

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** The Power of Praise

**SERMON REFERENCE:** 2 Chronicles 20:1-30

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1687

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Praise is a very powerful thing.
  - i) It is praise that infuses the joy into the Christian life and lets the joy begin to flow.
  - ii) When we have difficulty with joy, it is probably because we're not praising the Lord.
- b) It helps to praise in a time of joy.
  - i) Praise brings joy.
- c) It helps to praise in a time of help.
  - i) When someone has done something for you, learn to praise them.
  - ii) Give honor to whom honor is due.
    - (1) Romans 13:7
- d) Praise God when He has done something for you.
  - i) Give Him thanks.
- e) Learn to praise in times of trouble.
  - i) Today's message will show us how to praise God in the time of trouble.

2) A POWERFUL FOE (2 CHRONICLES 20:1-2)

- a) King Jehoshaphat was a good king.
  - i) He loved the Lord.
- b) 2 Chronicles 20:1-2
  - i) King Jehoshaphat was told that he had some enemies.
    - (1) Three powerful kings were coming against him.
- c) We have three mighty enemies that come against us on a regular basis:
  - i) Sin
  - ii) Sorrow
  - iii) Death
- d) Everyone who lives the Christian life will meet opposition from time to time.
  - i) Sometimes, the opposition will be fierce.

3) A POSITIVE FOCUS (2 CHRONICLES 20:3)

- a) King Jehoshaphat made a positive focus.
  - i) 2 Chronicles 20:3
  - ii) He set himself to seek the Lord.
- b) God was Jehoshaphat's first thought, not his last resort.
- c) Matthew 6:33

4) A PROCLAIMED FEAST (2 CHRONICLES 20:3)

- a) Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast throughout all of Judah.
  - i) 2 Chronicles 20:3
- b) America is sick, and it is time for the church of the Lord God to sharpen her focus and proclaim a fast to seek God.
  - i) It is not that by fasting we buy God's blessings.
    - (1) God's blessings are always by grace.

- ii) God does business with those who mean business.
  - iii) When we have a positive focus, fasting just simply sharpens the focus.
- 5) A PURPOSEFUL FELLOWSHIP (2 CHRONICLES 20:4)
- a) Everyone came together to seek God.
    - i) 2 Chronicles 20:4
  - b) What would happen in America if, in all of her cities, people got together to seek the Lord?
  - c) When we come to seek the Lord, He shows up.
    - i) Matthew 18:20
  - d) When we come together, not to try to heal racism, not to try to solve poverty, not to entertain ourselves, not to try to get America delivered from her enemies, but when we come together to seek the Lord, we will be in one accord.
    - i) And then we will be far better able to attack all of these other problems.
    - ii) We cannot bypass the one thing that we must do, which is to come together to seek the Lord.
  - e) 2 Chronicles 20:3-4
    - i) It was a purposeful fellowship to seek the Lord; not political, not social, not racial, but spiritual.
- 6) A PRAYERFUL FAITH (2 CHRONICLES 20:5-13)
- a) When we have a problem, it is very important that we put our eyes upon God and that we understand the character and the nature of God.
  - b) When a problem comes, we need to glance at the problem and gaze at God.
  - c) In Jehoshaphat's prayer, we find five characteristics of the nature of God:
    - i) He is a sovereign God.
      - (1) 2 Chronicles 20:6
        - (a) The pornographers cannot withstand God, the liquor distributors cannot withstand God, the abortionists cannot withstand God.
        - (b) There is none who can withstand God.
      - (2) God rules over all.
      - (3) There is no panic in Heaven.
        - (a) The Holy Trinity never meets in emergency session.
      - (4) Our problems are never too big for God.
    - ii) He is a steadfast God.
      - (1) 2 Chronicles 20:7
        - (a) God had made a promise to Abraham that this land would be his forever.
        - (b) Now, others were coming to try to take away that which God had given them.
        - (c) Jehoshaphat was standing on God's Word and praying on the basis of God's promise.
      - (2) God doesn't change.

- (a) God is the same yesterday, today and forever.
  - (b) The God who worked miracles in the past is the God who can work miracles today.
    - (i) God is still powerful, and He still has power to send revival today.
  - iii) He is a sympathetic God.
    - (1) 2 Chronicles 20:8-9
      - (a) They prayed on the basis of God's glory.
    - (2) He is the God who hears and the God who helps.
      - (a) If we cry to Him, He will hear and help.
    - (3) Isaiah 63:9
    - (4) Hebrews 4:15
  - iv) He is a seeing God.
    - (1) 2 Chronicles 20:10-11
      - (a) Jehoshaphat is asking God to take a look at what He already sees.
      - (b) He asks God twice to behold this.
    - (2) In prayer, we need to ask God for what He knows we already need.
      - (a) There is something about our prayer that gets God's attention.
        - (i) And God, in a very special way, focuses on what we focus on.
    - (3) God knows our situation.
      - (a) He knows our enemy.
      - (b) He knows our danger.
      - (c) He knows where we are right now and what we're thinking.
        - (i) All of this helps us when we pray.
    - (4) There is nothing that escapes His notice.
  - v) He is the saving God.
    - (1) 2 Chronicles 20:12-13
      - (a) Jehoshaphat acknowledged that they didn't know what to do, that they didn't have any strength, but that their eyes were on God.
    - (2) Hollywood is mightier than we are, the liquor industry has more money than we do, the media seems to be against us, and we don't know what to do.
      - (a) But our eyes are upon God.
        - (i) If we go down, we're going down with our eyes on God.
    - (3) God is the one who can deliver us.
    - (4) Jehoshaphat and the people came to a prayerful faith and prayed, not on the basis of what the problem was, but on who God is.
- 7) A PROPHETIC FACT (2 CHRONICLES 20:14-15)
- a) As they're praying, God begins to speak and to answer.
    - i) 2 Chronicles 20:14-15
  - b) The battle is not ours, but God's.
  - c) God takes a Spirit-anointed preacher to bring a message.

- i) This Spirit-filled messenger brings the prophetic fact that victory belongs to God.
  - ii) The battle is God's.
- 8) A POTENT FORCE (2 CHRONICLES 20:16-24)
- a) The prophet of God begins to speak.
    - i) 2 Chronicles 20:16-24
  - b) The potent force is praise.
  - c) The prophet of God said that the battle is the Lord's, but the people have a part; and that part is praise.
    - i) They were not going to hide until it was all over.
  - d) Many people want to wait until the battle is over and they have the victory before they praise God for the victory.
    - i) But God said that the people were to praise on the front end.
      - (1) They were to praise at the beginning, not at the conclusion.
      - ii) We can't praise after it's over because it won't be over until we begin to praise.
  - e) We need to learn to praise God in our problems.
    - i) If we can't praise God in the midst of our problems, then we will go ahead and live with our problems.
  - f) Praise is faith expressing itself.
    - i) Praise is faith turned inside out.
  - g) We must come to God and ask God.
    - i) Jehoshaphat and the people petitioned God.
    - ii) But the petition must be married to praise.
      - (1) Petitions says please; praise says thank you.
        - (a) Praise says thank you on the front end.
  - h) Praise brings God into it.
    - i) Psalm 22:3
    - ii) Wherever there is praise, God shows up.
    - iii) God occupies the praise of His people.
  - i) The two wings of power are petition and praise.
  - j) Praise will do two things:
    - i) Praise infuses the energy of God.
      - (1) This is because God is in that praise.
      - (2) Praise is very healthy for the Holy Spirit.
        - (a) It is the environment that the Holy Spirit occupies.
    - ii) Praise confuses the enemies of God.
      - (1) Satan is allergic to the praise of God.
      - (2) When we begin to praise God, Satan gets confused.
      - (3) 2 Chronicles 20:22-23
        - (a) The inhabitants of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir were all coming against Israel.

- (b) The army of God went forth with praises, and these three enemies turned on each other.
      - (i) They got in absolute confusion.
  - k) Praise fractures the unity of the enemy, and it formulates the unity of the believer.
- 9) A PROVIDED FORTUNE (2 CHRONICLES 20:25)
  - a) The enemy looked like they were going to destroy Israel.
  - b) As Jehoshaphat and the people sought the Lord in fasting and prayer, God sent them a message.
  - c) They obeyed the message and began to believe God and to praise God.
  - d) The enemy was put into confusion, and Israel was left with all this bounty, spoils and treasures.
    - i) 2 Chronicles 20:25
  - e) If we will begin to praise the Lord, the devil will become our servant to enrich us.
    - i) What the enemy means for evil, God uses for good.
      - (1) Genesis 50:20
    - ii) When David defeated Goliath, he beheaded Goliath with Goliath's own sword.
      - (1) 1 Samuel 17:50-51
  - f) God takes that which the enemy means against us for evil, and God uses it for His glory and good; and He wants to do the same for churches today.
    - i) God wants to do the same for Bible believers in America.
    - ii) If we will set ourselves to seek God in fasting and prayer and praise, then we will see God do a miracle in America.
- 10) A PEACEFUL FUTURE (2 CHRONICLES 20:26-30)
  - a) 2 Chronicles 20:30
    - i) This doesn't mean that Jehoshaphat's enemies loved him; they still hated him.
      - (1) But they were afraid of him.
    - ii) Proverbs 16:7
  - b) Wouldn't it be wonderful if, again, this world were afraid of the prayers of God's people?
    - i) The world today has no respect for Christians.
      - (1) They mock us.
      - (2) They laugh at us.
    - ii) We need to come back to the place where the world recognizes that God is with us.
- 11) CONCLUSION
  - a) If you're experiencing problems today, here are ten things you need to do:
    - i) Learn to see all satanic opposition as an opportunity.

- ii) Seek God.
    - (1) Set yourself to seek God before you take any action.
  - iii) Remember those times when you sought God and He has shown Himself faithful in the past, as Jehoshaphat did.
    - (1) Think back on other times when He delivered you.
  - iv) Study the Word of God for a promise on which to stand.
  - v) Let the Holy Spirit make that promise real, and let it live in your heart.
  - vi) Refuse any confidence whatsoever in the flesh.
  - vii) Give yourself to full, free, unrestrained, and open worship and praise of the Almighty.
  - viii) Praise God in the face of opposition and in the face of the enemy.
  - ix) Expect God to send confusion to your enemies.
  - x) Get ready for a blessing.
- b) But the very first step is to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.
  - c) Have you surrendered to Jesus Christ as Lord?
  - d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
  - e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
    - i) Romans 3:23
    - ii) Romans 10:9-10
    - iii) Romans 10:13
    - iv) Acts 16:31
    - v) John 3:16