

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer Series: 4

The Prayer Model – Thanksgiving and Praise

Matthew 6. 5-13

Having looked at the first two sections of the model prayer: this pattern, these guidelines to direct us we pray. We now turn our focus to the last section.

We have seen that part of our praying is to focus on God. We worship Him because He is our Father, we have an intimate relationship with Him. We worship Him because His name is holy. This gives us confidence so we can come boldly to Him, in Jesus' name, and bring our petitions to Him and receive the answer to our prayers.

As a follow on from what we have already studied we can now look at the final section of this pattern. We have already touched on it:

C. Thanksgiving and Praise vs13b

“For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen” Matthew 6.13b

The usual response at the close of prayers, according to *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* was “**Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom, for ever and ever.**” This ascribes praise and thanksgiving to God for His power and glory manifested through the kingdom of God.

It is right and proper that we give thanks when we pray – it is Scriptural. The Psalms are great examples of this. Many of them begin with the psalmists in deep trouble, wondering whether God would bring them out. Then they turn to God and bring their petitions to Him, trusting Him. These psalms then end with a song of thanksgiving and praise (e.g. Psalms 3; 13; 28; 31; 52; 60)

The Scripture says:

“be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God...” Philippians 4.6

“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving” Colossians 4.2

“pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” 1 Thessalonians 5.17-18

1. Thanksgiving Strengthens our Faith in God.

a) Jesus commended the Samaritan man who said 'thank-you'.

Luke 17.11-19

“Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. (12) Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. (13) And they lifted up *their* voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" (14) So when He saw *them*, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. (15) And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, (16) and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. (17) So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine? (18) Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" (19) And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."”

- Ten lepers were cleansed of leprosy
- As they went, they were healed. I believe this shows us that when we pray and bring our petitions to God, He expects us to act in faith. They were not cleansed as they stood in front of Jesus – it was their act of going (to the priest) in obedience to Jesus' words, that brought them their healing.
- Only one came back to Jesus to give God praise and thanksgiving. The other nine went on their way.
- Jesus connected the giving of thanks with faith in God.

When we give thanks and praise we are proclaiming that we trust and believe Him. Our praise and thanksgiving is an act of our faith.

(b) Thanksgiving Takes Possession.

When we receive a present from (or give one to) somebody it is customary and polite to say thank you to that person. Thank you means that you have taken possession of the gift, even if you do not yet have it in your hand.

Example: Let's say I wrote you a cheque for €1000 and telephoned you to say that I have this money in my hand for you and I will be sending it to you today. Even though you don't yet have the cheque in your hand you still say thank-you, believing that I am true to my word and will send it to you. You may even begin to spend the money because you trust my word. You take possession of the gift when you say thanks.

“So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.” Mark 11.22-24

When we pray, how can we believe that we have already received? By being thankful. This is the principle of this verse – thanksgiving takes possession.

2. Yours Is The Kingdom, Power and Glory

This is a fitting way to finish a prayer:

Our prayers are addressed to our Father, in Jesus name. He is the source of all that we have and need. He is the only God, our El-Shaddai, Jehovah Jireh.

Jude captures this in the closing benediction of his letter:

“To God our Saviour, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen” Jude 1.25

His is the glory, the power, the majesty and dominion. He is worthy to receive all the glory and power.

“You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honour and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.” Revelation 4.11

(a) The kingdom - His kingdom lasts forever. This was foretold through the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 9.7). When we approach God as Father, we also come to Him as King. We do not need a royal appointment, nor an invitation, for we are family. We have access to the throne of God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4.16

(b) The power - He is the King and He upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1.3).

His power keeps us and provides for all that we need,

“who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1.5

“as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,” 2 Peter 1.3

“Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thessalonians 1.11-12

(c) The glory - this is the Greek word *doxa* and is also used as 'praise, honour and worship'. He deserves the praise for all that He does for us, and will do for us. God blesses us so that He gets the glory.

Amen – This word means '*faithful, surely, truly*' and often ascribed as '*so be it*' and has the implication of consenting to the words of the prayer so as to make them our own. The word itself implies a confident resting of the heart in God, with the fullest assurance that all these petitions shall be fulfilled.

Some scholars suppose the word Amen is formed from the initial letters of אדוני מלך נאמן *adoni melech neetnan*, 'My Lord, the faithful King'.