

Outward Prayer

Three types of prayer,

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

Outward Prayer

Humbly bringing requests to God for yourself, others, and the world.

How do we bring our upward prayer to God in ways consistent to Scripture?

(Jesus' general categories in Jn 17)

- Yourself ,
 - Immediate needs and concerns
 - Areas of your life : Christian growth – for strength/desire to meet w/ God and follow His ways, heart for lost, wisdom-discrimintion, protection.

S-A-L-T "you are the salt of the earth"

Speaking – pray it would encourage, be wholesome

"encourage one another daily" "do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." (Eph 4:29)

Attention – pray you would listen well, pay attention to needs, attentive to understand, "be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry." (James 1:19)

Looking – pray you look at and dwell upon what is good and true. "eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness." (Mt 6:22-23)

Thinking – pray what you think about would be wholesome. "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent and praiseworthy—think about such things (Php 4:8)

- Others,
 - Family, close friends, in your community/small group (people from prayer requests of others), those you are reaching out to (coworkers, classmates, boss/supervisor).

- The world,
 - Includes several categories: Local church, Church universal, city, nation, global challenges, persecuted church, missions – nations, missionaries, unreached peoples.

Other Examples of Outward Prayer: Jesus and Paul

Outward Prayer According to Jesus

Read John 17 and list the things Jesus prayed...

- **For himself** (verses 1-5)
- **For others, his close friends/disciples** (verses 6-19)
- **For believers & the world** (verses 20-26)

Paul's Outward Prayers – for each Scripture reference, list every item for which Paul prayed.

- **Ephesians 3:14-19**
- **Colossians 1:9-12**
- **2 Thessalonians 1:11-12**
- **Others –**
 - **Romans 15:5-6**
 - Spirit of unity, that with one heart and mouth you may glorify God
 - **Ephesians 1:15-19**
 - Wisdom/revelation to know God better
 - Know hope, riches of inheritance, and great power available
 - Work his mighty strength
 - **Philippians 1:9-11**

- Love would grow in knowledge/insight
- Be able to discern what is best and be pure and blameless
- Filled with the fruit of righteousness

- **Applications**
 - Take a verse or two, or the list, and pray it for someone.
 - Pray the themes of John 17 for yourself, a close friend, or for yourself/friends/world.

Upward, Inward, and Outward Prayer in the Psalms

Upward Prayer in the Psalms

1. The Prayer of Adoration

Praising God for who He is—His character: greatness and goodness!

“Adoration is the yearning of the heart to worship, honor, magnify, and bless God for who he is.” Richard Foster

Examples – character qualities

- **Psalm 136:26** - His covenant love, faithfulness—“his love endures forever”
- **Psalm 95:9; 99:9** - His holiness.
- **Psalm 40:1-3** - His salvation.
- **Psalm 145, Psalm 103.** Psalms of adoration

2. The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thanking God for what He has done, closely associated with who He is.

Examples – Psalms of thanksgiving (8) both individual (30) corporate (107)

- **Psalm 100:4** “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise, give thanks unto him and praise his name.”
- **Psalm 78** recounts and thanks God for what he has done for Israel—though they strayed.
- **Psalm 75:1**, “We give thanks to you, O God; we give thanks for your name is near. We recount your wondrous deeds.”

Inward Prayer in the Psalms

3. The Prayer of Examen

This is the prayer for God to search us and cause greater trust and purity. It is for him to take an exam of our heart and soul and refine us so that we may trust in him in greater ways.

Examples

- **Psalm 139:23-24** “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”
- **Psalm 19:14** “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”

4. The Prayer of Repentance

This is expressing sorrow for sin and the desire to turn from evil and back to God in heart, mind, and actions. Often attached with assurance of forgiveness and salvation.

Examples

- **Psalm 32:1-7 (5)**
I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.
- **Psalm 51** – “have mercy, I have sinned, cleanse me, create in me a clean heart”

Outward Prayer in the Psalms

5. The Prayer of Illumination

Asking God to fill the soul with desire for His word. Prayer for understanding and insight into the depths of God’s word, ways, laws, commandments. Spirit gives this!

“The word of God is the food by which prayer is nourished and made strong.”

E. M. Bounds

Examples

- **Psalm 119:18** – “open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.”
- **Psalm 119** is full of this desire for God to give insight and fill the soul.
(18)–“show me wonder”
(105)–“illuminate my path”
(14-16)–“In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.”

6. The Prayer of Distress

Pouring out frustration to God. Being real with him, bringing our anxiety and hurts. When you feel alone, abandoned, when God seems to not be hearing you or acting.

Examples

- **Psalm 13** – expresses distress, gives request, and ends with trust.

Ideas

- Connect your frustrations with statement of truth or verses
 - I am anxious, nervous of future, "My God will meet all your needs" Phil 4:19
 - I am frustrated and discouraged, "God is our Refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." Ps 46:1
- "Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue. God's voice in response to mine is its most essential part." Andrew Murray
- Pray with a trusted friend, pour out hearts together
- Journal out your frustrations

7. The Prayer of Waiting

Asking God to give you patience and trust while waiting on him.

All of us are waiting on something; healing, spouse, kids, financial security, breakthrough in a relationship, someone you care about to trust Christ.

Examples

- **Psalm 62:5–8**

"For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us."

- **Psalm 27:13–14**

"I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!"

- **Psalm 130:5–6,**

"I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning."

Ideas

- List those things you are waiting for and pray over them.
- Read stories of Biblical characters who waited well, for encouragement.
- Ask God to give you patience and trust/joy in him in the midst of waiting.

8. The Prayer of Salvation

Asking God to act on one's behalf to save, work, be victorious, be mighty on one's behalf. Prayer for God's salvation from enemies. Prayer for God to execute his righteous judgment against those who oppose him and his people. This often connected with trust and hope in God.

"Prayer is the open admission that without Christ we can do nothing. And prayer is the turning away from ourselves to God in the confidence that He will provide the help we need. Prayer humbles us as needy, and exalts God as wealthy." John Piper

Examples

- **Psalm 71:1–3**

"In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame! In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me, and save me! Be to me a rock of refuge, to which I may continually come; you have given the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress."

Ideas

- How are you in need of salvation? Save, work, be victorious, be mighty on one's behalf.
- Ask for God's protection from the evil one and influences of world, flesh.
- Make a list of those who are in need of salvation [initial or some breakthrough]

Application: Group Outward Prayer Activity – Seek My Face