

HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 7/22/2024
Raising Hands in Worship

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

ONE AT ONE – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, July 23 you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, pray for our nation as we move through the process to elect a president. Rather than praying for a particular candidate, pray for the process. Pray for clarity in your choice. Pray for the people of our country and that, whoever is elected, put this nation and its people first.*

You may see people raising their hands in worship, especially during songs. Some may wonder why this is being done and if it is disrespectful or lacks proper worship decorum. However, there is biblical support for this practice that many may not realize.

Psalms 63:4 says, "I will praise YOU as long as I live, and in YOUR name I will lift up my hands."

Psalms 134: 2 encourages, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD."

Lamentations 3:41 invites, "Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to GOD in heaven."

Nehemiah records that when the people of Israel returned to their homeland and Jerusalem with its rebuilt walls, "Ezra praised the LORD, the great GOD; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, 'Amen! Amen!'"

In I Timothy 2:8, Paul states, "Therefore I want the people everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing."

Several other passages echo this theme of raising hands in the acclamation of GOD. By the way, Psalm 47:1 says, "Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to GOD with cries of joy." Using our hands in worship is a way of offering our praises to our LORD who loves us.

Raising hands in worship shows that the whole person is involved in the act of worship. Some people are so moved by something in the service that they can't help but raise their hand or hands to give glory to GOD. Rather than being disrespectful, it is a way of showing honor and devotion to GOD.

Lifting hands also indicates a desire for a close relationship with GOD. When my children were little and they wanted to be closer to me by having me pick them up, they would come to me and say, "Uppy, uppy, uppy." And they would do this with their hands raised. It is the same when we do this in worship. When we seek to feel nearer to GOD, we can do that by raising our hands. It doesn't mean you have to. But if the HOLY SPIRIT moves you to do so, go right ahead.

In CHRIST's love,
Pastor Jeffrey