

Restoring the Joy of Conversing with God - Praise and Thanksgiving
– Luke 11:2a, Matthew 6:9

Intro:

How often when we think about hanging out with God, praying to God and spending time listening to God, we would experience joy? The truth is that we often come to God when we have needs. I believe the joy of conversing with God is a lost art. Today we are going to look at restoring the Joy of Conversing with God through praise and thanksgiving!

1. Luke 11:1: “Lord, teach us to pray”

²He [Jesus] said to them, “When you pray, say: “‘Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. ³Give us each day our daily bread. ⁴Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.’”

2. Today, we are only going to focus on the first part: **“Father, hallowed be your name.”**

Father:

1. The word, “Father” came with the idea of a relationship – a relationship we have with God
2. This is a close, intimate relationship we are graced and blessed with.
3. It is also a relationship of how Jesus related to God the Father, and how we should relate to God the Father as well.
4. What God the Father IS NOT:
 - a. the cosmic cop waiting for us to step out of line.
 - b. the great hockey referee in the sky looking for an excuse to throw us in the penalty box, or
 - c. worse, disqualify us eternally.
 - d. A trigger to all our painful/negative memories that we had with our earthly fathers.
5. What God the Father IS:
 - a. never too busy for us,
 - b. never too tired to talk,
 - c. never too limited in knowledge or wisdom to be of any help, and
 - d. He is never absent.
 - e. He will never desert us,
 - f. never disappoint us,
 - g. never die, and
 - h. never get sick or old or confused.
 - i. His resources are never depleted,
 - j. His love knows no limits,
 - k. His power has no bounds, and
 - l. His grace has no borders.
6. Isn't it who the Father is brings us hope and joy?

Who Art In Heaven

1. In the gospel of Matthew, it included the phrase “who art in heaven”.
2. This was not to say our Father is distant from us.
3. God the Father can be in heaven and with us at the same time. After all, he is God.
4. Another way to look at “who art in heaven” is that God is a heavenly being.
5. That points us to the attributes of purity, holiness, perfection
6. A contrast between of heaven vs earth – sinless vs sinful

Hallowed Be Your Name

1. Acknowledge who God the Father is
 - a. What it means by “hallowed be your name.”?
 - b. It means His name is greatly revered and honoured.

- c. It means to give our attention in adoration
 - d. He alone is worthy of our hearts' praise.
 - e. There is none like Him and no one has the authority He possesses.
 - f. A restored perspective can be helpful for us to approach God.
 - g. We are to approach God with a recognition that He is holy – that is – set apart and unique.
2. Pray that the world will acknowledge God the Father through us
- a. We also are to pray that God's uniqueness and glory will also be recognized by others, through us.
 - b. That's what Jesus was getting at when He said: **Matthew 5:16 (NIV)** ... *let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*
 - c. The Apostle Paul's praying fell right in line with Jesus' injunction to pray that God's name be hallowed (glorified, magnified, extolled). He prayed ...
 - d. **Ephesians 3:21 (NIV)** ... *to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.* And so, should we!
3. So, what are some ways in which we could be praying about that?
- a. we are asking God to keep us from dishonoring the name by which we are called
 - b. we ask that God be glorified among the nations as He is glorified among us
 - c. it means that we show our gratitude to God, thereby praising who He is

However, this phrase goes well beyond personal recognition.

4. This is about worship.
- a. It is not necessarily mean music; however, music and singing can be a part of that
 - b. **worshiping God the Father is the only logical, sensible, and acceptable response.**

Benefits of coming to the presence of God:

1. Through praise, we come into and experience God's presence

When we come to hang out with God, we will really see who He is!

a. His Gates open up!

Instead, He tells us that when we come to His gates with sacrifices of praise for Him - Hebrews 13:15 (James 4:8a – "Come near to God and he will come near to you."), that the gates OPEN up and we come right into His presence!

b. He will fill us with Joy!

There we experience His presence!

- a. **Psalm 16:11 (NIV)** *You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.* (also, Ps 21:6)
- b. **Come into God's presence through thanksgiving, adoration, and worship, and we will experience Him in such a way that we will be filled with LIFE!**
- c. Nehemiah 8:10b, "for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

c. He will fill us with Peace!

- a. We see an example of Paul:
- b. **Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* ⁷ *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- c. When we are anxious by the challenges of this life, Paul predictably reminds us to turn to God with our requests by prayer and petition
- d. However, he surprises us by including the manner in which we are to make such requests – with thanksgiving!
- e. And the context reveals that there is benefit added to the one thus praying – peace!

d. He will fill us with Hope!

- f. And not just peace and joy, but also hope!
 - g. Which is why Paul could say what He said ...
 - h. **Romans 15:13 (NIV)** *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*
 - i. Once in His presence, anxiety, worry, and stress HAVE TO GO! Why?
 - j. Because there is NO anxiety, NO worry, and NO stress in God's throne room! NONE!
 - k. And the reason for that is because He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!
 - l. No one can overturn His will or thwart His plans – NO ONE! NOTHING! NONE!
 - m. And so, we are urged to pray with thanksgiving in all circumstances
 - n. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)** *Be joyful always; ¹⁷pray continually; ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* Also: Eph. 5:20; Col. 3:15, 17; 4:2
 - o. When we're overwhelmed with crippling anxiety over circumstances that threaten to drown us, we're exhorted to present our requests with thanksgiving!
 - p. And God promises that our hearts and minds will be filled with God's peace! And anxiety and worry will be replaced with joy! Great joy! And Hope!
 - q. This is what the Psalmist meant when He said, "*He restores my soul*" (Psa 23:2)! He really does!
2. Through praise which is also a spiritual weapon against the dark forces of evil
- a. What had happened? As Israel's prayer warriors raised their voices to God in praise, angels were sent to defeat a physical foe
 - b. The physical enemy was defeated because unseen enemies were scattered by the power of praise!
 - c. We don't exist to have a happy church; we are to drive back the forces of darkness

Summary:

- Luke 11:2, "Father, hallowed be your name."
- Matthew 6:9, "who art in heaven." – God's nature of heavenly, holy, pure, sinless, etc.
- "Father" – intimacy, denotes a close relationship
- "hallowed" – greatly honoured because of who God the Father is
- Not only we acknowledge in our time with God, we also pray that the world will see that through us – *Matthew 5:16, Ephesians 3:21*
- How can we pray – not profaned the name of God; people see and glorified God in us; we show our gratitude towards God through praise and thanksgivings
- Benefits of hanging out with God with praise in his presence
- A. His Gates Open up – *Hebrew 13:15, James 4:8*
- B. He Fills us with Joy! – *Psalm 16:11, Nehemiah 8:10*
- C. He Fills us with Peace! – *Philippians 4:6-7*
- D. He Fills us with Hope! – *Romans 15:13*
- Benefits of hanging out with God with praise in his presence also drives out evil darkness