

TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

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The Day That God Will Lift Up a Praise

01
Tim Dilena

Praise and worship have always been an important part of the church service. Praise is when God's people thank God for Who He is and what He has done. Those two elements make up true praise. Hold on to your seats: the Bible tells us that there will come a day that God will praise. That sounds both unbiblical and a bit incredible. However, it is in the Bible. Will God praise Himself? That's not the praise the apostle Paul is speaking about. What is unbelievable is that the Bible says that God will one day praise us! Listen to the words of Paul as he speaks to the church of Corinth.

“ And on the day we step into forever, we will hear a sound from God's lips that will shock us all. God will praise! ”

“Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts and then each man's praise will come to him from God.”
1 Corinthians 4:5 (NASB)

I was stunned when I saw the words, “Each man's praise will come to him from God.” I tried to read this differently and couldn't get it right. I did my best to reconstruct the verse that we are the ones praising and not God. But the text would not allow it. It truly is staggering to read that praise one day will come from God Himself. God will praise His children in heaven. That is the day that the Christians stand before God in heaven. Paul is speaking about eternity. And on the day we step into forever, we will hear a sound from God's lips that will shock us all. God will praise!

The words that come before the praise make this passage even more astonishing. Paul tells us that there is a day coming when the Lord will bring to light all hidden things and reveal the true motives of people's hearts. When I read these words, I shiver in my soul. Just the thought of doing good things with bad motives brings the fear of the Lord to me. Reliving sins that were confessed in private and knowing they will come to light one day, is another fearful moment. And without skipping a beat, Paul connects God's praise with the conjunction “and” to make sure we understand that they are part of the same sentence construct. I think Paul was telling us that despite hidden things and wrong motives, the verses prior tell us we are judged by God and the verdict is you are the righteousness of God in Christ. God praises because He sees the same righteousness in you that is in His very own Son.

This verse would have been so much clearer to me if God said, “I will praise those who lived victoriously as a Christian on earth.” Or

“ **God praises because He sees the same righteousness in you that is in His very own Son.** ”

if Paul had said, “I will disclose hidden motives and hidden things, and though I will be disappointed, I will allow you into heaven.” I wanted Paul to say God will praise the overcomer or God will be disappointed with the Christian’s hidden secrets. But Paul connects praise with disclosure. He connects God’s hallelujah with our humanity. It doesn’t seem right or real. But it does seem

supernatural. The only way I can see God praising is because He sees His Son’s righteousness and not mine. That’s why those words before the praise of God make sense. If they were not there, this would be sacrilegious. God doesn’t praise our righteousness but His Son’s. The only way praise comes from the mouth of God is towards His Son.

On that day, the God Who spoke and created the heavens and the earth WILL PRAISE His children. How humbling will that be. Just the thought of it makes me want to fall on my knees and say the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 115:1

“Not to us, O Lord, not to us,”

But to Your name give glory.

Music at Summit

We sat down with Ben Hughes, the Music Director at Summit, and asked him for the latest in music news from Summit and what we can expect in the coming year.

So Ben, what’s new with music at Summit?

There is lots going on! As our music program continues to mature (i.e. I’m getting old), we have been expanding ways to give students live production and worship-leading experiences outside of our walls. This spring, we participated in a worship event at Yale University, and in a few weeks we will take the Summit worship team to Prince Edward Island, Canada (my hometown!) to host a youth event there. We also have more churches and ministries interested in hiring live production techs and we are in the process of making major changes to

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Summit International School of Ministry

equipment in the chapel, both for Front of House and broadcast to prep our students accordingly. We are excited to continue our music relationship with TSC (one of our recent graduates will be joining the TSC worship team in NYC this summer), and we have an expanding list of ministries looking to hire Summit musicians and worship leaders.

What excites you most about the student musicians/singers you work with?

We have a fantastic group of students returning this fall. They are an eclectic mix of singers and musicians all passionate about glorifying the Lord with music. These folks will organize a praise and worship evening on their own, from setting up the PA system to leading in song. It’s pretty incredible. Also, it’s great to



see the growth in our students both spiritually and as musicians. Recently I've had a number of former students releasing music on their own and/or helping their local congregation out as sound technicians. They've taken Summit's class in live production and are able to immediately use those skills after graduation. It's encouraging to get those phone calls or receive DMs from former students excited about what they are doing in ministry.

Any plans for new recording projects?

Yes! There are some great songwriters around here, and right now we are developing a few songs written by students and

alumni. We've also set aside time for songwriting this fall. We have been inspired by the messages preached at TSC recently and we want to continue creating original worship centered on the Word.

What are you most excited for this coming school year?

Mostly I'm excited to meet the incoming freshman class! You never know from year to year who will come through our doors. The flavor of our program is really influenced by our students. They are what makes the music experience here great. God has been faithful to bring in those willing to learn, serve, and have fun.

The Real Spirit-Filled Life

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Pastor Nik Godshall

Spirit-filled has become a label for certain opinions about spiritual gifts in the church today, and even for a congregation's worship style. But such usage is a sad example of cultural labels overshadowing robust theology, as being Spirit-filled in a Biblical sense has little to do with any of that. In fact, such usage suggests that Acts 2:4 and a smattering of verses from 1 Corinthians are probably the only Scriptures being used to form up our doctrine of who the Holy Spirit is. But the Holy Spirit and His ministry are far too grand to be described with just a few New Testament passages. We need the entire Bible to fully capture what He's come to do and what it means to be Spirit-filled.

Throughout the Bible, the Holy Spirit has two related objectives: 1) Subdue all that opposes God's Kingdom. 2) Establish the Kingdom. We could call the Spirit, the Kingdom Executor. It is His job to advance God's reign over creation and remove all that opposes that reign. This ministry can be seen as early as creation, when He hovered over the dark, chaotic waters that made life impossible (Gen. 1:2). Deep waters inspired fear in ancient Israelite readers, as they were not seafaring people (e.g., Psa. 69:1; Jon. 2:5). For them, the Spirit hovering over the waters showed that He overpowers what terrifies men. He would allow no tumultuous sea to prevent God's Kingdom from advancing in the creation of the cosmos and of humankind.

The Holy Spirit follows this pattern throughout the whole Bible:

- He brought salvation to God's people and judgment to His enemies at the Red Sea (Exod. 15:8, 10; cf. Isa. 63:11-14).
- He was apportioned from Moses to 70 elders to help maintain order in the camp (Num. 11:16-34).
- He rested on Joshua in wisdom, enabling him to lead the conquest of Canaan (Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9).
- He "rushed upon" the Judges, enabling them to unite Israel and defeat enemies (Judg. 6:34).
- He empowered David to rescue Israel from Saul's incompetence and from Goliath's threats (1 Sam. 16:13-14; 17:1-58).



Most importantly, when it was time to save humanity, the Spirit hovered over a young virgin to bring forth Jesus (Luke 1:35). He then hovered over Jesus at His baptism before leading Him into single combat with the Tempter (Matt 3:16-4:1). He made war through Jesus as He confronted demons (Matt. 12:28). Now, He hovers over the Church, empowering her to storm the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:4).

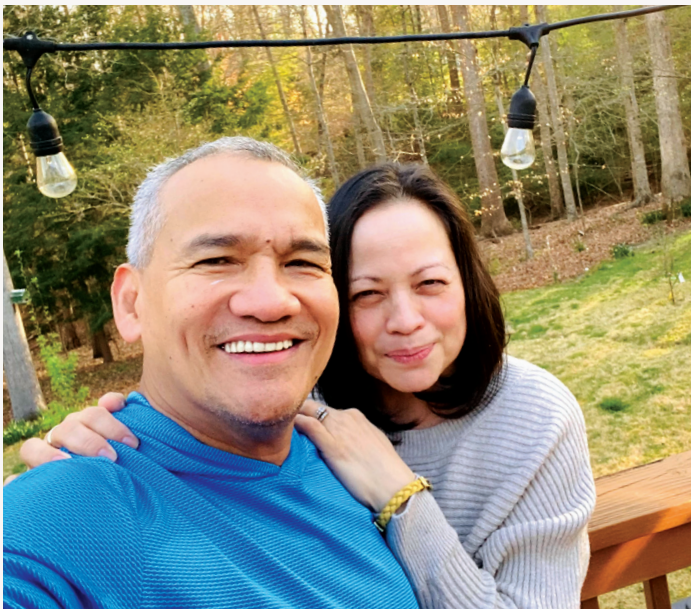
When hostile forces stand in the way of God's Kingdom advancing, the Spirit goes to war. This is why being Spirit-filled actually means being a threat to demonic strongholds. It means living in such dependence on His power that the Christian brings havoc to Satan's Kingdom. Don't judge whether I'm Spirit-filled by how I worship. Judge it by whether hell knows my name.

What does the word father mean to you?

Father to me is responsibility and accountability. It's a weighty word and also very meaningful. Knowing God as our Father means that as men, we are accountable to Him and responsible to our family, and everything that goes with it; the wife, children, finances, and security.

How did you become a different father after you were born again?

I have two boys and a girl. My middle boy got burned when he was six years old. 50% of his body is covered by burns. And during the time when it happened, I was halfway around the world. I was in Haiti, serving as a United Nations police officer. On top of that, I found out that the mother of my children was having an affair and taking drugs. Being in Haiti, my responsibility was to send money for school allowances and pay bills. Then only to find out what was really happening crushed me back then. During that time, I was not yet a believer. I grew up Catholic and had a fear of God but not a relationship with Him. So my first reaction was asking, "God, why him? Why not me? He's only six years old." I didn't understand. I had a lot of questions. Two years later, the Lord really saved me, and I began reading the Word. I understood His sovereignty and that everything happens for a purpose. So that includes what happened to my son. I thank God, he's still alive. Now he's born again. All of my children are believers. The Lord used me as an instrument for them to be in the faith. Then at one time, my daughter was a prodigal. She left the house. I just kneeled and prayed. It took three years. Then the Lord brought her back. It's still a challenge, but yet it's worth it. Because that's what the Lord gave me personally.



What does your relationship with your children look like now?

I totally trust God in everything. I'm here in America and my kids are back in the Philippines. Thank God for technology because now we have Zoom and FaceTime. I am able to minister to them because that's our first ministry, our family. God opened the eyes of their hearts to become believers. We do Bible study on the phone. Every time that I speak to them, I always ask them, "How are you? Give me your updates." After our conversation, we pray. And I always tell my kids, "You need to be open and honest." Number one is prayer. And then

number two is openness and honesty. And then there was one time I asked them for forgiveness. It's really important. I continuously tell them what God has done for me and to be a blessing to others.

Besides being a father to your biological kids, you are also a father to your stepkids. How does that role differ?

It's a big difference. With my wife, we are a blended family. I have three kids and she has two. You can speak directly to your kids, but not to your stepchildren. There are boundaries. I gave my wife the authority to speak to my kids as a mother, but not replace their real mother. I always tell my kids that their mom will always be their mom, regardless of what happened. It's challenging, but we've always led our decision-making with prayers. I thank God for my wife. God used her to help me become a believer. A father and a child are two, but a husband and wife are one. There is a oneness that needs to be invested in. Before being a believer, I didn't know those things. The scripture says what God brought together, no one can break. So that's where our investment is. First, we honor God, then our marriage, then our children, and then ministry. That's how we continuously grow our love.

What was your journey with your own father and how did influence you?

I am my mom and dad's only son from their union. When they separated, I was still young, only seven years old, so I really didn't experience growing up with my biological father. My mom got married again and I grew up with my stepfather and my step-brothers and sisters. I began to long for my biological dad when I was in college. I asked my mom about him and she would always tell me that he was dead. She would tell me not to bother wondering about him. However, I did my research and found out that he was alive. He had remarried and had other children. I finally saw him again when I was 18 or 19 years old. It was a casual meeting. He just asked me, "How are you?" I never heard the words "I love you." Now, since I've been saved, we have a good relationship. Because the Scripture says, "Honor your father and mother."

We were able to spend time with my dad and my stepmom when he came to New York and we were able to minister to them. Driving two hours with my dad in the car, he was able to open up. Maybe he was also waiting for an opportunity to talk to me again. And then for the first time, I heard him, say to me, "Okay bye son, I love you, I love you." It's really a journey being a father who grew up without a father physically, but knowing that my spiritual father is always there.

What advice would you give to a new father or a father who has just been born again?

Being a father, you will take full responsibility for your actions. We are all accountable to God. Never give up on praying for your kids. If they are already wayward or they're doing some things that you really have no control over, always trust God and fight on your knees. That is our best offense, our best weapon. Because the enemy comes to kill, steal and destroy family. What God loves, the enemy hates. Always go to the Word of God and talk to the Holy Spirit before anything else in the morning. That's all I can say because I have experienced it personally, I'm still on the journey.