

## Prayer is My Response to the Lord Part 3

We spent the summer talking about prayer as our response to God. Quoting often from a pastor and author named Peter Lord, we talked about prayer as our response to the character of God, our response to the will of God, and our response to the invitations of God. Do you remember? As an outline it looked something like this:

### **I. Prayer is my response to the character of God.**

**A. Praise is my response to the person, presence, position, power, greatness, majesty and the love of God.**

**B. Thanksgiving is my response to the goodness and graciousness of God.**

**C. Confession is my response to the holiness of God.**

**D. Intercession is my response to the love of God for all people, especially those in his family.**

**E. Petition is my response to the power and wisdom of God.**

**F. Listening is my response to the guidance and direction of God.**

### **II. Prayer is my response to the will of God.**

**A. We find his will for our lives in prayer**

**B. We pray in agreement with his will and move our lives into agreement with his will.**

### **III. Prayer is my response to the invitations of God.**

**A. The invitation to fellowship.**

**B. The invitation to rest.**

**C. The invitation to find strength and wisdom.**

**D. The invitation to receive protection and help.**

**E. The invitation to bear one another's burdens, to be intercessors.**

Even though we spent several weeks talking about some of this, I want to dig just a little deeper in talking about some of these aspects of prayer.

Peter Lord wrote, “The unlimited potential of prayer as seen through the promises in the Bible is staggering, as God moves into action in the lives and situations that we bring before him. Yet, little praying is done. Why? Because the prayer life of many people has been discouraging and frustrating. Why? Because the basic feeling seems to be that prayer is an attempt to move God over to our point of view – to get God to do what we want done – to use him as a means to our end. So, somehow, it seems easier to try to do it ourselves the best we can, than to get God involved in it.”

**“Yet, in prayer we ought to seek to discover God’s point of view and how, when, and where he wants us to move and live...and obey.” ... Peter Lord**

Once again, he talks about prayer moving God into action as we respond with these six things: praise, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, petition and listening. So, let’s talk specifically about:

**The Prayer of Praise.** Peter Lord wrote, “Praise is glorifying God for who and what he is and for how this affects you. It is the most appropriate way to enter into his presence. **“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.” Psalm 100:4.** Since its source is God himself, praise centers on the excellencies, perfections and glories of His nature, His character and his role in human affairs.”

“I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.” Psalm 34:1-3

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

“Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise.” Psalm 48:1

Praise God for His goodness, patience, love, grace, mercy, knowledge, power, holiness, faithfulness, wisdom, greatness, glory, kindness (and the list goes on and on.)

**Prayer of Thanksgiving.** The bible says, “give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16. King James reads, “In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

Thanksgiving involves gratitude and faith. Peter Lord wrote, “Thanksgiving is

thanking God for what He has done and for what he is going to do.” It implies an awareness that God is the source of every blessing and should be thanked and praised appropriately. Lord put it this way: “Since its source is the actions of God, thanksgiving declares positively both that He is the giver of every good and perfect gift and that to the believer every gift is good, perfect and acceptable.”

**“Thank God every day for at least one specific thing in the following areas of life and tell him why you are thankful:**

**Material possessions (house, car, shoes, etc.)**

**Physical blessings (eyes, mind, mouth, etc.)**

**Spiritual blessings (forgiveness, prayer, joy, etc.)**

**People (one each day)**

**Heaven is your eternal home.**

“Praise and thanksgiving are expressions of acknowledgment, approval, admiration, and adoration to God for who he is and for what he has done.

**Praise and thanksgiving please the heart of God.**

“Yet thou art holy, O Thou who art enthroned upon the praises of Israel.” Psalm 22:3

**Praise and thanksgiving are the responsibility of every Christian.** This is not just a responsibility for the musical as we sing our praises or the outspoken our outgoing as we lead prayer and praise, this is for everyone. “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.” Psalm 150:6. That covers all of us.

“Sing joyfully to the Lord you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him.” Psalm 33:1

**Praise and thanksgiving should be learned and refined so as to make them glorious to God.**

“Sing to him a new song; play skillfully and shout for joy.” Psalm 33:3. This implies work, practice, preparation, in order to play skillfully and to sing a new song.

“Shout with joy to God, all the earth! Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious.” Psalm 66:1-2. Making his praise glorious implies that we are creating, improving, refining something, making it better than it was. Have you thought about

making your praise and thanksgiving to God more glorious, more heartfelt, more fresh, new? How can you do that? What steps can you take to make your praise more glorious to God? What can you do to offer greater, sweeter, praise and thanksgiving to the Lord?

**Praise and thanksgiving must be expressed to be valid.** The question might be asked, is gratitude gratitude if it is unexpressed? The bible says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of the adversary." Psalm 107:2. "You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever." Psalm 30:11-12. Praise and thanksgiving have to be expressed. Don't just think it, say it, sing it, write it, share it, offer it to the Lord.

**Praise and thanksgiving will result in others trusting God.** The psalmist said, "He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord." Psalm 40:3. When we give praise to God and express our thanks to him, especially during difficult circumstances, people watch and can't believe our response. They see and fear and then they trust. What a powerful witness, to give thanks and praise to God.

Praise is becoming. Your attitude, your personality is affected and made more pleasing if your heart is filled with praise and thanksgiving.

**Praise and thanksgiving will be expressed in various ways, by various moods, with various intensities with various physical expressions.** For instance, various ways of expressing praise and thanksgiving include, spoken, written, sung, played on an instrument, etc. All of these are difference ways of expressing our praise and thanks to God.

Various moods include joy, contemplation, peace, wonder, etc. (even fear and doubt).

Various intensities include quietness, shouting, tenderness, excitement, strength, etc.

Various physical expressions include raised hands, clapping, kneeling, lying prostrate, etc.

“These various expressions of praise and thanksgiving are determined by such factors as the individual’s personality, the gift for which thanks is given, the occasion that surrounds the particular instance, the attitudes that prevail, etc. No one way, mood, intensity or [physical] expression is more right than any other. The only determining factor to God is the heartfelt, Spirit-led expression from an individual or group of individuals.”

“The people whom I formed for Myself will declare My praise.” Isaiah 43:21

We have an obligation and a responsibility to praise the Lord. Let’s take time tonight to offer a prayer of praise to the Lord.