# **Sermon Notes: Praise as the primary act of prayer, 15.04.18**

**1. Praise is the primary way of prayer**

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Philippians 4:4*

3 basic kinds of prayer to God.

* **Upward** – prayers of praise and thanksgiving that focus on God himself. – Prayers of awe!
* **Inward** – prayers of self-examination and confession that bring awareness of grace and assurance of love
* **Outward** – prayers of intercession that focus on the needs of others in the world

The prayer Jesus taught us!

*This then is how you ought to pray…Our Father, who is in heaven, may your holy name be honoured. Matthew 6:9*

Praise comes first.

Praise motivates the other kinds of prayer – looking to God first gives us the perspective and prism to view ourselves and the world around us…

Prayers of praise come before asking for “daily bread”

Story of woman putting this in to practice – Keller, Prayer - p190

*Years ago I was preaching on the lord’s prayer and commented – rather off handedly – that since adoration comes before asking for “daily bread”, we need to spend time thinking and praising God for who he is before we go to our prayer list of needs. One woman in my congregation too this to heart and a couple of weeks later related what a difference the advice had made. “Before,” she said, “I would run right in to my prayers list and the more I went through all the problems and needs, the more anxious and burdened I would get. Now I’ve started spending time thinking about how good and wise God is and how many prayers he’s answered of mine in the past. And when I get to my own needs – now I find I can put them in his hands and I feel the burden coming off me rather than on me.”*

*I never forgot her testimony, because she had taken a principle I barely understood myself and had appropriated it in her life.*

Great story – it doesn’t mean sometimes we don’t go straight to petition / or confession but it des mean overall praise and adoration must have a prime place in prayer.

*“Awe-filled adoration of God corrects the other forms of prayer.*

**2. Praise and thanksgiving are different but connected**

*by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God – Philippians 4:6*

Praise and thanksgiving are often viewed as the same thing but there is a distinction.

Thanksgiving is a subcategory of praise

Praise = is adoring God for who he is

Thanksgiving = is thanking God for what he has done

* Psalm 135 – calls us to praise the Lord
* Psalm 136 – calls us to give thanks for what he has done – made the heaven, bought Israel out of Egypt, gives food for the hungry

EG – Praise for God’s love and goodness transforms effortlessly into thanksgiving for all the examples of his goodness in our life.

*PRAISE*

God is self-existent – depending on nothing for his being

God is perfect and infinite

He is absolute glory

He is without comparison

His character is unchanging

His presence is everywhere

He is perfect knowledge of all things

He has irresistible power and sovereignty

He is moral purity

Beauty

Holy

Just

His inexorable judgment will ultimately put all things right.

He is creator, maker, protector, sustainer and ruler of all creation

He is truth – he draws near to all

He keeps his promises

He is community – Father, Son and Holy Spirit

He is our King and Friend

Our hearts were made for him to be our only joy.

*THANKS*

For the way he gives and sustains our physical life

For making us in his image, capable of knowing, loving, serving, enjoying him and other relationships

For preserving our lives

For the way he gives and sustains our spiritual life

For the plan of salvation - how F, S & HS planned it form the deeps of eternity

For Christ emptying himself of his glory for us

For his teaching and character

For his death that overcomes our sins and resurrection that gives us hope

For the Holy Spirit whose power and presence enables us to understand the truth – helps us to be transformed to Christ like-ness

Word of God – wisdom and truth

For this church, the community – the friends we have…

For Christian friends & family

For the ways God has been patient with us

For the gentle ways he changes us and breaks our bad habits and patterns of thoughts,

Overcomes our foolishness

Giving us communion

Walks with us in pain and suffering …

Fill out the responses to these two simple phrases...

      **Loving God, I praise you because you are…**

      **Generous God, I thank you because you have…**

3. **Praise in prayer is the reordering of our loves**

*And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus – Philippians 4:7*

Praise develops our love for God.

St Augustine – what we love is basically what we are.

James K. A Smith in his book – Desiring the kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation write about different theories to explain human personality and identity and says that in contrast to them all – he prefers the Augustinian model “I am what I love.”

“Our most fundamental identity and life behaviour is a function of what we love.”

Main human problem – disordered lives. We either love what we ought not to love or

We fail to love what we ought to love or

We love more what we should love less or

Love less what we should love more.

If a person loves making money more than doing justice they will exploit their workers and employees

If a person loves their career more than their children, family relationships will break down.

Our lives are disordered and our love for God not primary

**4. Praise in prayer includes singing**

*When they had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives – Mark 14:26*

      Psalms

      Doxology

      Jesus!

Jesus sings songs of praise…Mark 14:26 (Matthew 26:30) - Jesus sings.

Singing is about our relationship to God, the Father.

LISTEN - to the song by Pete James – Click on link below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mA2q295l9A0>

**5. Praise - has the potential to change your day**

***Christoph Schonborn -***Archbishop of Roman Catholic church of Vienna - prayer the following prayer

*I greet you cordially.*

*Heavenly father, I praise you, for this day, for the life you have given me.*

*I praise you, for my body which is beginning to age, but still I enjoy life.*

*Father, I praise you that you have inspired me from my early youth to love you and to search you: it's such a gift!*

*Heavenly father, I thank you and I praise you for Jesus who is the light of my life, and the deepest friendship.*

*Heavenly father, I praise you for the gift of pardon because without your pardon, I would be discouraged.*

*Thank you, heavenly father, for this day. I praise you father.*

*Dear friends, I recommend you to praise the Lord; just everyday try to have a moment of praise, it changes the day.*

**Give Him a smile.**