

LET GOD ARISE!

Like a Master Builder *Prayer Guide #12*

Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis



Built to Proclaim God's Excellencies

1 Peter 2.6-10

Behold the Glories of the Lamb

Isaac Watts

Behold the glories of the Lamb amidst His Father's throne.
Prepare new honors for His Name, and songs before unknown.

Let elders worship at His feet, the Church adore around,
With vials full of odors sweet, and harps of sweeter sound.

Those are the prayers of the saints, and these the hymns they raise;
Jesus is kind to our complaints, He loves to hear our praise.

Eternal Father, who shall look into Thy secret will?
Who but the Son should take that Book and open every seal?

He shall fulfill Thy great decrees, the Son deserves it well;
Lo, in His hand the sovereign keys of heav'n, and death, and hell!

Now to the Lamb that once was slain be endless blessings paid;
Salvation, glory, joy remain forever on Thy head.

Thou hast redeemed our souls with blood, hast set the prisoner free;
Hast made us kings and priests to God, and we shall reign with Thee.

The worlds of nature and of grace are put beneath Thy power;
Then shorten these delaying days, and bring the promised hour.

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Proclaim the Excellencies of the Lord

We Are a People of God's Possession to Proclaim the Excellencies of God

1 Pet. 2.6-10 - For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." [7] So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," [8] and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. [9] But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Eph. 1.3-6 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, [4] even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love [5] he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, [6] to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

We Are to Be Salt and Light That People May See Our Works and Glorify the Father

Matt. 5.13-16 - "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. [14] You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. [15] Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. [16] In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."



Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV)

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Prov. 4.18 - But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day.

Isa. 58.8 - Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Rom. 13.11-14 - Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. [12] The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. [13] Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. [14] But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Eph. 5.8 - For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

Phil. 2.14-16 - Do all things without grumbling or questioning, [15] that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, [16] holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

1 Thess. 5.6-8 - So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. [7] For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. [8] But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.



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Ps. 148.14 - He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him. Praise the Lord!

1 Chron. 16.35 - Say also: "Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather and deliver us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name, and glory in your praise."

Ps. 14.7 - Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Ps. 126.1 - When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

God Has Called Us to Be so Christ-filled That We Pursue His Kingdom Rule on Earth

Acts 26.18 - to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

Phil. 3.12-16 - Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. [13] Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, [14] I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. [15] Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. [16] Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

Col. 1.13 - He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son

1 Thess. 5.4-8 - But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. [5] For you are all children of light, children of the



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day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. [6] So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. [7] For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. [8] But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

"To God Be the Glory, Great Things He Has Done!"

1 Chron. 29.11 - Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all.

Ps. 145.11-13 - They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, [12] to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. [13] Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The Lord is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.]

1 Pet. 4.11 - Whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Eph. 3.20-21 - Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Let the Holy Ones of God Ascribe Glory to His Name

Ps. 29.1-2 - Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. [2] Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness.



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Ps. 72.19 - Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!

Ps. 115.1 - Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!

Isa. 6.3 - And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

Isa. 42.8-12 - "I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. [9] Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." [10] Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants. [11] Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar inhabits; let the habitants of Sela sing for joy, let them shout from the top of the mountains. [12] Let them give glory to the Lord, and declare his praise in the coastlands.

Luke 2.14 - "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Rom. 11.36 - For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Rom. 16.25-27 - Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages [26] but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— [27] to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.



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Phil. 2.9-11 - Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, [10] so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2 Tim. 4.18 - The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Heb. 13.20-21 - Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, [21] equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Rom. 8.31-39 - What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? [32] He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? [33] Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. [34] Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. [35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? [36] As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” [37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. [38] For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Our Lives Ought to Follow the Heavenly Pattern of Glorifying God That Occurs in Heaven

Rev. 4.9-11 - And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever,



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[10] the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, [11] “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

Rev. 5.9-14 - And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, [10] and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” [11] Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, [12] saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” [13] And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” [14] And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Isa. 25.8 - He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

We Ought to Not Live for Ourselves but for Him Who Loved Us and Gave Himself for Us

Gal. 2.20 - It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Eph. 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.



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Rom. 14.8 - If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

2 Thess. 2.16 - Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace.

2 Cor. 5.6-9 - So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, [7] for we walk by faith, not by sight. [8] Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. [9] So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

1 John 4.10 - In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4.19 - We love because he first loved us.

Jude 1.24 - Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, [25] to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Let Us Strive and Toil to Declare His Glory among the Nations

1 Cor. 9.24-27 - Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. [25] Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. [26] So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. [27] But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.



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1 Cor. 15.58 - Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Col. 1.27-29 - To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. [28] Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. [29] For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

1 Thess. 4.10-11 - for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, [11] and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you.

1 Tim. 4.7-10 - Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; [8] for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. [9] The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. [10] For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

Heb. 4.9-11 - So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, [10] for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. [11] Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

2 Pet. 1.10-11 - Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never



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fall. [11] For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Pet. 3.14 - Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

Let Us Live for the Glory of God, Who Has Redeemed Us from the Condemnation of the World

Ps. 98.1 - Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. [2] The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. [3] He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Ps. 96.1-5 - Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth! [2] Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. [3] Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! [4] For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. [5] For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Ps. 22.27 - All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.

Ps. 72.18-19 - Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. [19] Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!

Ps. 117.1 - Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!

Isa. 49.6 - he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will



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make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” ■



“Gettin’ Your Praise On”: Proclaiming the Excellencies of God

THROUGHOUT THIS year we have reflected on the security and power of Christ as our Cornerstone and Foundation, the Solid Rock on which we build our lives and ministries and hope for a transformed and righteous world. Without a doubt, the work of Christ on the Cross—his lowliness, sacrifice, and suffering—is worthy of constant, unbroken, and our best praise, and clearest, most compelling testimony. With hundreds of millions of people professing Christ, one would think Christians would simply be making headlines in their constant accolades, applause, and glories being offered up to and given in the name of the Lord.

If God is so great, why are we so silent in proclaiming his glories to a world in desperate need of something to acknowledge and celebrate?

Ready to Give Award to Anyone for Anything?

The latest craze with reality television, with the multiplication of award shows, with the plethora of nonsense dramas and situation comedies, and the nearly endless stream of foolishness and contrived-drama reveals a need in our society. We invent reasons to play games, nonsense games, to play and win. Our society is the community of the winner, the achiever, the conqueror. We acknowledge the expertise and value of a person’s merit, whatever vocation they possess or activity they engage in, whether they are a contestant in a business venture, play checkers, lose weight, survive in a contrived jungle situation, or participate in an “amazing race.” Sports heroes and heroines are legend, the biggest loser is a star, and even the most selfish, weird, and downright immature person who survives being “cut” from a home living situation gets their name in lights.

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There simply is no question about our fascination with awards; American culture is drunk on proclaiming so-called excellence in anything. MTV Awards, Country Music Awards, Academy Awards, Film Awards, Sports Awards, Teen Choice, Peoples Choice, Kid's Choice, Emmy Awards—from Writers to Actors, from Sales to Plumbers—we love awards. Everywhere we turn there is recognition for the “So-and-so” of the Year, the “Best-of-the-Class” acknowledgment, and so on. We love a reason to clap for a star; we are high on being fans.

Something to Get Excited About

The heart of the Church's mission and call is to bring glory, honor, and praise to the One whose work and action truly matters, whose story is greater than all others, and whose victory touches all things throughout all time. By worldly standards, no other hero, star, achiever, professional, politician, or anything else could match the wondrous work of God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. With the very salvation of the entire universe at stake (to say nothing of the future of all humankind) he willingly humbled himself and took on those enemies which had ravaged God's creation since the dawn of our rebellion against him. With perfect love and absolute resolve he obeyed his Father unconditionally, humbling himself to become a human being in order to redeem us from the grave and from hell. Having secured eternal salvation for humankind through his death on the Cross, he rose triumphantly from the dead on the third day, and ascended to heaven, from where he showered the unworthy yet believing with his Spirit and endowments from above.

If this were not truly enough, he has promised to prepare a place, a city, for his redeemed, and will return and gather them all—living, dead, and those who haven't been born yet!—to himself to live in a perfect heaven and earth where righteousness dwells. He did all of this not because of our merit or holiness, but in spite of ourselves and our sin, he gave himself for us purely for the sake of love—for his Father, and for his people, the Church.



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If this quick summary of the matchless grace of Christ is true, why hasn't the Church gone buck wild in proclaiming this message, living it out with style and thanksgiving, and celebrating it with the wildest, zaniest, and freshest praise and parties we can hold? Why can a Yankees game get more angst and verve out of a crowd than so-called saints who've inherited eternal life in praising the name of their risen Lord? How can the same people who dress up in team colors and go hoarse from yelling for their team at a Super Bowl party be completely drowsy and indifferent during their worship time on Sunday morning? Dear friends, this ought not to be so!

Called to Proclaim His Greatness to the World

In his first epistle (2.9-10), Peter calls believers to affirm their fundamental identity, to become who they are, and to flesh out for all to see our wonder, joy, and amazement at the works of God in Christ. In simple clear language he challenges us to affirm our status before God, and to embrace the mission we have as those set apart to glorify the Father through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

In a society addicted to the wonder of becoming and being associated with "number one," God has called us to shift our allegiance from ourselves to him. We are called to proclaim his glories, to declare his beauty, his greatness, and his power among those who do not know him. And, he asserts that it is perfectly reasonable to expect this, given that we have become his people and received his mercy.



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Human beings simply can't help themselves—we are creatures that must be the “fans” of someone or something. We celebrate excellence, we brag and boast on the “winners” and the “champions.” We like to make a big deal of being the best, being on top, of winning the prize. I would suggest that God, having done what he did for us in Christ, has given us the occasion to become the perfect fans, the truest fans, the most righteous fans of anything at any time in human history. Nothing is more appropriate, righteous, and legitimate than proclaiming through our words, works, and witness the excellencies of the love and grace of him who gave everything for us, who surrendered everything on our account, who held nothing back to make us his own.

Giving Credit Where Credit Is Infinitely Due

As we come to a close with our theme, “Like a Master Builder” this year, we must affirm the truly noble and appropriate nature of the work we do in Christ. Not only is it true, it is gracious. It is not only historically accurate but it is spiritually mind-boggling that we could be loved like this, cherished this way, provided for like this.

As Creator, Redeemer, Father, and Friend, our God is infinitely worthy to receive glory and honor for the majestic salvation that he has provided to the world, and his love for humankind, despite our rebellion and foolishness and waste. As builders on the sure Foundation of Christ, we know what life is about, and know why our works count. God has determined out of sovereign grace to call a remnant of human beings back to him to serve him forever in a new heavens and a new earth. He did this out of his love and grace, and now calls his people to simply declare it, to proclaim it, to sing it, to reveal it in how we worship, how we work, and how we serve. Nothing is simpler, and yet nothing is more profound.

Why waste your affection praising things which will not last, and cannot satisfy? Why ought we to express love for worldly things so effortlessly,



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while, at the same time, demonstrate heartfelt enthusiasm for the things of Christ so haltingly? Let's repent and rethink this out. Let's brag and boast in the One whose valor and sacrifice has won the world back to God, the same One who offers life, freedom, and forgiveness to every dweller, household, neighborhood and city, freely and without payment?

Church, it's time to strike up the band, get our dancing shoes on, and begin to proclaim to our friends and neighbors the excellencies of the great God who won us back to him by love.

May God grant us who know him to build on the Foundation that cannot move, the Rock that shall always stand, and the Stone which the builders rejected but through God became the Cornerstone and the Capstone. ■

The Season after Pentecost: Proclaiming God's Excellencies

1 Pet. 2.9-10 - But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Biblical Principle of the Month

As we come to the close of this Season after Pentecost, let us re-affirm our call and mission in the world—to proclaim with joy and integrity the excellencies of the One who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Through the valor and courage of our risen Lord Jesus of Nazareth, we have been redeemed, and we ought to be saying so everywhere we live, work and play. Nothing is more appropriate for the saints than for them to simply declare the glory of God among the nations, and prophesy healing and deliverance to all who repent and trust in the name of Christ. This is duty and our joy.



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Ps. 96.1-5 - Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth! [2] Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. [3] Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! [4] For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. [5] For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

An Example of this Principle: Paul, the Apostle

Col. 1.27-29 - To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. [28] Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. [29] For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.



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