

THANKSGIVING, PRAISE, AND WORSHIP
Prayer and Intercession
Resource Ministries
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6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)

16 Be joyful always; 17 pray continually; 18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV)

1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone -- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. (1 Timothy 2:1-2 NIV)

I. DEFINITION OF TERMS FOR THANKSGIVING, PRAISE AND WORSHIP:

- A. Thanksgiving: Gratitude for benefits received or experienced; related to our own experience of blessing and provision.

Focuses on: THE PROVISION OF GOD.

16 Be joyful always; 17 pray continually; 18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV)

- B. Praise: An expression of approval or admiration; acknowledging God's perfection, works, and benefits. Man can be praised, God must be praised.

Focuses on: THE POWER OF GOD (Miracles, deeds)

- C. Worship (Worship): To bow down, to fall down, to serve, to kiss the hand, fall to the knees, touch the forehead to the ground. To pay honor, devotion, and reverence to God. Positioning ourselves in humility before God.

Focuses on: THE PERSON OF GOD

II. THANKFULNESS: THE ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Do we bother to say thanks? Think about how often in a day someone does something for you, however small. How often do you say thanks? Now think about how often God helps you in a day. Think about how much God has given you. How often do you say thanks to him? Thanksgiving is a celebration of the giver and the gift. Celebrate often?

A. Why should we give thanks to the Lord?

1. Because God is good and kind and loving.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. (1 Chronicles 16:34 NIV)

2. A thankful heart plays a role in the maturing of our faith.

He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him and he was a Samaritan. (Luke 17:16 NIV)

3. For victory that he gives us in Christ.

But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57 NIV)

4. For God's Son, Jesus

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (2 Corinthians 9:15 NIV)

5. For answered prayer.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. (Colossians 4:2 NIV)

6. For what He has done.

Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. (1 Chronicles 16:8 NIV)

7. To let others know how wonderful God is.

1 Praise the LORD. I will extol the LORD with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly. 2 Great are the works of

the LORD; they are pondered by all who delight in them. (Psalm 111:1-2 NIV)

8. Because thanksgiving keeps our mind on Christ and our thoughts on others.

rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. (Colossians 2:7 NIV)

B. How should we show God we are thankful?

1. With music and singing.

Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make music to our God on the harp. (Psalm 147:7 NIV)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16 NIV)

2. By praising and honoring Him.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. (Psalm 100:4 NIV)

3. Through worship and giving.

I will sacrifice a thank offering to you and call on the name of the LORD. (Psalm 116:17 NIV)

C. When should we give thanks to the Lord?

1. Morning and evening

to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night, (Psalm 92:2 NIV)

2. When we are about to eat food he gives.

For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, (1 Timothy 4:4 NIV)

- D. We should maintain a spirit of constant gratitude.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. (Colossians 3:15 NIV)

give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:18 NIV)

1. A lack of thanksgiving puts up a barrier between us and God.
2. Thankfulness fades with time. For us, fading memory, neatly forgetting what we owe to God and others, can become a convenient way to avoid repaying our debt. Don't let time rob God of the thanksgiving he deserves from you. (Exodus 1:8)

- E. When our pride becomes a barrier, keeping us from thanksgiving and praise, it acts also as a wall to keep us from God.

But Hezekiah's heart was proud and he did not respond to the kindness shown him; therefore the LORD's wrath was on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. (2 Chronicles 32:25 NIV)

III. PRAISE AND WORSHIP

A personal life filled with praise and worship results in an intimate fellowship with God that is gained no other way. The Bible says if we delight in the Lord, He will grant us the desires of our heart. Praise and worship ushers us into the Lord's presence and brings God's presence into us. He has opened the way for us to minister to Him with thanksgiving, praise, and worship. We gladly respond because He is seeking those who will worship Him in Spirit and in truth. The more we open ourselves in humble adoration to worship a glorious and magnificent God, the more He reveals Himself to us personally.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)

- A. You are Chosen to Worship Him:

This means you, the believer. We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation as the body of Christ. We were chosen to declare praise and worship to the Father in heaven. We are called to a ministry as Royal Priests. Our lives should be filled with regular times of worshipping the Lord, one on one, just like the early church.

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, (Acts 13:1-4)

B. God is Seeking True Worshipers:

When we offer our thanksgiving, praise, and worship in total abandonment, we are getting close to the meaning of true worship. He is seeking those kinds of worshipers.

"Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers MUST worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24)

C. True Worship is Our Gift to God:

Since God chose us to minister to Him, we respond by offering our thanksgiving, praise, and worship. It is the most important gift we can offer Him. God owns it all. There is nothing He needs, nor anything we can give Him except our total adoration, honor, undivided attention, praise, and worship. True worshipers know that. There is nothing that gets God's attention more than true worship. It is up to the believer to find out the kind of worship that is acceptable and defined as that which He seeks.

D. Start with Thanksgiving:

We begin our approach to the Father with a thankful heart. Since He provides everything for us to enjoy, we begin worship with thanksgiving. We begin by thanking Him for everything we can think of. This is an act of our will as we approach Him with thanksgiving. Thanksgiving comes before praise. It opens the gates and prepares us to begin true praise.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. (Psalm 100:4-5)

Sacrifice thank offerings to God, fulfill your vows to the Most High, He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God. (Psalm 50:14, 23)

E. Then comes praise:

True praise is honest vocal adoration directed to God. It means to adore or cherish Him. It also means to render Him divine honor and esteem, vocally! Praise is an action of expressed love that emanates from our lips. We are vocalizing words of love and adoration from the lips of the created to the Creator. Spontaneous praise is nearing true praise. It can be released in many forms according to the Bible; with our mouth in singing, shouting, with instruments and with the whole congregation.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise. (Psalm 47:6-7)

Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart! (Psalm 32:11)

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. (Psalm 96:1-4)

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. (Psalm 100:1-2)

With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD: "He is good; his love to Israel endures forever." And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away. (Ezra 3:11, 13)

May those who delight in my vindication shout for joy and gladness; may they always say, "The LORD be exalted, who delights in the well-being of his servant." My tongue will speak of your righteousness and of your praises all day long. (Psalm 35:27-28)

F. We can release the power of God in Praise:

Sincere praise and worship ushers in the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit to do mighty things in our midst. Even in trial and tribulation, praise will change the situation. Sincere praise and worship moves the heart of God.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. (Acts 16:25-26)

It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying, "For he is good; for his mercy endures forever:" that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God. (2 Chronicles 5:13-14 KJV)

G. True Worship Ushers in God's Glory:

The glory of the Lord is released when a corporate gathering of believers finally enter into true worship. Notice in 2 Chronicles that the priests could not stand to perform their duties. When the authentic presence of the Lord is ushered in during high praise and worship as everyone finally comes into one accord, the awesome power of God is released. People may begin to fall because they are unable to stand. When everyone is in one accord, focused totally on God, engaged in total spontaneous worship, they will experience the majestic, overwhelming manifestation of God's glory. That is true worship.

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped. (Revelation 5:11-14)

H. Unity in Praise and Worship is a Key to Releasing the Presence and Power of God. To experience the glory of God we must take steps to be in one accord with one another and with God.

- We must have no unforgiveness towards anyone.
- We are to love and accept those with whom we worship.
- We are to be in close personal relationship with God.
- We are to surrender ourselves to worship the Father in Spirit and in truth.
- We are to practice the presence of the Lord, expecting Him to strongly manifest Himself at any given moment as we come into agreement with the Heavenly host of angels, worshipping Him with absolute abandonment.

"then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the LORD has spoken.(Isaiah 58:14)

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O LORD. They rejoice in your name all day long; they exult in your righteousness. For you are their glory and strength, and by your favor you exalt our horn. Indeed, our shield belongs to the LORD, our king to the Holy One of Israel. (Psalm 89:15-18)

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." (Psalm 91:1-2)

IV. THANKSGIVING, PRAISE AND WORSHIP: SCRIPTURAL CONCEPTS

A. THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise-- the fruit of lips that confess his name. (Hebrews 13:15)

"..and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord." Jeremiah 33:11-13

We do not Praise and Worship God just because we feel like it and are bursting with joy and enthusiasm. We worship Him because He is worthy of our Praise. He is always worthy, even when we don't feel "Praisey"!

Therefore it is legitimate to worship Him as a sacrifice of our flesh; Spirit overcoming flesh. This sacrifice is acceptable to the Lord.

B. MAGNIFY THE LORD (Psalm 34:3, Psalm 35:27, Psalm 40:16, Psalm 70:4)

"Let God be magnified.."

"My soul doth magnify the Lord.." (Luke 1:46)

"..speak with tongues and magnify God." (Acts 10:46)

"..Christ be magnified in my body." (Philippians 1:20)

Magnify means to "make to appear larger". Many times the things that appear large and overwhelming to us are our problems and difficulties which seem like mountains obstructing our pathway. Praise and Worship "Magnifies the Lord", making Him appear larger than our problems. This releases faith and allows us to rejoice in Him.

C. GOD INHABITS THE PRAISES OF HIS PEOPLE

But thou [art] holy, [O thou] that inhabits the praises of Israel. (Psalm 22:3 AV)

Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel. (Psalm 22:3)

Our praise and worship creates a throne or resting place where our Holy God can come and reign in our midst. An Old Testament type of this is the "Mercy Seat" where God's Presence appeared.

D. ENTER HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING..ENTER HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. (Psalm 100:4)

We come into the presence of God in Praise and Worship in a process that normally takes us from Thanksgiving into Praise and then into Worship; much like the process of entering a king's palace through the gates into the courtyard and then being invited to enter the throne room for an audience with the king.

E. PRAISE MOVES US FROM THE EARTHLY TO THE HEAVENLY REALM

When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me, till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. (Psalm 73:16-17)

There is a change in perspective or point of view that takes place when we come into the presence of the Lord in Praise and Worship. "..Then I understood!" There are many things that we simply can't understand until we come into God's presence in Praise and Worship.