FRESH THYME – Back With Your Ex – by Marcy Lytle

Catchy title made you look, right? I'm not writing about getting back with a former lover…but rather, I'm writing about those two little words used as a prefix "ex" and something I recently learned when my husband was reading to me one night before bed. We read the words *exalt* and *exult* in the same sentence. And then the next day I read the word *extol*.

It was then that we realized we didn't really know the difference between these words, these "lofty" words we'd heard and read in Bible verses all of our lives. Is there a difference, and would it be helpful to know the difference when spending time in praising the One that loves us so much? So, we did what any person does when they're curious…we asked Google.

The prefix "ex" means up or out…up in the case of exercising the privilege and honor of praising God.

To exalt means to view as high or superior. Exalt comes from the Latin word meaning "high."

To exult is to jump for joy, to rejoice. Exult comes from the Latin word "jump."

To extol is to raise or elevate or make high. Extol comes from the Latin word "raise."

One involves acknowledgement of His great worth, the second is to jump for joy over that realization, and the third is to do something with that knowledge – lift it up high.

Psalm 147 says,

Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever.

And then the rest of the chapter tells us how to exalt, exult and extol the Lord. These three words, in my experience, are rarely used except in the presence of scripture. Have you heard them used in any other context? They are really special words and worth nothing, if we are reminded to exercise praise daily.

The way to **exalt** the Lord is to tell of his mighty acts from one generation to another. We're supposed to share his wonderful works, to speak of them. This means when we eat around the dinner table, part of our conversation should be about what awesome things God showed up and did during that particular day. What a beautiful sunrise, amazing sunset, provision for this bill, meeting the need of that friend, and so on. This acknowledges God and his power; it speaks it out loud. so that others hear.

Exulting Him results in rejoicing and jumping for joy. It might erupt into joyful singing and celebration. One night recently, we were reading and a song from a long time ago popped into our heads, "Ah Lord God, thou has made the heavens and the earth by thy great power…" a really peppy joyful song. So we sang it in bed, in the dark, together. We then feel fast asleep, covered in peace. Exulting involves a response to the acknowledgement or exaltation of his greatness.

To **extol** the Lord hen means to actually raise and lift Him up high, to elevate his name. What are the aspects of his character? He's good, righteous, faithful and near. He watches, loves, and saves.

I'm pretty sure that we cannot really extol the Lord unless we have first exalted him – acknowledged his acts and appearances in our world, then exulted Him by responding to that realization that he's so present and available daily in our lives. Getting back with those two "exes" seems to precede the final "ex" of extoling.

Exalt, exult and extol. Three exes worth revisiting and getting to know better once again…or maybe for the first time…might be the best experience of love we can all hope to have this month. Read Psalm 145 and practice what it says, along with the writer. I know, I'm going to do it and I'm smiling already, as I think about getting back with these exes.