



Scripture nugget – May my life be a continual hymn of praise to God

Let everything that has breath give praise to the LORD! Hallelujah! (Psalm 150:6).

We are made to be happy, to love and praise God. *Bless the LORD, my soul; all my being, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, my soul; and do not forget all His gifts, Who pardons all your sins, and heals all your ills, Who redeems your life from the pit (Psalm 103:1-4).* Praise of God, our joy, our Highest Good is the delight of our pure souls. Not every soul can rise up and praise God. A soul steeped in sin will not be inclined to praise God because such a soul is more or less in bondage to Satan. But a soul in the state of grace can rise effortlessly to the noble task, and be uplifted and sanctified in the process. When we lift up our hearts and praise God with all our minds and souls, we put ourselves consciously into God's presence, forget ourselves, focus and recall with gratitude and love His marvelous attributes and mighty works. The Holy Spirit, our Sanctifier responds by filling our hearts with ardent love and admiration for God. Holy joy fills the soul and negative feelings disappear. Praise of God can be a powerful spiritual weapon. It drives away from us the evil spirits that want to make us unhappy. That is why even a 5-minute praise-You-Jesus mantra can do wonders to uplift the heavy spirit of a downcast person. Scripture tells how praise of God can be a mighty instrument to defeat evil. When faced with the threat of an attack by a large army of Ammonites, Moabites, and Meunites, King Jehoshaphat of Judah instructed his men heading his army in battle to sing and praise the Lord. As they sang and praised the Lord, the Lord fought the battle for them and set ambushes against the enemies who were defeated!

Praise is an acceptable sacrifice to God. It is easy to praise God when we are grateful for His love and mercy after receiving favours from Him. However, it requires solid faith and unwavering trust when our problems do not seem to be getting better, even though we have tried our human best, and God seems to be absent. In such a case we can learn much from St Paul. At Philippi, on the basis of some false charges, Paul and Silas were thrown into high security prison after being given a severe beating with rods. Despite the painful beating and false accusations Paul and Silas, at about midnight, were praying and singing hymns. Then a wondrous thing happened: there was a big earthquake and all the doors of the jail were opened and the chains of the prisoners were pulled loose (cf. Acts 16:23-26)! God appreciates and highly values our praise and trust when we are able to render them even when we are still struggling in the dark tunnel with no sight of the light at the end of it.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, my delight and duty is to render unceasing praise to You. You honored me when You made me in Your holy image, and gave me dominion over all your creatures. You gave me the highest dignity when through Your merits I become a child of the Most High God Whom You taught me to call "Father." You are the divine architect of my awesome being. Yes, I am wonderfully, fearfully made. Like You, I am eternal because You let me share Your eternal life of joy and glory. When I fall from grace and sinned through my pride, You did an even mightier work than my creation. Yes, You redeemed me with none other than Your own Precious Blood! You were not deterred by the abasement of Your divine glory in becoming a man, so that I could enjoy a lifetime of eternity with You. You have won me over completely by Your indescribable love and I am entirely Yours. May my life be a continual hymn of praise to You. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.