

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE LETTER OF JAMES

PRAISE TO THE LORD

James 5:13 "Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise."

"Praise God from Whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." (LSB 805) Most Christians are familiar with and love to sing these words which are known as the Common Doxology. The Psalmist wrote, "Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You." (Ps. 63:3-NASB) The actual word praise is found in the Bible over 200 times. Over 100 of these passages are found in the Psalms.

The Hebrew word that is translated as "praise" has the sense of "to acknowledge . . . God's character and works." To praise God is to declare who God is and what He does. Praise honors God because of His divine deeds and character. The Greek word for praise has the idea "to profess or to confess." Both words have the idea of declaring God's greatness, attributes (holy, good, just, righteous, infinite, all-knowing, all-powerful, etc.) and glory. Songs that speak about God are songs that praise Him. Preaching and teaching almost always praises God since they speak about God.

Isaiah wrote that God formed for himself a people "that they may proclaim His praise" (Isaiah 43:21) St. Paul wrote that God created His church "to the praise of his [God's] glorious grace" (Eph 1:6) Jesus said, "In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. (Matthew 5:16 NLT) Colossians 3:16 says, Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, signing to God with gratitude in your hearts."

There are many synonyms or parallel words found in the Bible for praise: "bless, " "exalt, " "extol, " "glorify, " "magnify, " "thank, " and "confess." David prayed, "O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise." (Ps. 51:15 NASB) Dear brother and sister in Christ, because God pours out His love and kindness upon you, give praise to His holy name.

Prayer: O Lord, "Let my lips utter praise, For You teach me Your statutes. (Psalm 119:171 NASB)

Joyful, joyful we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee, Praising Thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, Drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day.

All Thy works with joy surround Thee, Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee, Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain Call us to rejoice in Thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, Ever blessing ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living, Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Fountainhead of love divine:
Joyful, we Thy heav'n inherit! Joyful, we by grace are Thine!
(LSB 803)