



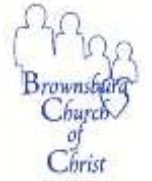
The Kinds of Prayer

Brownsburg Church of Christ

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PM Assembly



Introduction:

As we conclude our focus on prayer, we want to take a practical look at the kinds of prayer. We will divide prayer into three kinds—Adoration, Confession and Supplication.

Discussion:

I. The Prayer of Adoration

- A. *“Blessed are You, o Lord 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, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from you, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. Now therefore, our God we thank You, and praise Your glorious name. But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You. For we are sojourners before You, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope” (I Chronicles 29:10-15).*
- B. Adoration is the natural response to God from His child who knows how truly awesome, amazing and all-mighty He is. God is worthy of adoration, as the elders in **Revelation 4:9-11** demonstrated, because He is the Holy God, the powerful Creator, the righteous Judge, the loving Redeemer, the merciful Benefactor.
- C. We can subdivide adoration into thanksgiving and praise. Praise adores God for what He is and what He can do. Thanksgiving adores God for what He has done or what we are absolutely convinced He is going to do. We praise God because He is merciful and His lovingkindness endures forever. We thank God because in His mercy He sent His Son to die for us.
- D. Note especially the second most important reason we adore God. The first is, of course, because He deserves it (*cf. Psalm 96:8*). The second is we need to adore God to give us the proper perspective. Look at David’s perspective in his adoration from **I Chronicles 29**. It gives us the proper perspective on who God is, who we are and our relationship with God. Finally, because most of us spend most of our prayer time asking for things, we spend most of our time thinking about what God has not done for us yet. Adoration gives us the proper perspective on what God has done for us by counting our blessings.
- E. Allow me to offer you some advice for offering prayers of adoration.
 1. *Actually adore God.* You must love Him and realize how great He is. You can only do that through Bible study.
 2. *Adore God for the spiritual as well as the material.* Your house and car are great, but they will perish in the end. Forgiveness in Christ is greater and will go with you to judgment.
 3. *Be specific.* Too often our thanksgiving in prayer is limited to, “Thank you for our many physical and spiritual blessings.” Which ones? I love listening to children pray, because they get specific. Have you ever heard a little child thank God for their house, their bed, their doll, their teddy bear, their Mommy and Daddy, their grandparents, their brothers and sisters, their friends Susie, Billie, Cody, Bailey, Liam, ...? Perhaps we should learn from them.
 4. *Just simply to do it.* For all the advice I can give you, this is the most important. Praise God. Thank God. Honor God. Bless God. Adore God.

II. The Prayer of Confession

- A. *“Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from your commandments and ordinances. Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our father and all the people of the land. Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You. Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. To the Lord our God*

belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; nor have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His teaching which He set before us through His servants the prophets. Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. Thus He has confirmed His words which he had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. Therefore the Lord has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice. And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked. O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. So now our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord let Your face shine on your desolate sanctuary. O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” (Daniel 9:4-19).

- B. The Greek word translated “confess” (*homologeō*) literally means “same word,” that is, saying the same thing as. In spiritual issues, confession means to say the same thing God does. When we confess our sins, we say what God says about our sins. This corresponds interestingly with repentance. Repentance means to think through again. True confession follows true repentance. In other words, we have, through our actions, said one thing about sin. We have said it is alright, minor, justifiable, fun. However, having thought through these sins again, we come to see things differently. We begin to say what God says.
- C. If we say the same thing God does, what will we say? Think about Daniel’s prayer. We are not going to pull any punches. We are not going to mitigate. We are not going to qualify. We are not going to justify. We are not going to soften. We are not going to blame. Don’t you get tired of people saying, “I am sorry I did such and such but when you do that I just have a hard time stopping myself.”? If we get tired of that sorry kind of weak confession and apology, don’t you think God does too? If we are going to confess, let’s confess. Let’s say what God really says. Sin is not a mistake, bad judgment, an indiscretion or a character flaw. It is wicked rebellion against God that cannot be justified no matter our circumstances.
- D. Allow me to offer you some prayer advice as you turn to God to confess your sins.
 1. *Be honest with yourself and with God.* If you took the Lord’s name in vain, do not confess to a slip of the tongue, confess to blasphemy. If you lusted, do not confess to wandering eyes, confess to adultery in your heart.
 2. *Be specific.* I do not know what your prayers of confession at home are like. However, in the assembly, our prayers of confession are usually limited to, “Father, please forgive us of our sins.” If the one prayer is really into oratory, he will pray, “Father forgive us of our sins whether they be sins of omission or commission.” We do need to be specific. Why? I can tell you from personal experience of the time it dawned on me that I prayed every night for my sins to be forgiven, but rarely stopped to consider what I really needed forgiveness for. Because I had not thought about that, I had never thought about what I was going to do not to commit those same sins the next day. This leads to our next piece of advice.
 3. *Forsake your sin.* According to **Proverbs 28:13**, confession only does us any good if we forsake the sin. Confess it because you are giving it up.
 4. *Forgive others.* Remember what Jesus said in His model prayer, “Forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors” (**Matthew 6:12**). If we are not willing to forgive those who confess to us, we might as well not confess to God.

III. The Prayer of Supplication

- A. *“O Lord, the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear; open Your eyes, O Lord, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands and have cast their gods into the fire, for*

they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. Now, O Lord our God, I Pray, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Lord, are God" (II Kings 19:15-19).

- B. I can understand why the almighty God allows us to come into His presence and adore Him. I can understand why the holy God allows us to come into His presence and confess how far short of His holiness we are. What amazes me is that this same holy, almighty God allows us to come into His presence and make requests.
- C. **Matthew 7:7-11** is an absolutely phenomenal passage. "Ask, and it will be given to you." Why? Because our God is a good Father who wants to give good gifts to His children. The passage concludes saying, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!" God wants to bless us, but many of His blessings are conditional on asking. **James 4:2** said many do not receive blessings simply because they do not ask. For instance, God wants to give us wisdom, but we have to ask (**James 1:5**). God wants to forgive us, but we have to ask (**I John 1:9**). How many of God's gifts go unopened because God's children simply do not ask?
- D. Allow me to offer some advice as we turn to God to petition Him on our own behalf or intercede on another's behalf.
 1. *Don't be selfish.* **James 4:3** demonstrates this. When we make a request, we need to consider why we are asking. The ultimate goal of all our requests must be for the benefit of serving others and glorifying God.
 2. *Be specific.* First, because most of our general prayers really cannot be prayed with any kind of faith. Consider, "Lord, heal the sick the world over." While I am certain we all believe God can do that, do any of us really believe He will? Of course not. In fact, just the opposite, most of us believe that He won't because we know that is just not how He works.
 3. *Be observant.* If we are going to intercede for others, we have to pay attention to what are their needs.
 4. *Be willing to offer yourself as part of the answer to your prayer.*

Conclusion:

Indeed, prayer is the greatest privilege the Father offers us. We must remember it is not a toy. We must never approach it rashly. However, we can be thankful that through the blessing of Jesus' Christ death, we are allowed to come into the presence of God. As the Hebrew writer exhorts us, let us always draw near to God and pray (**Hebrews 10:19-22**).