



Upward: Adoration

Week 2 – Prayer – 3/8/2026

There are three categories of prayer,

1. **Upward Prayer** - adoration and thanksgiving. Praising.
2. **Inward Prayer** - confession, repentance, assurance. Confessing.
3. **Outward Prayer** - asking, supplication as bringing requests to God. Asking.

Today, Thanksgiving!

So, how might we define thanksgiving prayer?

- Here's a good description from *A Way to Pray*,
- In thanksgiving you, "give thanks to God for the mercies he has shown you, and for the many blessings he daily brings into your life."
 - So I can ask, what mercies has God shown me this week?
 - Or, what are some blessings that God has given me today?
 - We can list those things and pray them back to God.

So why is this type of prayer important?

- Matthew Henry goes on to say,

"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."
(A Way to Pray)

- So there is a lot going on when we practice the prayer of thanksgiving!
- We come to him, acknowledging that he has shown his goodness to us in so many ways.
- God is pleased and accepts these thanksgivings.
- We thank him for his many specific blessings.
- And we come with a true heart, a heart that is thankful.

One question I have is, how are these two aspects of Upward Prayer related?

- How is Thanksgiving related to Adoration?
- Thanksgiving is typically thanking God for what he has done, his works on our behalf.
- Adoration is known as, “Praise proper” which is, adoring God for who he is in himself. His characteristics.
- And as I was looking at it in Scripture, thanksgiving seems to be a subcategory of praise.
- Adoration and thanksgiving are often linked in Scripture, they overlap.

Examples:

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

Praise and thanks both seem to feed one another. And this makes sense,

- Thanking God for working in my life draws my mind to who He is – his goodness and greatness.
- And praising God for a characteristic, like he is merciful, makes us think of how he has shown his mercy to us in Christ - so we thank God for that.

That is why, Matthew Henry in *A Way to Pray*, in his Thanksgiving section includes thanking God for the many ways he has blessed us.

- The themes of God’s blessings are listed.
- But he also highlights God’ goodness to us in Christ.
 - Thanking God for redemption, forgiveness, grace, and other specific blessings in Christ.

Biblical examples of the Upward Prayer of Thanksgiving,

One of my favorite verses on thanksgiving is Psalm 75:1, says,

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

- Thanking God for his name, and remembering what he has done.

When we look at the Psalms, they have different categories, or types.

- Such as Lament Psalms, Royal Psalms, Wisdom Psalms...and there are also Thanksgiving Psalms.

And there are **eight Psalms of Thanksgiving**: (30, 32, 34, 40, 75, 107, 116, 118).

Within these Psalms of thanksgiving, we **see two types** - corporate & individual.

- Let's look at an example of each,
- **Corporate thanksgiving** Psalms highlight God's works on behalf of the people on the whole, as a group.
 - An example is 107.
- **Individual thanksgiving** Psalms highlight God's works on behalf of a person.
 - An example is Psalm 30.

What are the blessings and benefits of thanksgiving prayer?

- Thanksgiving changes our attitude, posture of appreciation, get our eyes off ourselves and our situations. Good for the soul.
- We are humbled, see God for who he is, and we see our need for him.
- We gain perspective, God is eternal and has a plan & life is not just about us.
- Our prayers are more balanced. They are more full, not just giving requests.
- Upward Prayer can also change our church. It will make us into a people more characterized by worship, praise, and thanks.

Practical ideas on how to practice Upward Prayer,

- Pray through a Psalm of thanksgiving.
(Thanks - 30, 40, 107, 118).
- Write your own psalm of praise or thanksgiving, patterned after one in Scripture.
- List 3-5 things you are thankful for today, do that for 30 days in a row and see how your perspective might change.
- Write out thankfulness A-Z.
- List out some things God has done in your life and spend time in thankfulness prayer.
- Pick attribute to praise and 1 thing thankful for each day (monthly calendar)

Applying Thanksgiving prayer: Prayer Practice,

1. Adoration and Thanksgiving Sheet

- For Thanksgiving, list out 5 things we are thankful for and then pray them back to God.
- And for Adoration, read Psalm 23 and a list of God's names that correspond with what we see in the Psalm.
 - Then spend some time praying over those.

2. Pray through the Thankfulness Themes Sheet

- This is a list of thankfulness themes for an extended time of thanksgiving.