

Our Response of Praise and Thanksgiving

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[0 : 00] Grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins and was raised again the third day and reigns on God's throne with all authority in heaven and on earth given to him.

Well these are exciting days in which to be alive troubling times to be sure but exciting times to witness our God who is working wonders wonders in nature wonders in providence as he rules over all that's happening in our world and most of all wonders of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Day marks another week that God has safely brought us on our way to heaven and so we pause on this first day of the week to worship him to draw near to him to seek his face to praise and thank him and then to hear his voice and then to go into our week with our eyes firmly fixed upon him expecting good from his hand as he's promised to never stop doing us good.

We want to say to any guests who might be watching this video that we would invite you if you have no church that you're a member of to join us when we're able to begin meeting again.

We'd love to meet you in person. We did hear this week from our governor that his five-stage plan for getting Indiana up and going again and so your elders and deacons will be laying plans for when and how we will resume meeting together and we'll be posting that on our website and sending emails to you.

[1 : 48] We would just ask that when we do start meeting again you'd leave your coffee cups and pajamas at home. A word to the wise is sufficient but it will be good for us to be able to worship the Lord together in one place.

One of the wonders of the world is the Bible. The fact that in this book we have God's very thoughts and words and so we turn to his word and Psalm 135 is our scripture reading for today.

Praise the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord. Praise him you servants of the Lord. You who minister in the house of the Lord in the courts of the house of our God.

Praise the Lord for the Lord is good. Sing praise to his name for that is pleasant. For the Lord has chosen Jacob to be his own Israel to be his treasured possession.

I know that the Lord is great. That our Lord is greater than all gods. The Lord does whatever pleases him. In the heavens and on the earth in the seas and all their depths.

[3 : 04] He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses. He struck down the firstborn of Egypt.

The firstborn of men and animals. He sent his signs and wonders into your midst of Egypt against Pharaoh and all his servants. He struck down many nations and killed mighty kings.

Sihon king of the Amorites. Og king of Bashan. And all the kings of Canaan. And he gave their land as an inheritance. An inheritance to his people Israel.

Your name oh Lord endures forever. Your renown oh Lord through all generations. For the Lord will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold made by the hands of men. They have mouths but cannot speak. Eyes but they cannot see. They have ears but cannot hear.

[4 : 09] Nor is there breath in their mouths. Those who make them will be like them. And so will all who trust in them. Oh house of Israel.

Praise the Lord. Oh house of Aaron. Praise the Lord. Oh house of Levi. Praise the Lord. You who fear him. Praise the Lord.

Praise be to the Lord from Zion. To him who dwells in Jerusalem. Praise the Lord. Well God has spoken to us in his word.

And it's our great privilege to speak to him in prayer. Let's do so now. How good it is oh Lord to praise your name.

And to make music to you oh most high. To proclaim in the morning your love and your faithfulness at night.

[5 : 06] And here we are in the morning. And it is fitting for us then to come into a new day. With the confidence that you love us.

And how we do praise you for your love. A love that is from everlasting to everlasting. A love that will not let us go.

A love that chose us before the creation of the world. A love that caused you to send your one and only son father. To go to the cross for us.

That we might be saved. A love that sent your spirit to our hearts. To quicken us when we were dead in sins and transgressions. A love that follows us all the days of our life.

A love that's preparing a heaven for us. A new heavens and a new earth. A love then that we can know and rely on.

[6 : 07] And because your love is better than life. We do glorify you with our lips today. We thank you for your name and your word that you have exalted above all things.

We thank you that in times like these we need the scriptures. We need to know what it is that our God thinks and says. And that you've spoken so clearly is a tremendous mercy to have the Bible.

Teach us to treasure it. And even now to hear it and to profit from it. We do pray for the nations that in these days you would draw their attention heavenward.

That you would speak to them through your word. Through the witness of your people. And that you would be drawing many to yourself. We thank you for protecting our congregation.

We thank you for your daily gifts to us. Your kindnesses that overflow. So continue to keep us. And give us help as we lay plans then.

[7 : 15] As to when and how to gather together again. And we do ask you as the one who controls all things. To bring that about soon. Not only for us here but all across our land and across this world.

That your people might come together in praise. And when we do. That it would be with an even greater appreciation for the body of Christ. That people that Jesus bought with his own blood.

And so we do give you thanks in Jesus name. Amen. Well since the beginning of the new year. We've been engaged in a study on the goodness of God.

Good is something God is. And good is something God does. We've seen his goodness in creation. We've seen it in redemption.

In providence. Providence is both bitter and sweet. Pleasant and painful. In which God is working all things for our good. Last week we saw God's goodness in his promises.

[8 : 22] And we looked at one promise in particular. Psalm 84 11. That tells us. The Lord God is a sun and a shield. The Lord gives grace and glory.

No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly. Now before we bring this study to a conclusion. We need to ask the so what question.

And though I've been seeking to lay some applications of this truth along the way. We now want to consider this question head on. What is to be our response to the goodness of God?

If as we've seen that God is a fountain of never failing goodness constantly overflowing to us. If he's a God who delights in seeing us his creatures delighted.

And especially us who are his people delighted. For he delights in the well-being of his servants he tells us. If this is the goodness of God. Then what should we do in response to his great goodness?

[9 : 30] We're not the first to ask that question. David wrestled with this very predicament in Psalm 116 and verse 12.

He found himself constantly on the receiving end of God's goodness. He found himself going greater into debt every day to the goodness of God.

And so he throws his hands up in the air and asks. Well how can I repay the Lord? For all his goodness to me. He's overwhelmed. He's dumbfounded.

How do you ever go about repaying the Lord? For even one of his undeserved gifts to us. Let alone all his goodness to you. Well you can't. You don't.

And you don't even try. But though we cannot repay the Lord for all of his goodness to him. We can by grace make a fitting response to his goodness to us.

[10 : 28] We can respond in fitting ways to his goodness. So for the next several weeks we'll look at what that response should be. Psalm 100 gets us started.

And there are many texts like it that we could have read. But verses 4 and 5 of Psalm 100. Enter his gates with thanksgiving. His courts with praise.

Give thanks to him. And praise his name. Why? For the Lord is good. So God's goodness is to have the response in us of praise and thanksgiving.

That's what we're looking at this morning. Praise and thanksgiving as our response to his goodness. Now as I searched the verses in the Bible on praising and thanking God.

I wanted to know what's the difference between praise and thanksgiving. Have you ever wondered that? Well I asked Mr. Google the difference.

[11 : 38] And he directed me to many articles addressing this very question. Several said the difference is that praise is given to God for his attributes. His name, who he is.

Whereas thanksgiving is given to God for his deeds. Specific ways that he's benefited and blessed us. And I thought well that's a helpful distinction.

But there was just one problem. When I went to my Bible it didn't hold up. Because we find people praising God not only for his attributes but for his gifts. And his specific ways that he's benefited them.

And we also find them thanking God for both as well. So that's not it. Someone else said well praise focuses on God. And thanksgiving focuses on us.

That's not it. Let me just say this. Praise and thanksgiving are our first cousins. They're closely related.

- [12 : 37] There's some real overlap I believe. And similarities between praise and thanksgiving. They're not exactly synonyms. But they're often found paired together.
- Just as Psalm 100 does. Enter his gates with thanksgiving. His courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. I trust that as we go along this morning.
- You'll see some of the ways that they are the same. And yet some differences between them. So first of all we are to respond to God's goodness with praise.
- Praise. Now we use this term all the time don't we? Praise the Lord. It's one of the most repeated words in the Psalms.
- But precisely what is it that we're doing when we praise the Lord? Well we're speaking highly of him.
- [13 : 37] Aren't we? We're highly commending him. We're talking him up. We're exalting lifting him up. With the good words that we say about him.
- We're extolling his virtues. We're declaring his worthiness and his glory. Think of an awards banquet. If you've ever been to an awards banquet.
- Either for academics or athletics. So the coach gets up and he gives an award to a student athlete. He doesn't just hand the student the award and he sits down and goes on to the next one.
- No the coach usually spends some time talking him up. Speaking well of him. Praising him for his good attitude. His all out effort or his excellent performance.
- Or listen to a grandmother talking up her grandchildren. Or maybe you don't want to listen to her. She can't say enough good about them.
- [14 : 36] Even perhaps more than you'd like to hear. But she boasts to everyone. Even people who are driving behind her. See her sign. My grandchild is an honor roll student.
- She's praising them. She's speaking well of them. Or think of a husband bragging on his wife to his workmates. You say does that happen?
- Well it does. Proverbs 31. We have this God fearing woman. And her godliness just permeates her life in very practical ways. And Proverbs 31 says of her that her children arise and call her blessed.
- Her husband also. And he praises her. There it is. He praises her. Well what does that mean? Well to her face.
- He says many women do noble things. But you surpass them all. He's praising her face to face. And God says there in Proverbs 31.
- [15 : 42] That a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Husbands and children. That's your duty. It's something that you're to do. God says give her the reward she has earned.
- Let her works bring her praise at the city gate. Now that's where her husband works. And is respected and takes his seat among the elders of the land.
- And that's where her works bring her praise. Maybe praise from others who are praising her to her husband. Do you know what my wife said to me about your wife?
- It's amazing that woman that you have. Perhaps he's praising her to the husband. But for sure the other way around. That he especially is praising her to all those present there at his job.
- He can't say enough about her for all that she is and does for her works. He's bragging her up. And making others think well of her.
- [16 : 46] He's polishing her reputation and making it shine by what he says about her. The message he's spreading about her. Now that's what praise is.

And that's what we owe God for his goodness. Should not his good works bring him praise where you work. Where you live.

Where you worship. Where you work out. Praise my soul the king of heaven. To his feet thy tribute bring. Ransomed. Healed.

Restored. Forgiven. Who like me his praise should sing. It's just reasonable isn't it? Our reasonable service to the goodness that he's done for us.

It's our fitting response to his goodness. Psalm 33. It's fitting. It's just fitting. It's only right for the upright to praise him. So praise the Lord.

[17 : 45] For the Lord is good. Now what we find. Especially in the Psalms. Is that the Lord's goodness is to excite praise. From our hearts.

That we're to praise him. In three different directions. The first is we're to praise him to others. And that's what we've been talking about most. Most about here.

As we've gotten started. Telling others how good God is. So Psalm 66. 16. Come. And listen. All you who fear God.

And let me tell you what he has done for me. Or Psalm 34. I will extol the Lord at all times. His praise will always be on my lips.

My soul will boast in the Lord. Let the afflicted hear. Let the afflicted hear. And rejoice. You see praise is boasting about God. It goes on.

[18 : 43] I sought the Lord and he answered me. He delivered me from all my fears. Psalm 34. The psalmist can't get over the fact that. God answers prayer.

God answers prayer. Is it not a wonder that. Here we are. We're one out of some 8 billion people on the planet. And yet when I talk to God. He listens.

And he gives me his attention. And he answers. Others. This poor man called. And the Lord heard him. He saved him out of all of his troubles. He encamps around us.

He's a refuge. Those who fear him lack nothing. Those who seek him lack no good thing. His eyes are on the righteous. His ears attentive to their cry. He's close to the broken hearted. He saves those who are crushed in spirit.

He protects us. He condemns our enemies. He redeems his servants. No one will be condemned who takes refuge in him. Praise the Lord. Psalm 34.

[19 : 41] And many psalms like it. We see that we're called upon to praise the Lord to others. To tell them how good he is.

So. The question is. Who in your life is hearing how good God is to you? Do those you live with hear it? Your immediate family.

Those you pray with. Those you worship with. Your fellowship with. Your church family. So that we're not just filling their ears with our troubles.

But also. They're hearing from us. How good God's been to us. How about those who are lost. And don't know the Lord. Are they hearing from you?

What a good God you have. Do your neighbors know? That you're overwhelmed with how good God is to you. When have they last heard from you? Some of the good things God has done for you.

[20 : 38] His goodness is to open our mouths. And cause us to speak well of God because of his goodness. Is he so good to you that you commend his goodness to others saying as Psalm 34 8 says.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Don't just take it from me. See for yourself how good he is. For how blessed, how happy is the one who trusts in him.

Whose sins are forgiven. Friend, have you tasted and seen that the Lord is good? Have you tasted his forgiveness of sin? The removal of all guilt?

It's hard to describe. But it's an amazing taste. But don't just take it from me. You take this Christ as your Lord and Savior. And you taste and see how good it is.

You see, our praising the Lord for his goodness is telling them of how good he is. And that means we must not stop short of the highest goodness of God.

[21 : 40] Which is that he gave his own son. That whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. The highest goodness of God is the good news of the gospel.

That he's so good that he would rather curse his own son. That we who trust in him might be saved from being cursed ourselves.

Well, I wouldn't kill my son for my enemies. But God did. He's just that good. And that's to be told. That's to be spoken well of.

And when we can truly speak well of God to others. When we're going through troubles. Maybe right along with them in this whole situation. We too are suffering right along with them.

When we can go on speaking well of God. It lends a megaphone to your praises. It gives a volume. It gives a weightiness to your praises.

[22 : 44] So last week I told you about Stonewall Jackson. In one day losing a son born dead. And later that evening losing his own wife. And yet it was then in the midst of his loss.

In the midst of his painful suffering. That he writes to his unconverted sister. And he's praising the Lord for his comfort. For his strength.

And even for his joy. That he can rejoice that his God will not withhold anything good from those who love him and keep his commandments.

Even going so far as to say. Oh my sister. Would that you could have him for your God. Now he could have praised the Lord to his sister.

When everything was going his way. When everything was just like he liked it. And perhaps he did that. But to do so in such painful suffering.

[23 : 42] Gave volume and weight and power to his praise for God. And so I ask you. Has God put a megaphone of suffering in your life?

Use that suffering as that megaphone to magnify his goodness. To tell how good God is. Tell them how good he is.

Commend him as Jackson to his sister. Oh that you my friend. Might have this God as your God. That you might taste and see that the Lord is just that good.

That's it. That's praise you see. It's boasting about the Lord. Paul says it's because of God that you are in Christ Jesus. If you're a Christian. It's because of God that you're in Christ Jesus.

Therefore as it is written. Let him who boasts. Boast in the Lord. Praise is boasting in the Lord. That's what Jeremiah said. So don't let the wise man boast of his wisdom.

[24 : 46] Or the strong man boast of his strength. Or the rich man boast of his riches. But let him who boasts. Boast about this. That he understands and knows me.

That I am the Lord who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on the earth. For in these I delight. Boasting. In this God.

And the glorious privilege of knowing him. So here's something amazing to brag about. I'm his. He's mine. And it's all because of him.

So that's one direction of our praise to the Lord. We praise the Lord to others. Secondly. Secondly. We find in the psalm that we praise the Lord to ourselves.

We find David doing this. In the psalms. Psalm 116 verse 7. Notice who he's talking to. Be at rest once more.

[25 : 47] Oh my soul. Okay. He's addressing his own soul. Be at rest once more. Oh my soul. For the Lord has been good to you.

You see. It's self-talk about God's goodness. How quickly our minds gravitate toward. Complaining. About. Our troubles and trials. So we need to tell ourselves.

That the Lord has been good to you soul. So get on with praising him. And that's what David does in Psalm 103 as well. Verse 2. Praise the Lord. Oh my soul.

And forget not all his benefits. Some of you know Latin enough to know that bene means good. And a benefit is a good thing that God has given or done for you.

And he's telling himself. God's given you lots of them. Don't forget them. And then he starts to count them. He starts to enumerate them. And right at the top of the list.

[26 : 47] He says. Who forgives all your sins. Who forgives all your sins.

Now we could stop there and. And praise the Lord for eternity. Not. Not some. Not most. But all your sins.

The whole mountain of them. The sins of the past. Those things that you kick yourself for. That you ever did them. And regret that you did them. Wish you could undo them.

Forgiven. The sins of the present. Of today. Of just the last hour. Right now. And then the sins of the future.

All of them. Paid in full by the blood of Jesus. And therefore all forgiven. Wiped clean from the slate. Remembered no more. Gone. Gone. Gone. Gone. Yes my sins are gone.

[27 : 45] And. That's worthy of praise. Soul. So start praising God. That all your sins. Are forgiven. That means sins of commission. As well as omission.

Sins of commission. When God says. Thou shalt not. He's drawing a line. And our sin is when we do. What he's forbidden. And we step across.

And transgress. And he's forgiven. All of those. Sins of commission. And then there's sins of omission. Where God says.

Thou shalt. And we don't. I should think that for every sin of omission. Or sin of commission that I commit. I am guilty of ten sins of omission.

So we sing in that. Hymn of repentance. We have not loved thee as we ought. What did we do? We didn't do it.

[28 : 41] It's something we didn't do. Something we should have done. We're told to love the Lord our God. With all of our heart. Soul. Mind and strength. And we didn't. That's a sin of omission. Oh.

A huge omission. And we're to love our neighbor. As ourselves. And when we don't. We sin against them. You see. We can sin by doing nothing.

James 4.17. So anyone who knows the good he ought to do. And doesn't do it. Sins. And he forgives all my sins. My commissions.

My omissions. Who can discern his errors. Forgive my secret faults. Even those sins I don't even know about. All my sins. Forgiven for Jesus' sake. That's worthy of praise all our days.

And we tell ourselves that. You see. I need to praise the Lord to myself. To others. To myself. And then.

[29 : 42] Thirdly. We praise the Lord. Directly to the Lord himself. Like the husband. Praising his wife. Directly to her. Bragging. On her.

To her. He tells her. Many women have done noble things. Dear. But you surpassed them all. He's praising her face to face. Telling her what a blessed man. What a blessed man he is.

To have her. And why that is. And that's what you ought to do. With your God. Father. Son.

And Holy Spirit. To tell each person of the Godhead. How blessed you are to have them. And why. Their attributes. The good things they've done for you.

And this kind of talk abounds in the Psalms. Psalm 54. And verse 6. I will praise your name. Oh Lord. For it is good.

[30 : 41] You see that's direct address. Telling him. I praise you. For your goodness. Now. We do this in our prayers.

So praise is a. Is a type of prayer. Isn't it? It's one of the forms of prayer. Prayer. And one of the striking ingredients. Of prayers. Prayers in the Bible.

Is just how full they are. And how weighty they are. In terms of praising the Lord. So how much praise. Is there in your praying.

Would anyone listening in to your prayers. In public. In private. Come away. Thinking. That woman. She's overwhelmed. With how good God is to her.

You know. Praise is like a thermometer. That's shoved down into our hearts. And it's. It's by the amount of our prayers. And the warmth of our praise. Praises. I mean. That.

[31 : 38] That we. We show. Just how. Taken we are. With God's goodness. And oh. How I need to grow. This matter. Of praise. Let's think together.

More. On the goodness of God. As we come to pray. Let's. Let's pause. Let's call time out. And think. About his goodness. So that.

When we open our mouths. We. We overflow. With praise. Let's determine. To praise the Lord. He's worthy of it. He deserves it. So let's be determined.

To give it. I should think. That if we. Don't determine. To praise the Lord. He'll. He'll not be receiving. Half of the. Praise. That.

He's due. That's what David did. Psalm 138. Verse 1. I will. Praise you. Oh Lord.

[32 : 33] With all my heart. There's a resolution. I will. I will. I will. Praise you. Oh Lord. With all my heart. I will. Praise your name. For your love. And your faithfulness.

For you've exalted. Above all things. Your name. And your word. And when I called. You answered me. So he determines. To praise the Lord. So. So let the Psalms.

Lead you in praise. To the Lord. In your praying. You're talking to God. Let the Psalms. Help you. It's like priming.

The pump. Some of you. Are old enough. To remember. The old pumps. Maybe out in the barnyard. Maybe on the golf course. Back on whole number.

What? Seven. Way far from the clubhouse. And there's the old pump. And there's a cup there. And whoever used the pump last.

[33 : 30] Should have left the cup full. Why? Because you need to pour the water. Down into the well. In order to get the water. To come up. From the well. And. And that's what these Psalms.

Can be for us. We can piggyback. Our praises. On top. Of David. And the psalmist. Asaph. Asaph. And the other authors. Of the Psalms. We.

We take a Psalm. And we. We pray it. We. We pour it out. Our praises out. Before the Lord. And. And soon. The waters. The cool waters. From the deep. Start bubbling up.

And we fill out. The praises of God. Ourselves. Praise. Praising the Lord.

Directly. We do this in our prayers. Then. But any reading of the Psalms. Will also show. That we're not only to speak. Our praises.

[34 : 25] We are to sing. Our praises. And that for his goodness. Many references could be cited. Psalm 135. We read it. Verse 3.

Praise the Lord. For the Lord is good. Sing praise to his name. For that is pleasant. In other words. The goodness of God. Is to not only put.

Praise. Words. On our lips. It's to put a song. Of praise. In our mouths. Sung praises. As well as.

Spoken. Praises. We're to make music. To. God. The most high. And that. Music. Is to. Lift his voice up.

We're to sing. Praise. Joyfully. To him. So that James says. Is anyone happy? Let him sing. Songs of praise. So as the Lord.

[35 : 22] Made you happy. With his goodness. Then express it. In a song. Of praise. Sing. God is so good. He's so good to me.

Psalm. 13. 6. I will sing to the Lord. For he has been good to me. That's our response. To his goodness. To sing. His praise.

Directly to him. So as the Lord. Been good to you today. Look over the day. At the end of the day. And see. And see. His goodness.

And mercies. Has he been good to you. This past week. That's a. Blessed marker. On the Lord's day. We pause. And we look back. And we say. Oh. What. What a good God.

We have. And how he's provided for us. Again. Protected us. And kept us. And blessed us. Has goodness and mercy. Followed you. All the days of your life.

[36 : 17] Go back. All the way to the beginning. And even before you. You were old enough to know. From whom those goodnesses came. Go all the way back. Has God been good to you.

Was it. Was he not good to you. Two thousand years ago. Outside of Jerusalem. As. His son. Hung on the cross for you. He was good to you. Two thousand years ago.

And. And three days later. When. He rose from the grave. And. And went up into heaven. There for you. He was good. How about before the world was created.

When in love. He chose you. Wasn't God good to you then. You. Deserving to go to hell. And he chose you. Well. Then let us sing to the Lord.

For he has been good to us. He has dealt bountifully with us. You know. The book of Psalms is itself. A collection of the church's.

[37 : 13] Sung praises. The gathered church. As they gathered. They sang the praises of God. And. And this is what they sang. I wonder if you've missed.

The congregational singing of God's praise. As much as I have. In these. Past weeks. You know. A Lord's day without congregational praises. In song.

Is like a day without sunshine. It's. Just not the same. Is it? And Psalm 22. I think holds. One of the clues. Is. It's interesting.

You know. Psalm 22. It begins. My God. My God. Why have you forsaken me? It's the very words of our Savior from the cross. As he's.

Enduring the separation from God. That would have been ours for eternity. And. And he's totally broken by it. In the dark. But.

- [38 : 11] But after those three hours of darkness. The sun came out again. And God's face was shining again. On his son. And he sensed that love of God.
- There in his. Last expiring. Moments. On the cross. And. The end of Psalm 22. Takes us to that period. And he's glorying in his father.
- He. He does not despise or disdain the suffering of the afflicted one. He's heard my cry. He's. He's. He's come to my relief. He's lifted the darkness.
- He's. He's no longer hiding his face from me. And. He says to. To us there in Psalm. Or he says to his father. I will declare your name to my brothers.
- In the presence of the congregation. I will sing your praises. I miss Jesus singing the praises of God. Along with us. As he's with us by his spirit.
- [39 : 10] In the gathered assembly. And he says to his heavenly father. In Psalm 22. 225. From you comes the theme of my praise. What's. What's.
- What's Jesus praising. Well. The whole theme of his praise. Is his father in heaven. It. It. Sets him to sing. And. Singing. And to praising. In the great assembly.
- In the gathered church. You see. In praise. Jesus is bragging on his father. And then he turns to us. And says. Now you do the same.
- He says in verse 23. You. Who fear the Lord. Praise him. Those are the words of Jesus. To us. He praises the Lord.
- In song. And in word. And he says. Now you praise him. Because this same God. That is my God. Is now your God. And he deserves. Praise.
- [40 : 04] So if we have profited from our study on the goodness of God. It. It will be leading us to praise the Lord more. To others. To ourselves. And to the Lord himself. Let's determine by the grace of God.
- To be found more. In praising him. Now I've not left. Much time at all. For the cousin of praise. Which is. Thanksgiving. For our response to God's goodness.
- This is to be both praise and thanksgiving. And this too is an oft repeated theme in the Psalms. One thirty six one. Give thanks to the Lord. For he is good.
- So the goodness of God is meant to open our mouths. Not only in praise. But in thanksgiving. In children. You know what thanksgiving is. Your children. Your parents have been teaching you.
- Maybe still are teaching you. What thanksgiving is. That when someone gives you something good. Or does something good for you. What are you to say? You're to say. Thank you.
- [41 : 00] You are to express to them. Your gratitude. For the way they've benefited. Your life. And it's no different with God. His children are taught.
- To give thanks to him. For his goodnesses. To us. And this is one of the ways. Thanksgiving is different from praise. In praise.
- We speak well. About God. But we can do that sometimes. To him. Or to others. Or to ourselves. But thanksgiving. Is always.
- Given to God. Directly to God. I had a friend this week. Brought me some. Some. Chocolate chip cookies. That his wife had baked. And I said. Would you thank her for me?
- But. But when God. Does things for us. And is. Good. To us. We go directly to him. With our thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is.
- [41 : 55] Always directed. To him. We thank him. We say thank you. Ephesians. Chapter 5.
- And verse 20. Always giving thanks. To God the Father. For everything. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Always giving thanks. To him. Directly to him.

So when good things happen. In our lives. Both big. And small. This is the way. That we acknowledge. The Lord. As the giver. Of every good gift. We don't thank. Some rain God. We don't thank.

Mother nature. We don't thank. Our lucky stars. And we don't remain. Silent. As if it. Just happened. And nobody. Is to be thanked.

Rather. Proverbs 3. 6. Says. In all your ways. Acknowledge him. As good. Come into your life. Acknowledge him. As the giver. And that's what. Thanksgiving does.

[42 : 48] It acknowledges. I have received. This good from God. I've received it. From his hand. And none other. And that's a fitting. Response. When we're on the receiving end.

Of his giving. He gives his goodness to us. And we give him thanks. Say. We got the better end in that deal. Didn't we? He gives us good gifts.

And we give him. Thanks. He gives us. Life. Breath. And family. And food. And money.

And freedom. And forgiveness of sins. And heaven to come. And we give him. Thanks. You see. You see.

That surely is a fitting response. To all the goodness. To at least say thank you. And to do so from the heart. And it shows us how highly. God. Regards our thanks.

[43 : 47] That's it. That's what he's after. He's happy with that. That. That. With our blessings. That he heaps upon us. That he that he sees that it's not coming to a spoiled brat.

But to one who. Who really is thankful. And giving. Him praise. And this is something that we're to do for everything. He. Ephesians 5 20. Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything.

For everything. You think he really means everything? You think. He means the bad stuff. The painful stuff.

You know. First Thessalonians 5 18. Won't let us get around. That. Giving thanks in all circumstances. For this is God's will. In Christ Jesus. Concerning you.

So if his discipline is for my good. Hebrews 12. And if it's good for me to be afflicted. Psalm 119. Well then. I shouldn't leave these out of my thanksgivings either.

[44 : 44] Jesus. I just want to thank you. Thank you. For being so good. Thank you for the good times. Thank you for the hard times. And the good things you are working.

Out of those hard times. So if God's goodness is showering down blessings upon us in a continual stream. Should not our praises and thanksgivings be continually rising to heaven.

It's just the children saying the rains come down. And the prayers go up. So the goodness of God comes down. And the thanks and praise should be going up. Continually coming down.

Continually going up. The Puritan Richard Baxter said. I believe on the topic of prayer. Spend most of your time in thanksgiving and praising of God.

If you cannot do it with the joy that you should. Yet do it as you can. Doing it as you can is the way to be able to do it better.

[45 : 42] For thanksgiving stirs up thankfulness in the heart. So giving thanks. However much heart you're able to bring to it. Is like priming the pump again.

Stirring up deep within your heart. A thanksgiving. So that you overflow with thankfulness. And why is that?

Because thanksgiving. When we count our blessings and name them in thanking God. It's reminding us how good God is. And that's what stirs up true thanksgiving and thankfulness in our hearts.

So don't neglect it. Just because you can't do it as you wish you could. You wish you could praise and thank him with a fuller heart. Oh, but go on praising him or you'll never improve.

Brothers and sisters. Let's spend more time thanking and praising the Lord. It's good preparation for heaven. We'll be doing a lot of it there. I love to walk and talk with Jesus.

[46 : 46] At night. And stars are out. Nobody else is out. That's even better. I find that it's harder for me to fall asleep when I pray.

When I'm walking. And I know a lady who takes such walks. And doesn't let herself start asking God for anything. Until she meets a certain marker on her walk.

And what that does is it ensures that she's thinking and soaking her mind and heart in the goodness of God. She's only thanking and praising him for that.

However long that is till she gets to that that marker. And it ensures that her heart has been confronted and her mind has been confronted. First, not with her troubles and all the concerns of her heart.

But first with how good God has been. So go on a walk of praise. With no petitions until you've reached marker mile number one or two or however far out you put it.

[47 : 46] God is great and is greatly to be praised. He's worthy of all honor and glory and praise. He's good. And he's to be thanked for his goodness. He's given and given and given again.

And only us that we return. Praise and thanksgiving to him. Praise is his gracious choice. Let's give it to him with gladness. Once we meet again and are able to meet again.

We're going to plan in an evening of praise and thanksgiving. Much as we do in the thanksgiving season. But a special evening of praise and thanksgiving for God's goodness to us during this whole pandemic.

Specific things he's done for us. Things he's taught us. Mercies received. Lessons learned. Ways he's provided for our needs. Our health and safety. Our sanity.

Our joy and peace and contentment. His forgiveness of our many sins during this period. With our worry and unbelief and discontent. Discontent. We want to come together.

[48 : 50] And when we do we want to be overflowing with praise and thanksgiving. So be sure to be here for that. And be sure to not come empty handed. And so I am telling you this now.

So that you still have a little time left. Before we have this evening. And be intentionally growing closer to the Lord during this time.

Drawing nearer to the Lord Jesus. Seeking his face. Growing in some grace. Focusing on some passage of scripture. That you put to memory perhaps. Or you just read over and over again.

For three weeks. So that you get some gain. From the repeated praying through a passage.

Reading a Christian book. Something. Let's not come through this unchanged. Let's not waste this pandemic. As John Piper likes to say of cancer.

[49 : 48] Don't waste this. There's too much to be learned and gained. That when we come together. We might all be ready. In the words of Psalm 147. 145.

To celebrate his abundant goodness. And joyfully sing of his righteousness. Well let's pray to our good God. Our ever blessing and blessed heavenly father.

Thank you for your goodness to us. Like a never failing fountain. For giving up your own son for us. The greatest gift of all. That we might be saved.

And have eternal life. And an abundant life. That begins now. And knowing you. And fellowshiping with you. And that never ends. Oh we do feel.

That if you never did anything else for us. That there would be enough here. To keep us singing your praises. Not only for our lifetime. But for all eternity.

[50 : 48] So we're not complaining of a lack of goodness in you. But we're confessing. A lack of praise and thanksgiving in us.

So forgive us our sins. And change us. Stir our hearts and loose our tongues. That we might be overwhelmed. With how good you are.

And it would find expression. In our words. And in our songs. About you and to you. Bring those who have never. Tasted the salvation. The forgiveness of sins.

The fellowship with. The God that made them. Bring them today. To taste and see. That the Lord is good. And that there is salvation for them. In Jesus Christ. And so add to that.

Growing choir of praise. Where we will give you praise. And thanks for all eternity. Teach us to do more of it. Even here and now. We ask in Jesus name.

[51 : 46] Amen.