

Count It All Joy!

Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

(Psalm 150:6)

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN UNTO GOD. (Philippians 4:6)

Dear friend and partner,

One of the most important things in a believer's life of faith is their attitude. Throughout the scriptures, we're admonished to always be thankful, no matter how circumstances may presently seem or appear. Your Christian life immediately begins to spiral downward when you lose your praise and thankful heart unto the Lord.

Satan is the enemy that we have to contend with in our walk of faith. For, as we read in 1 Peter 5: 8, **9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour : Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.**

Satan's objective is to steal, kill, and destroy our lives (John 10: 10). He is the one who brings the tests, trials, temptations, discouragements, hindrances, worries, fears, doubts and unbelief¹ in hopes of taking away our joy of serving the Lord. For, **...the joy of the LORD is your strength** (Nehemiah 8: 10).

Have you ever noticed that when you're hit with a trial, the first thing you usually think is, *'Why is this happening to me? Why is God allowing this to happen? What have I done wrong to deserve this? I must not be in God's will'*. But, we are instructed by God that as soon as the trial hits us, we are to begin to count it all joy. **My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations** (James 1: 2). Doing this will help you stay on course and in faith.

When Satan hits you with a trial, his intent is to distract, discourage, defeat, depress, and disengage you from your pursuit of the Lord:

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness; (2 Corinthians 12:7-9)

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:3)

You counter the devil's attacks by praising God for what the Word says about you, and by determining to become even more committed to fulfill your mission in life to walk by faith. Your life of faith is what pleases God, as we see in Hebrews 11:6: **But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**

I believe that the last thing Satan expects you to do when he hits you with whatever he brings against you is for you to continually praise God and become more committed to pursue the Lord and His will for your life.

When a believer is attacked with everything Satan brings against them, and they maintain their joy and gladness of heart, it helps that believer stay strong in the Lord, remain covenant-minded, and on fire for God. We accomplish this by daily staying in the Word of God, keeping a bold confession of faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and lifting our hands in praise to the Lord.

This is when the joy of the Lord will rise up from within and come out of your mouth. An excellent scriptural example of staying in faith when hit up with bad news is when Jesus' friend, Lazarus, got sick and died before Jesus was able to minister to him.

By the time Jesus arrived in Lazarus' hometown, Lazarus was dead and buried. This is a situation in which Jesus could have lost control emotionally. Jesus was not devoid of human feelings. He had emotions, just like you do, for the scripture says, **"Jesus wept"** (John 11:35)

The scripture says He was touched with the feelings of our infirmities. **For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin** (Hebrews 4:15)

Jesus didn't allow his emotions to control Him. When they told Jesus that Lazarus had already died and was buried, Jesus responded in thanksgiving toward God. **And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me** (John 11:41)

Because Jesus stayed in faith, God was able to raise Lazarus from the dead. Many things have happened that God never intended to happen, all because a believer got out of faith and was carried away by what they felt, saw, or heard. **...For we walk by faith, not by sight...** (2 Corinthians 5:7).

A good friend of mine used to work for Brother Hagin, traveling with him doing faith crusades and faith seminars. During one of the faith crusades they were conducting, Brother Hagin received the news that while he was away from home, someone had broken into his house and vandalized it. My friend said that some of the things that

were stolen were irreplaceable heirlooms which had sentimental ties. He said he knew that those things meant a lot to Brother Hagin, but the first thing Brother Hagin said was, "*Praise the Lord.*"

I later heard Brother Hagin speak about that incident on a tape. He said, "*The reason I praised the Lord was not that those things were stolen - it was because I knew that God would take care of me and that He had something even better for me. God's Word never fails.*"

Privately, Brother Hagin has always praised the Lord, no matter how things seemed. That's one of the reasons why Brother Hagin has the public position in the body of Christ that he has today. Jesus taught us that what you do privately, He rewards you openly (Matthew 6: 1-6).

Anyone can praise the Lord whenever things are going well. But, when the storms are raging and the natural mind and flesh rise up and the devil is telling you that you're 'history' now, you find out what you're really made of. Whether you realize it or not, praising and thanking God in the midst of problems does more *for you* than it does for God.

If you stop and think about it, God knows all the problems of the world. All you are aware of are the problems that *you* know about and are personally experiencing. If God's not worried about everything bad that seems to be going on, why are you? If we keep our trust in Him, He will never fail to come through, if you and I will just keep standing in faith and counting it all joy. Doing this will help us walk by faith and not by sight and stay focused on God and what He has promised us in His Word.

God had told the children of Israel that He'd given them the land that flowed with milk and honey. All they had to do was go possess the land. That sounds simple enough, for God had already performed countless mighty miracles for them. Why would this be any different?

They sent the twelve spies over to spy out the land. When they returned, ten of the spies were persuaded by what they saw: that it was *impossible* for them to take the land. But Caleb and Joshua believed they could take the land. Ten went by sight; two went by faith. Ten spies persuaded the multitude of God's people that they were unable to take the land. The people spent the night crying, complaining, and murmuring .

Caleb and Joshua were unable to stop the people from murmuring. Consequently, the children of Israel limited God, robbed themselves of the blessings of God and died prematurely without ever obtaining the promise of God. The story is in Numbers, chapters 13 and 14. Paul referred to the incident by the Holy Spirit and warned that what happened to them could also happen to the church, the body of Christ.² You cannot murmur and complain without suffering the consequences.

Murmuring and complaining are indications that a believer is walking by sight and is no longer in faith. Not only is that believer devoid of understanding the principles of faith believing and receiving, they have also forfeited God's divine protection.

Once a believer loses their praise, they immediately begin to criticize, complain. They become hard hearted and cynical toward God and others. They put themselves in a position where God is limited in blessing them:

How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them from the enemy. How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, *and* grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not his hand, *nor* the day when he delivered them from the enemy (Psalm 78:40-42)

Before I got saved, my occupation was installing carpets. Another fellow and I were carpeting a house one day, and we were almost finished when the owner came home. To his surprise, he saw us installing carpet when he walked in the door.

Before he even greeted us, the first thing he did was drop to his knees, lift his hands to God and thank Him for all of the carpet being installed in his home. He then told us that he and his wife had prayed for carpet according to Mark 11: 24 (*Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them*), and he was rejoicing over what God had done.

Personally, I thought he was just a religious nut. The more he talked, the more he praised the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works. Not only was he praising God for the carpet, he was also praising God for his wife, his salvation, and everything else that he could think of. He just kept rejoicing in the Lord.

When I checked the work order to see if there was anything else I had to do, I noticed something under the financial arrangements part where it said, **Method of Payment: check /money order /cash/ C. O.D.** The salesman had written the words, "***Paid in full.***" And in huge capital letters, someone had written the word, "**HALLELUJAH!**"

I handed the work order to this on fire, born-again Christian, child of God, (*who I thought was a religious fanatic*) to get me the interpretation of what "*hallelujah*" meant. He read it out loud to both of us: "*Paid in full, Hallelujah!*" This seemed to push him over the edge.

You've got to realize that at the time, I wasn't even saved. The only people I had ever seen conducting themselves this way were my grandmother Childs, my Aunt Bethie, and my oldest brother, Paul, and his wife Lorraine. They were all full of God and had been praying that God would send forth laborers to witness to me. (*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest -Matthew 9:37,38*).

If you're not saved, and you've got people like these praying for you, you might as well give up and get saved, because you don't stand a chance!

The homeowner asked us, "Do you boys know what 'Hallelujah' means?" Well, I went to church every Sunday and I didn't know what it meant. The guy working with me never went to church, and he didn't know what it meant. So, the man proceeded to tell us that 'hallelujah' means, "Praise the Lord!" To make matters worse, before we left his house, he laid hands on us and prayed that we would be saved.

God did something to me that day that would change me for the rest of my life. I wish I knew who that man was so I could thank him for being so bold in his witness and for unashamedly praising God and rejoicing in the Lord. Under God's mercy and grace, I'm saved and in the ministry today because of people taking an uncompromisingly bold stand for the Lord. This would help me see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ.

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4)

Remember, it's always correct to be thankful and full of praise, so that the light of God's Word can shine in a dark world. If there's anything the body of Christ is behind in today and needs to get caught up in, it's our vocal praise to God. Don't let the devil intimidate you and cause you to draw back from praising God. Making statements such as, "Praise the Lord!" . . . "Thank You Jesus" . . . "Glory to God" . . . "Hallelujah!" is one way that we can be a witness to others and at the same time, give God the glory. Whenever you're in doubt of what to do, begin to lift your hands and voice to God and say, "**Praise the Lord! Thank You, Jesus! Hallelujah! Well, Praise the Lord!**"

Your partner in faith,

Brother Rich

For the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever; let everything that has breath Praise the Lord!

References: Matthew 4: 1, Luke 4: 1, Acts 10: 38,

Acts 26: 18, 2 Timothy 2: 26² 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13 & Hebrews, ch. 3

Praise The Lord!

The scriptures teach the importance of us, as believers, praising and thanking the Lord. We do it to express our reverence toward God, because He is Holy and eternal, and He is the Almighty God. There is none above Him or like Him (Psalm 22:3, Psalm 22:23, Psalm 33:21 & Psalm 48:1).

We praise God because He's good and merciful (Psalm 106:1). We praise the Lord continually and willingly, as a sacrifice unto Him (Hebrews 13:15, Psalm 34:1 & Psalm 54:6).

We praise God for our prosperity, forgiveness of all our sins, good health, our redemption, and for all of our blessings (Psalm 35:27, Psalm 103:2-4).

When we praise God, we show Him that we believe He's heard and answered our prayers (Philippians 4:6, John 6:11 & John 11:41).

Praising God strengthens our faith in Him and His Word (Romans 4:20).

We don't praise the Lord halfheartedly; God wants to hear us praise Him *from* our heart, and with our *whole* heart (Psalm 9:1, Psalm 86:12 & Psalm 111:1).

We praise God with our mouths (Psalm 50:23, Psalm 51:15, Psalm 35:27, 28 & Psalm 19:1-3).

We praise the Lord from the time we first get up, until we lie down at night (Psalm 113:1-3).

Who should praise the Lord? From Kings to children (Psalm 148:11-14). Everything that has breath should praise the Lord (Psalm 150:6).

When we praise God, we show Him that we believe and trust Him and His Word above our present physical circumstances and situations. When in the natural, there was no one to help Jonah out of his dilemma, he called out to God in prayer and began to thank God that he was delivered. God miraculously delivered Jonah (Jonah 2: 1, 9, & 10).

God had mercy upon Jonah and delivered him out of his troubles, even though he had disobeyed the Lord. On the other hand, Paul and Silas had obeyed God, and were severely persecuted for their service unto the Lord. The Bible says in Acts 16: 25 & 26 that their miracle came as they were praising God.

In another instance, a woman who did not have a covenant with God got her demon possessed daughter delivered through her persevering faith and her worship unto the Lord (Matt. 15: 21-28).

After a man with leprosy was healed for obeying the voice of the Lord, he worshiped and thanked the Lord, and he was made whole (Luke 17: 11-19).

Through David's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord, God delivered him out of trouble on numerous occasions (Psalm 18:3 & 2 Samuel 22:4, 18).

The benefits that you and I receive from praising God are innumerable (Psalm 68:19, Psalm 103:2-5, Psalm 107:20-22 & Psalm 112:1-3).

VERSES TO USE TO PRAISE THE LORD :

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name. Hebrews 13:15

But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his

marvellous light: 1 Peter 2:9

I will praise *thee*, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. Psalm 9:1

I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. Psalm 18:3

Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. Psalm 29:2

Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: *for* praise is comely for the upright. Psalm 33:1

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. Psalm 34:1

Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant. And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long. Psalm 35:27,28

Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, *in* the mountain of his holiness. Psalm 48:1

I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for *it is* good. For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: Psalm 54:6,7

1) Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2) Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3) Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; we *are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4) Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name. 5) For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations. Psalm 100

1) Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name. 2) Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3) Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; 4) Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; 5) Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things*; so *that* thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. 20) Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. 21) Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Psalm 103:1-5; 20,21

Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is good*: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. Psalm 106:1

Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for*

his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing. Psalm 107:21,22

Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation. Psalm 111:1

O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is *great* toward us: and the truth of the LORD *endureth* for ever. Praise ye the LORD. Psalm 117:1-2

Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments. Psalm 119:164

1) O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is good*: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 2) O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 3) O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 4) To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 5) To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 6) To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 7) To him that made great lights: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: 8) The sun to rule by day: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: 9) The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 23) Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: 24) And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 25) Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 26) O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. Psalm 136:1-9; 23-26

Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD. Psalm 150:6

MY PRAISE UNTO THE LORD:

God, I praise Your Holy Name. Holy and worthy is Your Name! I give glory to Your Name, oh Lord, my God! Holy, worthy, and mighty are You, God! You reign over the heavens, the earth, and over all creation. You are my God, and Jesus is my Lord and Savior.

God, I bow down before You and lift my hands unto You, and I praise and worship You today for who You are: the Almighty God! There is none like You in heaven or on earth. There's none above You. You made the heavens and the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars. You created the angels and mankind. You're all knowing and all-powerful! There's nothing in my life that You cannot take care of or get me through successfully.

God, You said, ***"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation"*** Psalm 91:14-16; ***"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus"*** Philippians 4:19; ***"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son"*** Colossians 1:13 ; ***"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree"*** Galatians 3:13; ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"*** Philippians 4:13; ***"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith"*** Mark 11:23, and in 3 John 2, You said, ***"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth"***.

So I thank You, Father God, that according to Your Word, I'm delivered, I'm prosperous, and I'm healthy. You supply all of my needs abundantly. You've redeemed me from the curse of the law and I can do all things through Christ, Who strengthens me. By faith, I believe You have heard and answered all of my prayers.

I thank You that You never fail me or forsake me and that You never leave me.¹ You've forgiven me of all my sins,² and the angels of God encamp round about my loved ones and me.³ Daily, Your blessings overtake me.⁴ You provide me with divine protection⁵ and You never want me to be afraid or to worry.⁶ God, I believe in Jesus' Name, that You're perfecting everything that concerns my family and me,⁷ and I know that no one can take care of us like You can.

You provide me with divine health and healing, for You are my Great Physician.⁸ You provide me with divine prosperity,⁹ for the Lord is my shepherd; I do not want.¹⁰ You provide me with divine wisdom and help me in all of the affairs of my life.¹¹ You protect me from all evil and harm, and You keep me from falling.^{5 & 12} You lead me by Your Spirit. You enlighten me and encourage me through Your Word¹³ and reveal Your perfect will to me.¹⁴ You sustain me daily¹⁵ and abundantly supply all of my needs and

desires,¹⁶ for You said in Ephesians 3:20 : ***"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us"***.

I thank You, Father God, for protecting me today and for leading me by Your Holy Spirit. I thank You for giving me wisdom in every situation, favor with every person, strength for every task, and discernment to know right from wrong. I thank You that the Holy Spirit gives me revelation knowledge from Your Word.

Anoint me to be a witness and help me to flow in the Holy Ghost and have the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate through me. Make me a blessing to whomever I come in contact with today. I thank You, Father God, that You're good and Your mercy endureth forever, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES :

¹ Joshua 1:5 & Hebrews 13:5	⁸ Exodus 15:26
² Isaiah 43:25 & 1 John 1:9	⁹ 3 John 2 & Psalm 23:1
³ Psalm 34:7	¹⁰ Psalm 23:1
⁴ Psalm 68:19 & Deuteronomy 28:2	¹¹ Proverbs, ch. 4
⁵ Psalm 91	¹² Psalm 116:8 & Jude 24
⁶ Isaiah 41:10, Isaiah 54:14, 2 Timothy 1:7 & Matthew 6:31-34	¹³ Romans 4:17 & Psalm 119:130
⁷ Proverbs 3:5, Hebrews 11:6 & Psalm 138:8	¹⁴ Romans 12: 1,2
	¹⁵ Psalm 55:22
	¹⁶ Philippians 4:19 & Psalm 37:4

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