

**Loris First Baptist Church**  
**“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”**

Doctrine #38 – The Church: Her Worship in Prayer and Thanksgiving

Note: Most information based on pages 257-265 of the book “Major Bible Themes” by Lewis Sperry Chaffer.

**Introduction**

1. As brought out in Romans 12:1-2 and Hebrews 13:15-16, a Christian as a believer-priest is occupied with four sacrifices:

- a. The sacrifice of his body

**Romans 12:1-2** “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, TO OFFER YOUR BODIES AS LIVING SACRIFICES, holy and pleasing to God—THIS IS YOUR TRUE AND PROPER WORSHIP. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

- b. The sacrifice of praise

**Hebrews 13:15** “Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE—the fruit of lips that openly profess His name.”

- c. The sacrifice of good works

**Hebrews 13:16a** “And do not forget TO DO GOOD and to share with others, for with SUCH SACRIFICES God is pleased.”

- d. The sacrifice of stewardship or sharing

**Hebrews 13:16b** “And do not forget to do good and TO SHARE WITH OTHERS, for with SUCH SACRIFICES God is pleased.”

2. God is well pleased with such sacrifices (Heb. 13:16).

3. Having dealt with the sacrifice of good works and stewardship of material possessions in previous discussion, we may now consider the work of the believer-priest in his prayer and praise to God which forms the essential of worship.

- a. In the present age, worship is not a matter of form and circumstance, but as Christ said to the Samaritan woman:

**John 4:24** “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.”

- b. Accordingly, worship is not confined to sacred services in great cathedrals, but is the adoration of the heart of the Christian as he expresses his praise and intercession to his Heavenly Father in the name of Christ.

4. Prayer and praise are the principal elements of worship and are acts of direct communion of men with God.
5. The study of the doctrine of prayer and praise in the Old and New Testaments reveals a progressive revelation and increasing privilege.

### **Prayer Before the First Advent of Christ**

1. Though individual and private prayer was offered by godly men in all the ages, it is evident that prayer, in the main, was offered by the patriarch in behalf of his household (Job 1:5) and, during the period between Moses and Christ, by the priests and rulers in behalf of the people.

**Job 1:5** *“When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would make arrangements for them to be purified. Early in the morning HE WOULD SACRIFICE A BURNT OFFERING FOR EACH OF THEM, thinking, ‘PERHAPS MY CHILDREN HAVE SINNED and cursed God in their hearts.’ This was Job’s regular custom.”*

2. Throughout these centuries the ground of prayer consisted in “pleading the covenants” of Jehovah.

**1 Kings 8:22-26** *“Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven and said: ‘LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth below—YOU WHO KEEP YOUR COVENANT OF LOVE with Your servants who continue wholeheartedly in Your way. YOU HAVE KEPT YOUR PROMISE to Your servant David my father; with Your mouth YOU HAVE PROMISED and with Your hand You have fulfilled it—as it is today. Now LORD, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father THE PROMISES YOU MADE TO HIM when You said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor to sit before Me on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful in all they do to walk before Me faithfully as you have done.’ And now, God of Israel, let YOUR WORD THAT YOU PROMISED Your servant David my father come true.’”*

**Nehemiah 9:32** *“Now therefore, our God, the great God, mighty and awesome, WHO KEEPS HIS COVENANT OF LOVE, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in Your eyes—the hardship that has come on us, on our kings and leaders, on our priests and prophets, on our ancestors and all Your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today.”*

**Daniel 9:4** *“I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: ‘Lord, the great and awesome God, WHO KEEPS HIS COVENANT OF LOVE with those who love Him and keep His commandments...”*

3. And also pleading His holy character

**Genesis 18:25** *“Far be it from You to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth DO RIGHT?”*

**Exodus 32:11-14** *“But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. ‘LORD,’ he said, ‘why should Your anger burn against Your people, whom You brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘IT WAS WITH EVIL INTENT THAT HE BROGHT THEM OUT, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth?’ Turn from Your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on Your people. Remember Your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom YOU SWORE BY YOUR OWN SELF: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give*

*your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’ Then the LORD relented and did not bring on His people the disaster He had threatened.”*

4. And it followed the shedding of sacrificial blood

**Hebrews 9:7** *“But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and NEVER WITHOUT BLOOD, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.”*

### **Prayer in Expectation of the Kingdom**

1. The Messianic claim of Christ and the acceptance of the kingdom at His hand were rejected by the nation of Israel; but during the early days of His preaching, and when the kingdom was being offered to Israel, He taught His disciples to pray for the kingdom to be set up in the earth.
2. The familiar Lord’s Prayer is stated in Matthew 6:9-13 and includes the petition *“thy kingdom come”* (Matthew 6:10).
  - a. This prayer has primarily in view the realization of the kingdom on earth in the millennium when Christ would reign supreme on earth. The doxology as contained in **Matthew 6:13** concludes, *“for Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”*
  - b. This doxology is NOT found in many ancient manuscripts of the gospel of Matthew and is omitted in the parallel account in:

**Luke 11:2-4** *“He said to them, ‘WHEN YOU PRAY, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.’”*

- c. Accordingly, many believe it was added by those who copied Scripture as a suitable way to conclude the prayer.
  - d. Whether originally in Matthew or not, it correctly states the doctrine of the future kingdom.
3. Because the Lord’s Prayer also includes other items that are suitable for all ages and circumstances—such as the adoration of the Father, petition for daily bread, and for deliverance from temptation—it has often been taken as a model prayer.
    - a. It is doubtful, however, whether this was the intention of Christ.
    - b. The real “Lord’s Prayer” is found in John 17, where our Lord interceded for His church in the full recognition of God’s purpose for the church in the present age.
  4. Some have held that the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew is improperly used in the present age, and yet its many timeless characteristics and its simplicity have endeared it to many believers; moreover, it is not improper for those living today to anticipate in prayer the coming of the millennial kingdom.

5. However, it must be clearly understood that this kingdom will not come by human effort before the second coming of Christ, as some have taught (i.e. The Catholic Church), but awaits the glorious return of Christ who by His power and might will set up His kingdom on earth.

### **The Prayer of Christ**

1. In John 17, the true “Lord’s Prayer” is presented and reveals the utmost freedom in communion between the Father and the Son. In this chapter Christ is exercising His office as High Priest, and the theme of His prayer is the need of believers on earth in the coming age following Pentecost.
2. While on earth prior to His death, Christ spent long seasons in prayer (Matt. 14:23), even all night (Luke 6:12), and it is probable that the form of His prayer was the same familiar communion with His Father found in John 17.

**Matthew 14:23** “After He had dismissed them, He went up on a mountainside by himself TO PRAY. Later that night, He was there alone...”

**Luke 6:12** “One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and SPENT THE NIGHT PRAYING TO GOD.”

3. The prayer of Christ does not seem to depend upon the promises or covenants, but rather rests in His Own person and priestly work of sacrifice.
4. The prayer of Christ especially in John 17 is, accordingly, a revelation of the intercessory work of Christ at the right hand of the Father which continues throughout the present dispensation.

### **Prayer Under the Relationship of Grace**

1. Prayer is not the same throughout all ages, but like all other human responsibilities, it is adapted to the various dispensations.
2. With the great advance in the revelation provided in the New Testament, prayer takes on the new status of prayer in the name of Christ in the full revelation of His sacrifice on the cross.
3. Among the seven outstanding features of the believer’s life under grace which Christ mentioned in the Upper Room and in Gethsemane (John 13:1—17:26), prayer is included.
4. The teaching of Christ on this most vital theme is given in three passages:

**John 14:12-14** “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. AND I WILL DO WHATEVER YOU ASK IN MY NAME, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. YOU MAY ASK ME for anything in my name, and I WILL DO IT.”

**John 15:7** “If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ASK WHATEVER YOU WISH, and it will be done for you.”

**John 16:23-24** *"In that day you will no longer ask Me anything. Very truly I tell you, My Father will give you WHATEVER YOU ASK IN MY NAME. Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. ASK AND YOU WILL RECEIVE, and your joy will be complete."*

5. According to this word of Christ, the present possibility of prayer under grace is lifted out of earthly limitations into the sphere of the infinite relationships which are obtained in the new creation.
6. This form of prayer may be considered under four aspects.
  - a. *The function of prayer includes not only praise but the believer presenting "his own needs" to the Lord and "interceding on behalf of others".*
    - 1) Rationalism teaches that prayer is unreasonable because an omniscient God would already know what is required better than the man who prays. God, **NEVERTHELESS**, has sovereignly "ordained prayer" as a means to accomplishing His will in the world and has instructed those who believe in Him to present their petitions.
    - 2) The importance of prayer is revealed in John 14:13-14, (see above), wherein Christ promised to do whatever they would ask in His name. Accordingly, God has elevated the importance of prayer to the point where to a large degree God has "conditioned His own action" on the "faithful prayer" of the believer.
    - 3) This responsibility in partnership has been established. It is no longer a question of "reasonableness"; it is a question of "adjustment". It is probable that we cannot know all that is involved, but we do know that in the ministry of prayer the child of God is brought into vital partnership in the work of God in a manner in which he could not otherwise partake.
    - 4) Since the Christian may share in the glory that follows, he is given this "opportunity of sharing" in the achievement. This responsibility in partnership is not extended to the believer as a "special" concession; it is the "normal function" of one for whom the sacrificial blood has been shed and who has been vitally joined to Christ in the New Creation.

**Hebrews 10:19-20** *"Therefore, brothers and sisters, since WE HAVE CONFIDENCE to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body..."*

- 5) It is not unreasonable that one who is a living part of Christ (Eph. 5:30) should share both in His service and in His glory.

**Ephesians 5:30** *"...for we are MEMBERS OF HIS BODY."*

- 6) It should be noted that it is in connection with this announcement of the new office of prayer as a partnership in achievement that Christ stated, "Greater works than these shall he [the believer] do" (John 14:12), which word is immediately followed by the assurance that He alone undertakes "to respond" to this ministry of prayer.

**John 14:12** *"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in Me WILL DO THE WORKS I HAVE BEEN DOING, and they will do even greater things than these, BECAUSE I AM GOING TO THE FATHER."*

- 7) So vital is this blending of endeavor between prayer and that which is divinely wrought in its answer that the believer is said by Christ to be the *doer* of the “greater works.”
- b. *The privilege of praying in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, which under grace is extended to every child of God, lends to prayer a characteristic which lifts it to an infinite degree above every other form of prayer “that ever was or will be”.*
- 1) Likewise, the present form of prayer supersedes all preceding privileges; for when Christ said, “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name” (John 16:24), He “dismissed” every other ground of prayer that had existed.
  - 2) We may be sure that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ commands the attention of the Father and that the Father will not only listen when that name is used, but will be inclined to do whatsoever is asked to be done for the sake “of His beloved Son”.
  - 3) The name of Christ is equivalent to the person of Christ, and the name is not given to believers merely as something with which to “conjure”.
    - a) Praying in the name of Christ means recognition of oneself as a living part of Christ in the New Creation and therefore limits the subjects of prayer to those projects which are in direct line with the purposes and glory of Christ.
    - b) It is praying a prayer which Christ might pray.
    - c) Since prayer in the name of Christ is like signing His name to our petition, it is reasonable that prayer in His name should be thus limited.
  - 4) Having pointed out that sometimes spiritual poverty is due to the fact that we “ask not,” James goes on to state that “*Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts*” (James 4:2-3).
    - a) Prayer thus may become an appeal either for the things “of self” or for “the things of Christ”.
    - b) The believer, having been saved from self and vitally united to Christ is no longer concerned with self.

**2 Corinthians 5:17-18** *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. THE OLD HAS GONE, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation...”*

**Colossians 3:3** *“FOR YOU DIED, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”*

- c) This is not to say that the believer’s best interests are abandoned; but it is to say that these interests are now looked upon as belonging to the new sphere wherein “Christ is all in all”.
- d) Being in Christ, it is normal for us to pray in His name and abnormal to pray for the “mere desires of self” which are apart from the glory of Christ.

- 5) Since prayer is possible only on the ground of the shed blood and by virtue of the believer's vital union with Christ, the prayer of the unsaved cannot be accepted by God.
- c. *The scope of prayer under grace is stated in the one word "whatsoever"; but not without its reasonable limitations.*
- 1) It is *whatsoever* you ask in "the name" (i.e. "according to the purposes and glory") of Christ.
  - 2) Before true prayer can be offered, the heart must be conformed to the mind of Christ.
  - 3) Thus it is said, "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will" (John 15:7), and this is true; for under such heart adjustment the child of God will ask only for those things which are in the sphere of God's will.
  - 4) Under grace, there is perfect liberty of action given to the one *in whom God is working both to will and to do of His good pleasure* (Philippians 2:13).
  - 5) Likewise, there is unlimited freedom of petition to the one who prays in the will of God. To the Spirit-filled believer it is said: "*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.*" (Romans 8:26-27).
  - 6) The scope of prayer under grace is not narrow; it is as infinite as the eternal interests of the One in whose name we are privileged to pray.
- d. *The practice of prayer should be given careful attention by every faithful believer.*
- 1) It is most important that believers observe regular times of prayer.
  - 2) They should avoid any irreverent use of prayer or useless repetitions as characterize the heathen world and follow the divine order prescribed for prayer under grace.
  - 3) This is stated in the words, "*In that day you shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you*" (John 16:23), and prayer is to be "*in the Holy Spirit*" (Jude 20).
    - a) This order is not arbitrarily imposed. However, to pray to Christ is to abandon His mediation by praying *to* Him, rather than *through* Him, thereby sacrificing the most vital feature of prayer under grace—prayer "IN" His name.
    - b) To pray to the Spirit of God is to pray *to* Him, rather than *by* Him, and implies that we are to that degree depending on "our own sufficiency" and bypassing the intercessory ministry of God, the Son.
    - c) It may be concluded then, that prayer under grace is to be offered to "the Father", in "the name" of the Son, and in "the power" of the Holy Spirit.

## The Prayer of Thanksgiving

1. True thanksgiving is the voluntary expression of heartfelt gratitude for benefit received.
2. Thanksgiving's effectiveness depends upon its sincerity, as its intensity depends upon the value which is placed upon the benefit received.

**2 Corinthians 9:11** "...will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity WILL RESULT IN THANKSGIVING TO GOD."

3. Thanksgiving is peculiarly personal. There are obligations belonging to us which may be assumed by another; but no one can offer for us our word of thanksgiving.

**Leviticus 22:29** "When YOU sacrifice A THANK OFFERING TO GOD, sacrifice it in such a way that it will be accepted ON YOUR BEHALF."

4. Thanksgiving is in no way "a payment" for the benefit received; it is rather a gracious acknowledgement of the fact that the one who had received the benefit is "indebted" to the giver.
5. Since no payment can be made to God for His unmeasured and uncounted benefits, the obligation to be thankful to Him is stated throughout Scriptures, and all thanksgiving is closely related to worship and praise.

1) Under the old order, the spiritual relationships to God were expressed in material ways.

2) Among these, provision was made for the offering, or sacrifice, of thanksgiving:

**Leviticus 7:12-15** "If they OFFER IT AS AN EXPRESSION OF THANKFULNESS, then along with this thank offering they are to offer thick loaves made without yeast and with olive oil mixed in, thin loaves made without yeast and brushed with oil, and thick loaves of the finest flour well-kneaded and with oil mixed in. Along with their fellowship offering OF THANKSGIVING they are to present an offering with thick loaves of bread made with yeast. They are to bring one of each kind as an offering, A CONTRIBUTION TO THE LORD; it belongs to the priest who splashes the blood of the fellowship offering against the altar. The meat of their fellowship OFFERING OF THANKSGIVING must be eaten on the day it is offered; they must leave none of it till morning."

**Psalms 107:22** "Let them sacrifice THANK OFFERINGS and tell of His works with songs of joy."

**Psalms 116:17** "I will sacrifice A THANK OFFERING TO YOU and call on the name of the LORD."

6. Similarly, in this age it is the privilege of the believer to make sacrificial offerings of thanksgiving to God. However, if while offering the sacrificial gift of thanksgiving the motive should include the thought of "compensation", the essential value of thanksgiving is "destroyed".

7. The subject of prayer is mentioned many times in the Old Testament and frequently in the Psalms.
- a. In the Old Testament explicit direction is given for the thanksgiving offerings.

**Leviticus 7:12-15** “*If they OFFER IT AS AN EXPRESSION OF THANKFULNESS, then along with this thank offering they are to offer thick loaves made without yeast and with olive oil mixed in, thin loaves made without yeast and brushed with oil, and thick loaves of the finest flour well-kneaded and with oil mixed in. Along with their fellowship offering OF THANKSGIVING they are to present an offering with thick loaves of bread made with yeast. They are to bring one of each kind as an offering, A CONTRIBUTION TO THE LORD; it belongs to the priest who splashes the blood of the fellowship offering against the altar. The meat of their fellowship OFFERING OF THANKSGIVING must be eaten on the day it is offered; they must leave none of it till morning.*”

- b. Praise and thanksgiving were especially emphasized in the revival under Nehemiah. (see Nehemiah 12:27-40)
- c. Likewise, the prophetic message of the Old Testament anticipates thanksgiving as a special feature of worship in the coming kingdom.

**Isaiah 51:3** “*The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins. He will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, THANKSGIVING AND THE SOUND OF SINGING.*”

**Jeremiah 30:19** “*From them will come SONGS OF THANKSGIVING and the sound of rejoicing. I will add to their numbers, and they will not be decreased; I will bring them honor, and they will not be disdained.*”

- d. So also, there is ceaseless thanksgiving in heaven.

**Revelation 4:9** “*Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and THANKS TO HIM Who sits on the throne and Who lives for ever and ever...*”

**Revelation 7:12** “*...saying: ‘Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and THANKS and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!’*”

**Revelation 11:17** “*...saying: ‘WE GIVE THANKS TO YOU, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.’*”

8. An important feature of Old Testament thanksgiving is the appreciation of the Person of God apart from all His benefits.

**Psalms 30:4** “*Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people; PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME.*”

**Psalms 95:2** “*Let us come before Him WITH THANKSGIVING AND EXTOL HIM with music and song.*”

**Psalms 97:12** “*Rejoice in the LORD, you who are righteous, and PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME.*”

**Psalm 100:1-5** “Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. ENTER HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING and His courts with praise; GIVE THANKS TO HIM AND PRAISE HIS NAME. For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.”

**Psalm 119:62** “At midnight I rise TO GIVE YOU THANKS FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS LAWS.”

9. Though so constantly neglected, this theme of thanksgiving is most important and such praise is reasonable and fitting. “It is A GOOD THING to GIVE THANKS unto the LORD” (Psalm 92:1).
10. In the New Testament the theme of thanksgiving is mentioned about forty-five times, and this form of praise is offered for both temporal and spiritual blessings.
11. Christ’s unfailing practice of giving thanks for food should prove an effectual example to all believers.

**Matthew 15:36** “Then He took the seven loaves and the fish, and WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, He broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people.”

**Matthew 26:27** “Then He took a cup, and when HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you...’”

**Mark 8:6** “He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When He had taken the seven loaves and GIVEN THANKS, He broke them and gave them to His disciples to distribute to the people, and they did so.”

**Mark 14:23** “Then He took a cup, and WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.”

**Luke 22:17-19** “After taking the cup, HE GAVE THANKS and said, ‘Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.’ And He took bread, GAVE THANKS and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’”

**John 6:23** “Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread AFTER THE LORD HAD GIVEN THANKS.”

12. The Apostle Paul was also faithful in this particular example.

**Acts 27:35** “After he said this, he took some bread and GAVE THANKS TO GOD in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat.”

**Romans 14:6** “Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, FOR THEY GIVE THANKS TO GOD; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and GIVES THANKS TO GOD.”

**1 Timothy 4:3-4** *“They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created TO BE RECEIVED WITH THANKSGIVING by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected IF IT IS RECEIVED WITH THANKSGIVING.”*

13. Thanksgiving on the part of the Apostle Paul is worthy of close attention.

a. He uses the phrase “thanks be unto God” in connection with Christ:

1) As the “unspeakable gift”

**2 Corinthians 9:15** *“THANKS be to God for HIS INDESCRIBABLE GIFT.”*

2) Concerning “the victory” over the grave which is secured by the resurrection

**1 Corinthians 15:57** *“But THANKS be to God! He GIVES US THE VICTORY through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

3) And because of the present “triumph” which is ours through Christ

**2 Corinthians 2:14** *“But THANKS be to God, who always leads us as captives in CHRIST’S TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of Him everywhere.”*

b. His thanksgiving to God:

1) For “believers”

**1 Thessalonians 1:2** *“We always THANK GOD FOR ALL OF YOU and continually mention You in our prayers.”*

**1 Thessalonians 3:9** *“How can we THANK GOD ENOUGH FOR YOU in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?”*

2) For “Titus” in particular

**2 Corinthians 8:16** *“THANKS BE TO GOD, who put into THE HEART OF TITUS the same concern I have for you.”*

3) And his exhortation that thanks be given for “ALL men” are likewise object lessons to all the children of God.

**1 Timothy 2:1** *“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and THANKSGIVING BE MADE FOR ALL MEN...”*

14. Two important features of thanksgiving according to the New Testament should be noted.

a. *Thanksgiving should be prayer "without ceasing".*

- 1) Since the adorable Person of God is unchanged and His benefits never cease, and since the abundant grace of God will redound to the glory of God through the thanksgiving of many (2 Cor. 4:15), it is reasonable that thanksgiving be given to Him without ceasing.

**2 Corinthians 4:15** *"All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause THANKSGIVING TO OVERFLOW to the glory of God."*

- 2) Of this form of praise we read: *"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God CONTINUALLY, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name"* (Hebrews 13:15; Ephesians 1:16; 5:20; Colossians 1:3; 4:2).

- 3) This feature of thanksgiving is also emphasized in the Old Testament

**Psalm 30:12** *"...that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. LORD my God, I WILL PRAISE YOU FOREVER."*

**Psalm 79:13** *"Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, WILL PRAISE YOU FOREVER from generation to generation we will proclaim your praise."*

**Psalm 107:22** *"Let them sacrifice THANK OFFERINGS and tell of His works with songs of joy."*

**Psalm 116:17** *"I will sacrifice a THANK OFFERING to You and call on the name of the LORD."*

b. *Thanksgiving should be offered for all things.*

**Ephesians 5:20** *"GIVING THANKS ALWAYS FOR ALL THINGS unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

**1 Thessalonians 5:18:** *"IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"*

**Philippians 4:6** *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in EVERY SITUATION, by prayer and petition, WITH THANKSGIVING, present your requests to God."*

**Colossians. 2:7** *"...rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and OVERFLOWING WITH THANKFULNESS."*

**Colossians 3:17** *"And WHATEVER YOU DO, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, GIVING THANKS to God the Father through Him."*

- 1) Giving thanks *always* for *all* things is far removed from giving thanks “sometimes” for “some” things.
  - a) Having accepted the truth that *all* things work together for good to them who love God, it is fitting that thanks be rendered to God for *all* things.
  - b) Such God-honoring praise can be offered only by those who are saved and who are Spirit-filled.

**Ephesians 5:18-20** “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ALWAYS GIVING THANKS to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- c) Daniel gave thanks to God in the fact of the sentence of death.

**Daniel 6:10** “Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, GIVING THANKS TO HIS GOD, just as he had done before.”

- d) And Jonah gave thanks to God from the belly of the great fish.

**Jonah 2:9** “But I, with SHOUTS OF GRATEFUL PRAISE, will sacrifice to You. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the LORD.’”

15. The common sin of “ingratitude” toward God is illustrated by one of the events recorded in the ministry of Christ.

- a. Ten lepers were cleansed, but only one returned to give thanks, and he was a Samaritan.

**Luke 17:11-19** “Now on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, ‘Jesus, Master, have pity on us!’ When He saw them, He said, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were cleansed. ONE OF THEM, when he saw he was healed, came back, PRAISING GOD IN A LOUD VOICE. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and THANKED HIM—and he was a SAMARITAN. Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned TO GIVE PRAISE TO GOD except this foreigner?’ Then He said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’”

- b. It should be noted here that “ingratitude” is “a sin”, being included as one of the sins of the “last days”

**2 Timothy 3:2** “People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, UNGRATEFUL, unholy...”

## CONCLUSION

It is probable that there is true sincerity on the part of many unsaved who try to be thankful to God for temporal benefits; but their utter failure to appreciate the gift of His Son leaves them most unthankful in His sight. It should be remembered that Thanksgiving Day was established in this country by believers and for believers and in recognition of the fact that the Christ-rejecting sinner CANNOT give acceptable praise unto God.

**Loris First Baptist Church**  
***“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”***

Doctrine #38 – The Church: Her Worship in Prayer and Thanksgiving

1. Read Pages 1-14 from the Doctrine#38 Study Guide by next Wednesday.
2. Answer the following Questions about “The Church” as you read:

**a. Introduction**

- 1) As brought out in Romans 12:1-2 and Hebrews 13:15-16, a Christian as a “believer-priest” is occupied with what four (4) sacrifices? (page 1, top-middle)
  
- 2) According to John 4:24, how “must” God be worshipped in order for it to be acceptable?
  
- 3) Worship is NOT confined to sacred services in great cathedrals, but is truly “what”? (page 1, bottom)
  
- 4) What does a careful study of the doctrine of prayer and praise in the Old and New Testaments “reveal”? (page 2, top)

**b. Prayer Before the First Advent of Christ**

- 1) Throughout the centuries covered by the Old Testament, the majority of prayers were grounded in the pleading of primarily “what” two things?  
(page 2, middle-bottom; 1Kings 8:22-26; Nehemiah 9:32; Daniel 9:4; Genesis 18:25; Exodus 32:11-14)
  
- 2) The majority of prayers in the Old Testament followed “what”? (page 3, top; Hebrews 9:7)

**c. Prayer in Expectation of the Kingdom**

- 1) Although the Messianic claim of Christ was rejected by the nation of Israel, what did Jesus teach His disciples to pray “for”? (page 3, top-middle; Matthew 6:9-13)
  
- 2) How does the “doxology” in Matthew 6:13 “conclude”? (page 3, middle)
  
- 3) True or False. The “doxology” in Matthew 6:13 is NOT found in many ancient manuscripts and many theologians believe it was “added” by those who copied Scripture (during the “Dark Ages”) as a suitable way to conclude the prayer. (page 3, middle)
  
- 4) True or False. Although Matthew 6:9-13 is considered the “model prayer” or “the Lord’s Prayer” by many theologians, it is doubtful that this was the intention of Christ and the “real” Lord’s Prayer is better recognized as Christ’s prayer found in John 17. (page 3, bottom)
  
- 5) The “Messianic” or “Millennial” Kingdom will NOT COME by human effort as some have taught; rather, it awaits what? (page 4, top)

**d. The Prayer of Christ**

- 1) In John 17, the true “Lord’s Prayer” is presented and reveals what? (page 4, top)
  
- 2) True or False. Like found in the Old Testament, the prayer of Christ found in John 17 seems to depend upon the promises or covenants that Jehovah has made. (page 4, middle)

- 3) The prayer of Christ found in John 17 is a revelation of “what” which continues throughout the present dispensation? (page 4, middle)

**e. Prayer Under the Relationship of Grace**

- 1) True or False. Like all other human responsibilities, “prayer” is revealed in the Old and New Testaments as being the “same” throughout all ages. (page 4, middle-bottom)
- 2) With the great advance in the revelation provided in the New Testament, prayer takes on the new status of prayer “in” what? (page 4, bottom)
- 3) According to John 15:7, what are the two criteria that Jesus gave for assuring answers to our prayers?
- 4) The function of New Testament prayer, according to Christ, includes not only “praise” but the believer “presenting” what to the Lord? (page 5, top)
- 5) What does “rationalism” teach about prayer and why? (page 5, top)
- 6) True or False. Since God is “omniscient”, there really is no good reason for a believer to ask God to “heal” someone or to “accomplish” something in any certain way, since God’s perfect will is going to be done anyway and He knows better what to do than a believer does. (page 5, top)

- 7) True or False. According to passages like John 14:13-14, God appears to have elevated the importance of prayer to the point where, to a large degree, He has “conditioned His own action” on the “faithful prayer” of the believer. (page 5, middle)
  
- 8) When the Lord’s teaching on prayer is taken “literally”, prayer is no longer a question of “reasonableness” but a question of “what”? (page 5, middle)
  
- 9) True or False. According to John 16:24 and similar teachings by Christ, Jesus was teaching that “praying in His name” was far superior to any previous ground of prayer that had existed before His coming. (page 6, top)
  
- 10) Far from being some “magic words” that “conjure” up the obedience of God to our wishes, what does “praying in the name of Christ” really mean? (page 6, middle)
  
- 11) Being “in Christ”, it is normal for believers to pray in His name and abnormal to pray for “what” which are apart from the glory of Christ? (page 6, bottom)
  
- 12) Why can the prayer of the “unsaved” NOT be accepted by God? (page 7, top)
  
- 13) Before true prayer can be offered, the heart of a believer must be conformed to what? (page 7, top)
  
- 14) In accordance with John 15:7, a child of God who is adjusted to the Word of God will only ask for what in prayer? (page 7, top)

- 15) Because of the significant privilege and importance of prayer, what should a believer be very careful to “avoid”? (page 7, bottom-middle)
  
- 16) Why should we concentrate on praying “to the Father”, in the “name of the Son”, with the “help of the Holy Spirit”, rather than just praying TO the Holy Spirit? (page 7, bottom)

#### **f. The Prayer of Thanksgiving**

- 1) True thanksgiving is “what”? (page 8, top)
  
- 2) What is thanksgiving’s “effectiveness” dependent upon? (page 8, top; 2Corinthians 9:11)
  
- 3) Thanksgiving should never be considered a “payment” for a benefit received, but rather as what? (page 8, middle)
  
- 4) What did the Psalmist advise believers to do in Psalm 107:22?
  
- 5) What happens when the “motive” of a believer for thanking God is thought of as “compensation” for a benefit that was received from Him? (page 8, bottom)
  
- 6) The prophetic message of the Old Testament anticipates “what” as a special feature of worship in the coming Millennial Kingdom of Christ? (page 9, middle; Isaiah 51:3; Jeremiah 30:19)

- 7) True or False. An important feature of Old Testament “thanksgiving” is the appreciation of the Person of God “apart” from all His “benefits”.  
(page 9, bottom; Psalm 30:4, 95:2, 97:12, 100:1-5, 119:62)
  
- 8) How many times in the New Testament is the “theme of thanksgiving” mentioned? (page 10, top)
  
- 9) What is an “unfailing practice” of Christ which should prove an effectual “example” to all believers?  
(page 10, top-middle; Matthew 15:36, 26:27; Mark 8:6, 14:23; Luke 22:17-19; John 6:23)
  
- 10) According to 1Timothy 4:3-4, “everything” God created is “good”, and nothing is to be rejected “if” what is done?
  
- 11) What are the three (3) things that Paul uses the phrase “thanks be unto God” in connection with Christ?  
(page 11, top; 2Corinthians 9:15; 1Corinthians 15:57; 2Corinthians 2:14)
  
- 12) What are three (3) things that Paul specifically gives “thanksgiving to God” for?  
(page 11, middle-bottom; 1Thessalonians 1:2, 3:9; 2Corinthians 8:16; 1Timothy 2:1)
  
- 13) What are the two (2) important features of thanksgiving according to the New Testament that should be noted by all believers? (page 12; 2Cor 4:15; Psalm 30:12, 79:13; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 4:6)
  
- 14) According to 1Thessalonians 5:18, what is the will of God in Christ Jesus for believers?

15) Why is it “fitting” that thanks be rendered to God for “all” things by believers?  
(page 13, top; Romans 8:29)

16) God-honoring praise can “ONLY” be offered by whom? (page 13, top; Ephesians 5:18-20)

17) According to 2Timothy 3:2, “ingratitude” is a characteristic of mankind in the last days and should always be considered “what”? (page 13, bottom)

#### **g. Conclusion**

1) While it is probable that there is true sincerity on the part of many “unsaved” who try to be thankful to God for “temporal” benefits, their utter failure to appreciate the gift of His Son leaves them “what” in God’s sight? (page 14, top)

2) It should be remembered that Thanksgiving Day was established in this country BY “believers” and FOR “believers” in recognition of what “fact”? (page 14, top)