

Studies in Christianity Prayer – A Private Discipline #4

S#1.

Gratitude, the Second Key to Prayer ?

S#2.

Text : **Psalm 30: 1-12** ; **I Samuel 2: 1-6**

A. It's great to study about building our relationship with the Lord we love. S#3.

1. We studied about how to talk with Him in a group.
2. We looked at the fundamentals of a conversation with Him.
3. We did an exegesis of the form Jesus gave us to pattern our prayers after.
4. Our last lesson was an introduction to the foundation of every prayer.
Every prayer should be founded on praise :
 - a. Prayer should contain great praise
 - b. Our praise should be given with gladness
 - c. The desire to glorify should

B. In the KJV words for gratitude appear more than 100 times.

1. Thanks ... 73 times
2. Thanksgiving ... 28 times
3. Thank ... 27 times

C. Therefore, the concept of gratitude in prayer is worthy of being examined.

D. So, this lesson will look at the expressing of gratitude to God in prayer. S#4.

1. God anticipates that we'll be grateful.
2. How does one develop a grateful heart ?
3. Some examples of gratitude in the scriptures.
4. A few things for which to be grateful.

I. God anticipates that we'll be grateful for what He has given us.

S#5.

A. There are so many examples of people giving thanks.

1. Under the Law of Moses God gave instructions for a thank offering.

Lev. 7: 11 – Now this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which shall be presented to the Lord. **12** 'If he offers it by way of thanksgiving, then along with the sacrifice of thanksgiving he shall offer unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of well stirred fine flour mixed with oil. **13** With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving, he shall present his offering with cakes of leavened bread. S#6.

2. Many of the Psalms are to thank God.

Psa. 136: 1 – Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. **2** Give thanks to the God of gods, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. **3** Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (Cf- **118: 1** ... *same wording*) S#7.

3. In the first chapter of all Paul's writings he gives thanks for them except **Gal. & Tit.**

B. Jesus set the example for thanking God.

1. **John 11: 41** ... At Lazarus' tomb Jesus thanked God for hearing His prayer.
2. **Mark 8: 6** ... Jesus gave thanks for the food He created to feed the 4,000.
3. **Matt. 26: 27** ... Jesus gave thanks for the bread and wine at last supper.

C. Luke 17: 11-17 ... Jesus healed 10 lepers and expected them to say thanks.

1. **Luke 17: 15** – Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, **16** and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan. **17** Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine — where are they? **18** "Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?" S#8.

2. Notice two things 1) Jesus expected to be thanked.
2) The giving of thanks was glorification of God.

D. Being ungrateful is listed as evil character.

II Tim. 3: 1– But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. S#9.
2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, **4** treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

II. How does one develop a grateful heart.

S#10.
S#11.

A. The lack of gratitude is destroying the fabric of society in developed nations.

1. Young people who have grown up in relative affluence take it for granted.
2. Instead of being thankful, they riot demanding more free stuff.

B. Parents and teachers have stopped teaching gratitude.

1. Gratitude must be taught and preferably from early childhood.
2. "Please and thank you" are common social graces. (*Be polite*)
3. Polite children stop being polite because they are embarrassed to be different.

C. One way to learn gratitude is to practice it.

1. Say thank you to people who do even small things for you.
 - a. Pass food to you
 - b. Open door
2. Thanks the cook (your wife) when you get up from the table.
3. Set a goal to challenge yourself and count how many times you say it daily.

D. Each day write a list of things for which you are grateful.

1. You may want to use these lists as prayer notes.
2. Even if unused such lists train one's mind to think about gratitude.

III. Some examples of gratitude in the scriptures.**S#12.****A. I Samuel 2 ... Hannah the wife of Elkanah.****S#13.**

1. Grieved because she had no child so she prayed and made a vow
2. Conceived and bore a child
3. Returned to give thanks and to keep her vow

B. David is most famous for thanking God.**S#14.**

1. Our text was but one example of many psalms of thanks by David.
Psa. 30: 12 – That my soul may sing praise to You and not be silent.
 O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.
2. Psalm #118 is a psalm of deliverance and thanksgiving for the save,
 - a. The Psalm starts with thanksgiving and praise.
Psa. 118: 1 – Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
 For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

S#15.

- b. The psalm ends as it started.
Psa. 118: 28 – You are my God, and I give thanks to You;
 You are my God, I extol You.
29 – Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
 For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

C. The Apostle Paul was grateful for the love he enjoyed in Christ.**S#16.**

- Philemon 4** – I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers,
5 because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints; **6** and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

IV. A few things for which to be grateful.**S#17.****A. We should be overflowing with gratitude for our salvation.****S#18.**

1. Thankful to God for His love and mercy.
2. Thankful for Jesus and His willingness to be a substitute for us.
3. Thankful to Jesus for the ongoing forgiveness of sins.
4. Thankful for the direct access to God through Jesus,
5. Thank God for the anticipation of Heaven.

John 14: 1 – Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. **3** "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

S#19.**B. We must be constantly grateful for His watchcare over us,****S#20.**

1. We have the promises :
 - a. **Matt. 28:20b** – I am with you always, even to the end of the age.
 - b. **Heb. 13: 5b** – I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,
2. He promised to insure our physical needs.
 - a. **Matt. 6: 33** – But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
 - b. **Heb. 13: 6** – The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid.
3. **I John 1: 6f** ... He offers us ongoing daily forgiveness.
4. Health ... both spiritual and physical

S#21.**C. God blesses us with relationship. (*Homosapians are communal animals.*)****S#22.**

1. We have a relationship as children in the family of God.
2. We have an eternal relationship with God's people on earth. (*The church*)
3. We have temporary relationships with our friends and family outside.

D. We need to thank God for all the opportunities He gives & ask for more.**S#23.**

1. Opportunities to glorify God by sharing Christ with others
2. Ability to gather for mutual encouragement
3. Occasions to glorify God by our lives

Matt. 5: 16 – Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

E. Thank God for our birthright.

S#24.

1. We were born normal. (1 in 6 U.S. children aged 2–8 years (17.4%) had a diagnosed mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder.)
2. We were born in the richest, freest country in the history of the world.
3. We were born into a family that raised us.

F. Abundant physical blessings.

1. We have an income that provides for our needs and some of our wants.
2. We live in comfortable houses and drive dependable cars.
3. We have had the best medical care on the planet. (*Other countries NOT*)

G. We have so many spiritual blessings are often taken for granted.

1. Someone taught us the gospel.
2. We have a comfortable building in which to worship.
3. We have access to the word of God in many formats.
4. We have the scriptures taught to us regularly.

CONCLUSION :

A. God longs to hear the sweet sound of lips thanking Him for all He does for us.

1. The sound of lips thanking God is as the sweet savor of a burnt offering.
Heb. 13: 15 – Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. **S#25.**
2. In **Luke 17** we saw the reaction of God the Son to ingratitude.
3. In II Timothy we saw God’s attitude toward those who do not express gratitude.
II Tim. 3: 2– For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,

B. So what have we seen about giving thanks when we pray ?

S#26.

1. God anticipates that we’ll be grateful.
2. How to develop a grateful heart ?
3. Three examples of gratitude in the scriptures.
4. A few things for which to be grateful.

C. Let’s all try to apply what we have learned in this lesson.

INVITATION :

S#27.

Lesson Text :**Psalm 30: 1-12**

1 I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up,
And have not let my enemies rejoice over me. **2** O Lord
my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me. **3** O
Lord, You have brought up my soul from Sheol; You have
kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit. **4** Sing
praise to the Lord, you His godly ones, And give thanks to
His holy name. **5** For His anger is but for a moment, His
favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night,
But a shout of joy comes in the morning.

6 Now as for me, I said in my prosperity, "I will never
be moved." **7** O Lord, by Your favor You have made my
mountain to stand strong; You hid Your face, I was
dismayed. **8** To You, O Lord, I called, And to the Lord I
made supplication: **9** "What profit is there in my blood, if I
go down to the pit? Will the dust praise You? Will it
declare Your faithfulness? "

10 "Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me; O Lord, be
my helper." **11** You have turned for me my mourning into
dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me
with gladness, **12** That my soul may sing praise to You
and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You
forever.

I Samuel 2: 1-6

1 Then Hannah prayed and said,

"My heart exults in the Lord; My horn is exalted in the
Lord, My mouth speaks boldly against my enemies,
Because I rejoice in Your salvation. **2** There is no one
holy like the Lord, Indeed, there is no one besides You,
Nor is there any rock like our God. **3** Boast no more so
very proudly, Do not let arrogance come out of your
mouth; For the Lord is a God of knowledge, And with
Him actions are weighed. **4** The bows of the mighty are
shattered, But the feeble gird on strength. **5** Those who
were full hire themselves out for bread, But those who
were hungry cease to hunger. Even the barren gives birth
to seven, But she who has many children languishes.
6 The Lord kills and makes alive; He brings down to
Sheol and raises up. "