the peace of God until you have received Jesus as your Lord and personal Saviour.

1. Drawing closer to God with Praise

A) Praise the Lord – in your comings and goings

Psalms 100:4 (NIV) “Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name.”

“Praise the Lord” is found nearly 40 times in the Bible.

While the word "praise" appears much more frequently, with commands and declarations about praising God occurring approximately 250 times.

I don't think we can Praise the Lord too much!

B) Praise the Lord in times of corporate praise and worship

Psalms 106:1 (NIV) “Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever.”

if the praise and worship songs we are singing are based on scripture – I believe it makes them extra powerful

David had his weaknesses – but he was a man after God's own heart.

Acts 13:22 (NKJV) “And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ‘I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.’”

Psalms 34:1 (NKJV) “I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be continually in my mouth.”

2 Samuel 6:14 (NKJV) “Then David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod.”

David’s example gives a very good steer as to how we should praise the Lord.

Praise God at every opportunity you get. With all your might!

C)Praise the Lord – make music from your heart to the Lord

Ephesians 5:19-20 (NIV) “speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

What are you thinking about and meditating on? Is it psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit. This is great place to start.

Philippians 4:4 (KJV) “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.”

Praise can also overcome depression.

Nehemiah 8:10 (NIV) “The joy of the Lord is your strength”

To recap – what helps us to draw closer to God:

- Praising the Lord in general conversation
- Praising the Lord in song – in corporate praise and worship (like on a Sunday morning)
- Making music and song from your heart to the Lord

2. Drawing Closer to God through Proclamation

Primarily, where we are at today (in life), is a result of:

- what we listen to
- what we read
- what we watch or exposure our eyes to
- who we hang out and associate with, and
- what we say

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

What are you saying or speaking over yourself and others? Would you be embarrassed if someone recorded you for a day and played it back to you? Or played it back to God?

We are called to be speakers of life over ever circumstance, situation and ultimately over ourselves and others.

All of us are 3-part persons

- Spirit
- Soul
- Body

When we give our life to Jesus we get God’s Spirit, but that does not normally change our soul – well at least not straight away. Our soul is made up of the mind / will / emotions.

Romans 12:2 (NKJV) “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God”

Proclamation of God’s word on a consistent and diligence basis can move the dial here. God’s word is like a weapon to pull down strongholds, habits and behaviours that have become ingrained into us over months, years and sometime even decades.

Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV) “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.”

I challenge you to ramp up your proclamation of God’s Word. I believe it will help and enable you to enjoy a closer walk with God, and focus on the things He wants you focusing on.

3. Enjoying the Peace of God

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV) “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

From my experience the peace of God deserts or leaves us when one of two things take place

A) We have not done something God has highlighted or asked us to do, or we miss an opportunity that is right in front of us

We need to be in tune with God

John 10:27 (NKJV) “My sheep recognise my voice, I know them, and they follow me.”

To recognise God’s voice we need to be in fellowship with Him – we need to be doing the basics – which include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- regular Bible reading
- regular prayer
- being in Church
- being filled with the Holy Spirit on a regular basis
- connecting into a Home Group
- Bible verse Proclamation and Praising the Lord

2 Corinthians 6:14 (NKJV) “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

B) Having unconfessed sin in your life

1 John 1:9 (NIV) “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

And on top of that God may direct us to restore a relationship with someone if we have upset them.