

INTRODUCTION - Where are you with prayer?

Keller's boat metaphor - soul is a boat with rows and sails:

1. Sailing? - pray often and see answers, sense His presence often, reliant on Him.
2. Rowing? - pray & read regularly, but more of a duty than delight. Doing it mostly on your own strength. May be experiencing little freshness of the the Spirit, feeling presence.
3. Drifting? - instead of rowing in response to dryness, soul is drifting away from God. Little time praying or reading the Bible, drifting into negative behaviors and attitudes.
4. Sinking? - all forward motion toward God has been lost and in great danger of burnout, heart toward God and prayer life is not doing well.

Prayer is rowing as you sail. Using the means of grace (Bible, prayer, church) with discipline (work, diligence, time, etc.) but also experiencing the wind of God's grace and Spirit giving regular encouragement and refreshment, strengthening power.

This semester/series: Pray for a fresh wind in your prayer sails as you row.

"Taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the one who takes refuge in him!" 34:8

Three categories of prayer:

1. Upward - adoration (praise) and thanksgiving
2. Inward - confession, repentance, assurance
3. Outward - asking, supplication as bringing requests to God

ADORATION

"The most appropriate way to begin prayer is with adoration. Sadly, we are most often moved to prayer by our desires for supplication. We go to God when we want something from him. We are in such a hurry to mention our requests and articulate our needs that we either omit adoration or skip over it quickly..." RC Sproul (*Following Christ*)

What is Adoration?

"An attitude of worship characterized by love and reverence to God." (Bible Dictionary DBT)

- To express love toward God...bringing reverence and honor that is due Him.
- To praise him for who he is - the biblical pattern is to highlight his characteristics, meditate, and reflect back in prayer or song.

Examples in Scripture:

1 Chronicles 29:10-13 (end of life, worshipping with Israel, passing on reign to Solomon)

Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

Psalms of Adoration - 103 & 145

Systematic Categories and Biblical Prayers of Adoration - *A Method for Prayer* by Matthew Henry ed. Palmer Robertson. Or Ligon Duncan. Online: matthewhenry.org, 16th-17th
Using Scripture and its categories, he answers what is praise/adoration, how do we do it?

Praise - we approach God with a heart full of praise for the glories of his person and work.

- Acknowledge God's existence.
- Admit you can never fully grasp the greatness of God.
- Bring before your mind some of the glorious aspects of this great God.
 - Eternal, ever-present, knows all things, wisdom, rule, power, holy, true, just...
- Give glory to God as the Creator of all things, the ruler of the world.
- Give distinct honor to each of the three Persons of the Godhead (Father, Son, Spirit).
- Acknowledge the privilege of approaching God in prayer.

THANKSGIVING

What is thanksgiving? (Henry)

"Thanksgiving: give thanks to God for the mercies he has shown you, and for the many blessings he daily brings into your life."

What happens in the prayer of thanksgiving?

"We give him glory by honoring him for his infinite perfections as the one and only living and true God. We glorify him by gratefully acknowledging the many manifestations of his goodness to us. He gladly accepts our thanks, and regards himself as glorified by them if they arise from a humble heart aware of its unworthiness to receive any favor from God. Our thanks must come from the heart, a heart that shows genuine appreciation for his gifts, but always loves the Giver more than the gift." (Matthew Henry, *A Way to Pray*)

How is thanksgiving related to adoration?

Thanking God for what he has done, works on our behalf. "Praise proper" (adoration) is adoring God for who he is in himself. Characteristics. Thanksgiving seems to be a subcategory of praise. Adoration and thanksgiving are often linked in Scripture, overlap.

Examples:

Psalm 135 - call to praise the Lord: focuses on who he is: good, saving, great, power, sovereignty - yet also thanks God for his deeds on behalf of his people Israel. Psalm 136 - give thanks: great creative works and works on behalf of Israel, yet also highlights his goodness and characteristic of steadfast love that endures forever.

Goes two ways, thanking God for working in your life draws our mind to who he is - goodness. And praising God for a characteristic, merciful, makes us think of how he has manifested that to us in Christ - so we thank God for that.

That is why, Henry, in his Thanksgiving section includes thanksgiving for particular works on our behalf, blessings, Christ's work... but also highlights goodness, redemption, grace in Christ, patience, strength, faithfulness.

Example: Psalms of Thanksgiving

Psalm 75:1

"We give thanks to you, O God; we give thanks for your name is near. We recount your wondrous deeds."

Types of Psalms: Praise, Thanksgiving, Trust, Lament, Royal, Wisdom, Hymn
Eight Psalms of Thanksgiving (30, 32, 34, 40, 75, 107, 116, 118)

Types:

1. Corporate thanksgiving - works on behalf of God's people, example - Ps. 107
2. Individual thanksgiving - works on behalf of an individual, example - Ps. 30

What are the outcomes or benefits of adoration? What happens to us and in us as we pray this way?

- Prayers are more balanced. Full.
- Prayers are more Scriptural - patterned on Word.
- We are humbled, see God for who he is, our infinite, brokenness - see sin, led to repent.
- We gain perspective, eternal, not about us.
- We gain confidence - to then ask based on his power, patience, etc.
- Reminded of his glory and relationship aspect or prayer - renews purpose, refreshes us - Keller praise has a "power to heal what is wrong with us and create inner spiritual health."

Adoration and Thanksgiving: Practical Ideas

- Pray through a psalm of praise or thanksgiving.
(Praise - 103, 139, 145 : Thanks - 30, 40, 75:1, 107, 118).
- Write your own psalm of praise or thanksgiving.
- Pray through the names of God.
- Pray through the attributes of God.
- List out what God has done in your life and spent time in thankfulness prayer.
- List 3-5 things you are thankful for today (30 days)
- Thankfulness A-Z.
- Pick attribute to praise and 1 thing thankful for each day (monthly calendar)
- Use praise music or hymn book.

Group Practice Time

Practice thanksgiving and adoration together

Thanksgiving - list out 5 things on worksheet or pray through the Thankfulness Themes sheet.

Adoration - use God's names and Ps 23 on sheet or pray through God's characteristics graphic.