



Open Water Ministries

~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, I want to walk in the Spirit and to mortify the deeds of the flesh. I don't want the flesh to have the superior role in my life that it has had in the past. I know that if Your Spirit empowers me, I can say no to the flesh and to its demands to control my life. I am tired of struggling with the same old sins again and again. So right now I am asking You to help me see the truth about what needs to change in my life. Once I see the problem, give me the courage to tell that work of the flesh that it is going to die. Then help me to fully embrace the new life You are wanting to release inside me. Thank You Lord for bringing conviction when it is necessary, and changing me into exactly what you want me to be. In Jesus' name. Amen....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

[Go Light Your World-
Kathy Troccoli](#)

[He Will Make Away-
Kathy Troccoli](#)

[My Life Is In Your
Hands-Kathy Troccoli](#)

[He's Been Faithful To
Me....](#)

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Cathe Laurie](#)

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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1 IF ONE is found slain in the land which the Lord your God gives you to possess, lying in the field, and it is not known who has killed him, 2 Then your elders and judges shall come forth and measure the distance to the cities around him who is slain. 3 And the city which is nearest to the slain man, the elders of that city shall take a heifer which has never been worked, never pulled in the yoke, 4 And the elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with running water which is neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. 5 And the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for the Lord your God has chosen them to minister to Him and to bless in the name [and presence] of the Lord, and by their word shall every controversy and every assault be settled. 6 And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley, 7 And they shall testify, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. 8 Forgive, O Lord, Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, and do not allow the shedding of innocent blood to be charged to Your people Israel. And the guilt of blood shall be forgiven them. 9 So shall you purge the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when you do what is right in the sight of the Lord. 10 When you go forth to battle against your enemies and the Lord your God has given them into your hands and you carry them away captive, 11 And you see among the captives a beautiful woman and desire her, that you may have her as your wife, 12 Then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall shave her head and pare her nails [in purification from heathenism] 13 And put off her prisoner's garb, and shall remain in your house and bewail her father and her mother a full month. After that you may go in to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife. 14 And if you have no delight in her, then you shall let her go absolutely free. You shall not sell her at all for money; you shall not deal with her as a slave or a servant, because you have humbled her. 15 If a man has two wives, one loved and the other disliked, and they both have borne him children, and if the firstborn son is the son of the one who is disliked, 16 Then on the day when he wills his possessions to his sons, he shall not put the firstborn of his loved wife in place of the [actual] firstborn of the disliked wife—her firstborn being older. 17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the disliked as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he was the first issue of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his. 18 If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or his mother and though they chasten him will not listen to them, 19 Then his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, 20 And they shall say to the elders of his city, This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey our voice. He is a glutton and a drunkard. 21 Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall cleanse out the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear and [reverently] fear. 22 And if a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he is put to death and [afterward] you hang him on a tree, 23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day, for a hanged man is accursed by God. Thus you shall not defile your land which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance.

Now in the 21st chapter.

If you find a dead body out in the field and you don't know the circumstances of the death; here's a man; he's dead in the field. Then they are to measure from that dead body to the closest cities and you are to bring the elders of the city out. They are to sacrifice a bullock and they are to each one swear that they don't know how this person died. And thus, the cities would be cleared from this person who had been slain and whose body left there in the field. And so it was sort of an inquest kind of a thing for the dead, in order that there might be sort of the innocency, from the declaration of the innocency from the guilt.

Now if you go to war against your enemies,... and you happen to see a beautiful women among the captives, and you want her for your wife: You may take her for your wife, but first of all she has to shave her head, and to pare her nails; and then [for 30 days] she is to put off her robes of captivity, and after 30 days you may take her as your wife. But when you've taken her for your wife, then you find out you don't like her, then you can't sell her (Deu 21:10-14),

Now in those days, of course, they had slaves and they sold people, and the captives were usually sold as slaves. But the fact you have taken her for your wife, you can put her away. You don't have to stay with her, but you can't sell her as a slave.

you can't make merchandise or money off her, now a man has two wives, and he loves one, and hates the other; if the one he hates has his first born son: [and the one he loves has the second born son. You can't reverse the inheritance.] you can't give the second son who was from the wife you loved the first inheritance (Deu 21:14-16).

You can't reverse the inheritances on these sons. It doesn't matter if you didn't care for her so much, you got to give the first born son the first inheritance.

Now of course, in those days, stubborn and rebellious kids got into real trouble.

[Because] if you had a child who is stubborn and rebellious,... you spank him [you've done every thing you can to correct him], and he doesn't behave:... Then you bring him before the elders (Deu 21:18, 20),

And say I have a stubborn and rebellious kid here and I've done everything I can to correct him. He is incorrigible. I can't handle him, then they would stone him to death.

So you would say,

My son is stubborn, he is rebellious, he will not obey; he is a glutton, he's a drunkard (Deu 21:20).

So the penalty was being stoned.

Now the man is committed a sin worthy of death, and he needs to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged on a tree is accursed of God;) that the land be not defiled, which the Lord God gives you for an inheritance (Deu 21:22-23).

Now this of course becomes interesting to us. Any man who was hung on a tree was cursed of God. Paul tells us that Christ became a curse for us because it is written, "cursed is he who hangs on a tree" (Gal 3:13). Paul was referring to this particular verse here in Deuteronomy.

But showing that Christ became the curse for us in that He took our sins upon Himself when He was hung there upon the tree, He took the curse of God. He bore the curse of God against sin.

When Adam sinned, Adam brought the curse of God upon man, upon woman, and upon the earth itself. God said to Adam that he would be cursed, that the earth would no longer just bring forth for him but actually with the sweat of his brow, would he earn his bread. The earth would actually bring forth thorns, and briars, and thistles. Harvesting your crops is not gonna be easy, your going to have to do it now by the sweat of your brow. Up until then the earth had been just producing, you could go out and get just whatever you want, just enjoy it. Now the curse brought the thorns, the briars, the thistles, and it brought the hard labor for a man to eke out a living from the ground.

To the woman, the curse in childbearing, the labor pains and all: To the ground the curse in bringing forth the thorns and the thistles. And thus there was sort of a three fold curse: upon man, upon woman, and upon the earth itself and of course the forth upon the serpent. It shall go in the dust of the earth on its belly and so forth.

Now Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us, for it is written cursed is everyone who hangs upon a tree. So you see the law actually cursed me. Man if I was living under this thing I would be stoned to death. The law condemned me to die. But Christ has redeemed me from the curse of the law, because He became a curse for me. He bore the curse for me, because it is written accursed is everyone that hangs upon a tree. By Him being crucified there He bore God's curse.

Actually it is interesting that when the Roman soldiers made a crown for Him, what kind of a crown did they make? A crown of thorns. And where did the thorns come from? They came from the curse. So the crown that He bore upon His brow was really a sign of the curse of God against the earth because of sin. Really the crown of thorns was a very fitting crown because He came to bear God's curse against your sin, then hanged upon the tree, redeeming you from the curse of the law.
(Through The Bible; C 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; 1979-1986)

III. PRAYER AND DEVOTION

"Once as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly had been to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God. As near as I can judge, this continued about an hour; and kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears and weeping aloud.. I felt an ardency of soul to be what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to love Him with a holy and pure love; to serve and follow Him; to be perfectly sanctified and made pure with a divine and heavenly purity."—Jonathan Edwards

Devotion has a religious signification. The root of devotion is to devote to a sacred use. So that devotion in its true sense has to do with religious worship. It stands intimately connected with true prayer. Devotion is the particular frame of mind found in one entirely devoted to God. It is the spirit of reverence, of awe, of godly fear. It is a state of heart which appears before God in prayer and worship. It is foreign to everything like lightness of spirit, and is opposed to levity and noise and bluster. Devotion dwells in the realm of quietness and is still before God. It is serious, thoughtful, meditative.

Devotion belongs to the inner life and lives in the closet, but also appears in the public services of the sanctuary. It is a part of the very spirit of true worship, and is of the nature of the spirit of prayer.

Devotion belongs to the devout man, whose thoughts and feelings are devoted to God. Such a man has a mind given up wholly to religion, and possesses a strong affection for God and an ardent love for His house. Cornelius was "a devout man, one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed always." "Devout men carried Stephen to his burial." "One Ananias, a devout man, according to the law," was sent unto Saul when he was blind, to tell him what the Lord would have him do. God can wonderfully use such men, for devout men are His chosen agents in carrying forward His plans.

Prayer promotes the spirit of devotion, while devotion is favourable to the best praying. Devotion furthers prayer and helps to drive prayer home to the object which it seeks. Prayer thrives in the atmosphere of true devotion. It is easy to pray when in the spirit of devotion. The attitude of mind and the state of heart implied in devotion make prayer effectual in reaching the throne of grace. God dwells where the spirit of devotion resides. All the graces of the Spirit are nourished and grow well in the environment created by devotion. Indeed, these graces grow nowhere else but here. The absence of a devotional spirit means death to the graces born in a renewed heart. True worship finds congeniality in the atmosphere made by a spirit of devotion. While prayer is helpful to devotion, at the same time devotion reacts on prayer, and helps us to pray.

Devotion engages the heart in prayer. It is not an easy task for the lips to try to pray while the heart is absent from it. The charge which God at one time made against His ancient Israel was, that they honoured Him with their lips while their hearts were far from Him.

The very essence of prayer is the spirit of devotion. Without devotion prayer is an empty form, a vain round of words. Sad to say, much of this kind of prayer prevails, today, in the Church. This is a busy age, bustling and active, and this bustling spirit has invaded the Church of God. Its religious performances are many. The Church works at religion with the order, precision and force of real machinery. But too often it works with the heartlessness of the machine. There is much of the treadmill movement in our ceaseless round and routine of religious doings. We pray without praying. We sing without singing with the Spirit and the understanding. We have music without the praise of God being in it, or near it. We go to Church by habit, and come home all too gladly when the benediction is pronounced. We read our accustomed chapter in the Bible, and feel quite relieved when the task is done. We say our prayers by rote, as a schoolboy recites his lesson, and are not sorry when the Amen is uttered. Religion has to do with everything but our hearts. It engages our hands and feet, it takes hold of our voices, it lays its hands on our money, it affects even the postures of our bodies, but it does not take hold of our affections, our desires, our zeal, and make us serious, desperately in earnest, and cause us to be quiet and worshipful in the presence of God. Social affinities attract us to the house of God, not the spirit of the occasion. Church membership keeps us after a fashion decent in outward conduct and with some shadow of loyalty to our baptismal vows, but the heart is not in the thing. It remains cold, formal, and unimpressed amid all this outward performance, while we give ourselves over to self-congratulation that we are doing wonderfully well religiously. Why all these sad defects in our piety? Why this modern perversion of the true nature of the religion of Jesus Christ? Why is the modern type of religion so much like a jewel-case, with the precious jewels gone? Why so much of this handling religion with the hands, often not too clean or unsoiled, and so little of it felt in the heart and witnessed in the life? The great lack of modern religion is the spirit of devotion. We hear sermons in the same spirit with which we listen to a lecture or hear a speech. We visit the house of God just as if it were a common place, on a level with the theatre, the lecture-room or the forum. We look upon the minister of God not as the divinely-called man of God, but merely as a sort of public speaker, on a plane with the politician, the lawyer, or the average speech maker, or the lecturer. Oh, how the spirit of true and genuine devotion would radically change all this for the better! We handle sacred things just as if they were the things of the world. Even the sacrament of the Lord's Supper becomes a mere religious performance, no preparation for it before-hand, and no meditation and prayer afterward. Even the sacrament of Baptism has lost much of its solemnity, and degenerated into a mere form, with nothing specially in it. We need the spirit of devotion, not only to salt our secularities, but to make praying real prayers. We need to put the spirit of devotion into Monday's business as well as in Sunday's worship. We need the spirit of devotion, to recollect always the presence of God, to be always doing the will of God, to direct all things always to the glory of God. The spirit of devotion puts God in all things. It puts God not merely in our praying and Church going, but in all the concerns of life. "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The spirit of devotion makes the common things of earth sacred, and the little things great. With this spirit of devotion, we go to business on Monday directed by the very same influence, and inspired by the same influences by which we went to Church on Sunday. The spirit of devotion makes a Sabbath out of Saturday, and transforms the shop and the office into a temple of God. The spirit of devotion removes religion from being a thin veneer, and puts it into the very life and being of our souls. With it religion ceases to be doing a mere work, and becomes a heart, sending its rich blood through every artery and beating with the pulsations of vigorous and radiant life. The spirit of devotion is not merely the aroma of religion, but the stalk and stem on which religion grows. It is the salt which penetrates and makes savoury all religious acts. It is the sugar which sweetens duty, self-denial and sacrifice. It is the bright colouring which relieves the dullness of religious performances. It dispels frivolity and drives away all skin-deep forms of worship, and makes worship a serious and deep-seated service, impregnating body, soul and spirit with its heavenly infusion. Let us ask in all seriousness, has this highest angel of heaven, this heavenly spirit of devotion, this brightest and best angel of earth, left us? When the angel of devotion has gone, the angel of prayer has lost its wings, and it becomes a deformed and loveless thing. The ardour of devotion is in prayer. In Rev. 4:8, we read: "And they rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." The inspiration and centre of their rapturous devotion is the holiness of God. That holiness of God claims their attention, inflames their devotion. There is nothing cold, nothing dull, nothing wearisome about them or their heavenly worship. "They rest not day nor night." What zeal! What unfainting ardour and ceaseless rapture! The ministry of prayer, if it be anything worthy of the name, is a ministry of ardour, a ministry of unwearied and intense longing after God and after His holiness. The spirit of devotion pervades the saints in heaven and characterizes the worship of heaven's angelic intelligences. No devotionless creatures are in that heavenly world God is there, and His very presence begets the spirit of reverence, of awe, and of filial fear. If we would be partakers with them after death, we must first learn the spirit of devotion on earth before we get there. These living creatures in their restless, tireless, attitude after God, and their rapt devotion to His holiness, are the perfect symbols and illustrations of true prayer and its ardour. Prayer must be aflame. Its ardour must consume. Prayer without fervour is as a sun without light or heat, or as a flower without beauty or fragrance. A soul devoted to God is a fervent soul, and prayer is the creature of that flame. He only can truly pray who is all aglow for holiness, for God, and for heaven. Activity is not strength. Work is not zeal. Moving about is not devotion. Activity often is the unrecognised symptom of spiritual weakness. It may be hurtful to piety when made the substitute for real devotion in worship. The colt is much more active than its mother, but she is the wheel-horse of the team, pulling the load without noise or bluster or show. The child is more active than the father, who may be bearing the rule and burdens of an empire on his heart and shoulders. Enthusiasm is more active than faith, though it cannot remove mountains nor call into action any of the omnipotent forces which faith can command. A feeble, lively, showy religious activity may spring from many causes. There is much running around, much stirring about, much going here and there, in present-day Church life, but sad to say, the spirit of genuine, heartfelt devotion is strangely lacking. If there be real spiritual life, a deep-toned activity will spring from it. But it is an activity springing from strength and not from weakness. It is an activity which has deep roots, many and strong. In the nature of things, religion must show much of its growth above ground. Much will be seen and be evident to the eye. The flower and fruit of a holy life, abounding in good works, must be seen. It cannot be otherwise. But the surface growth must be based on a vigorous growth of unseen life and hidden roots. Deep down in the renewed nature must the roots of religion go which is seen on the outside. The external must have a deep internal groundwork. There must be much of the invisible and the underground growth, or else the life will be feeble and short-lived and the external growth sickly and fruitless. In the Book of the prophet Isaiah these words are written: "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." Isaiah 40:31. This is the genesis of the whole matter of activity and strength of the most energetic, exhaustless and untiring nature. All this is the result of waiting on God. There may be much of activity induced by drill, created by enthusiasm, the product of the weakness of the flesh, the inspiration of volatile, short-lived forces. Activity is often at the expense

of more solid, useful elements, and generally to the total neglect of prayer. To be too busy with God's work to commune with God, to be busy with doing Church work without taking time to talk to God about His work, is the highway to backsliding, and many people have walked therein to the hurt of their immortal souls. Notwithstanding great activity, great enthusiasm, and much hurrah for the work, the work and the activity will be but blindness without the cultivation and the maturity of the graces of prayer. EM Bounds.....

IV. PRAYER, PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

"Dr. A. J. Gordon describes the impression made upon his mind by intercourse with Joseph Rabinowitz, whom Dr. Delitzsch considered the most remarkable Jewish convert since Saul of Tarsus: 'We shall not soon forget the radiance that would come into his face as he expounded the Messianic psalms at our morning or evening worship, and how, as here and there he caught a glimpse of the suffering or glorified Christ, he would suddenly lift his hands and his eyes to heaven in a burst of adoration, exclaiming with Thomas after he had seen the nail-prints, "My Lord, and my God."'—D. M. McIntyre

Prayer, praise and thanksgiving all go in company. A close relationship exists between them. Praise and thanksgiving are so near alike that it is not easy to distinguish between them or define them separately. The Scriptures join these three things together. Many are the causes for thanksgiving and praise. The Psalms are filled with many songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving, all pointing back to the results of prayer. Thanksgiving includes gratitude. In fact thanksgiving is but the expression of an inward conscious gratitude to God for mercies received. Gratitude is an inward emotion of the soul, involuntarily arising therein, while thanksgiving is the voluntary expression of gratitude. Thanksgiving is oral, positive, active. It is the giving out of something to God. Thanksgiving comes out into the open. Gratitude is secret, silent, negative, passive, not showing its being till expressed in praise and thanksgiving. Gratitude is felt in the heart. Thanksgiving is the expression of that inward feeling. Thanksgiving is just what the word itself signifies—the giving of thanks to God. It is giving something to God in words which we feel at heart for blessings received. Gratitude arises from a contemplation of the goodness of God. It is bred by serious meditation on what God has done for us. Both gratitude and thanksgiving point to, and have to do with God and His mercies. The heart is consciously grateful to God. The soul gives expression to that heartfelt gratitude to God in words or acts. Gratitude is born of meditation on God's grace and mercy. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Herein we see the value of serious meditation. "My meditation of him shall be sweet." Praise is begotten by gratitude and a conscious obligation to God for mercies given. As we think of mercies past, the heart is inwardly moved to gratitude. "I love to think on mercies past, And future good implore; And all my cares and sorrows cast On Him whom I adore." Love is the child of gratitude. Love grows as gratitude is felt, and then breaks out into praise and thanksgiving to God: "I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplication." Answered prayers cause gratitude, and gratitude brings forth a love that declares it will not cease praying: "Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." Gratitude and love move to larger and increased praying. Paul appeals to the Romans to dedicate themselves wholly to God, a living sacrifice, and the constraining motive is the mercies of God: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Consideration of God's mercies not only begets gratitude, but induces a large consecration to God of all we have and are. So that prayer, thanksgiving and consecration are all linked together inseparably. Gratitude and thanksgiving always looks back at the past though it may also take in the present. But prayer always looks to the future. Thanksgiving deals with things already received. Prayer deals with things desired, asked for and expected. Prayer turns to gratitude and praise when the things asked for have been granted by God. As prayer brings things to us which beget gratitude and thanksgiving, so praise and gratitude promote prayer, and induce more praying and better praying. Gratitude and thanksgiving forever stand opposed to all murmurings at God's dealings with us, and all complainings at our lot. Gratitude and murmuring never abide in the same heart at the same time. An unappreciative spirit has no standing beside gratitude and praise. And true prayer corrects complaining and promotes gratitude and thanksgiving. Dissatisfaction at one's lot, and a disposition to be discontented with things which come to us in the providence of God, are foes to gratitude and enemies to thanksgiving. The murmurers are ungrateful people. Appreciative men and women have neither the time nor disposition to stop and complain. The bane of the wilderness-journey of the Israelites on their way to Canaan was their proneness to murmur and complain against God and Moses. For this, God was several times greatly grieved, and it took the strong praying of Moses to avert God's wrath because of these murmurings. The absence of gratitude left no room nor disposition for praise and thanksgiving, just as it is so always. But when these same Israelites were brought through the Red Sea dry shod, while their enemies were destroyed, there was a song of praise led by Miriam, the sister of Moses. One of the leading sins of these Israelites was forgetfulness of God and His mercies, and ingratitude of soul. This brought forth murmurings and lack of praise, as it always does. When Paul wrote to the Colossians to let the word of Christ dwell in their hearts richly and to let the peace of God rule therein, he said to them, "and be ye thankful," and adds, "admonishing yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord." Further on, in writing to these same Christians, he joins prayer and thanksgiving together: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." And writing to the Thessalonians, he again joins them in union: "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you." "We thank Thee, Lord of heaven and earth, Who hast preserved us from our birth; Redeemed us oft from death and dread, And with Thy gifts our table spread." Wherever there is true prayer, there thanksgiving and gratitude stand hard by, ready to respond to the answer when it comes. For as prayer brings the answer, so the answer brings forth gratitude and praise. As prayer sets God to work, so answered prayer sets thanksgiving to work. Thanksgiving follows answered prayer just as day succeeds night. True prayer and gratitude lead to full consecration, and consecration leads to more praying and better praying. A consecrated life is both a prayer-life and a thanksgiving life. The spirit of praise was once the boast of the primitive Church. This spirit abode on the tabernacles of these early Christians, as a cloud of glory out of which God shined and spoke. It filled their temples with the perfume of costly, flaming incense. That this spirit of praise is sadly deficient in our present-day congregations must be evident to every careful observer. That it is a mighty force in projecting the Gospel, and its body of vital forces, must be equally evident. To restore the spirit of praise to our congregations should be one of the main points with every true pastor. The normal state of the Church is set forth in the declaration made to God in Psalm 65: "Praise waiteth for thee, O Lord, and unto thee shall the vow be performed." Praise is so distinctly and definitely wedded to prayer, so inseparably joined, that they cannot be divorced. Praise is dependent on prayer for its full volume and its sweetest melody. Singing is one method of praise,

not the highest it is true, but it is the ordinary and usual form. The singing service in our churches has much to do with praise, for according to the character of the singing will be the genuineness or the measure of praise. The singing may be so directed as to have in it elements which deprave and debase prayer. It may be so directed as to drive away everything like thanksgiving and praise. Much of modern singing in our churches is entirely foreign to anything like hearty, sincere praise to God. The spirit of prayer and of true praise go hand in hand. Both are often entirely dissipated by the flippant, thoughtless, light singing in our congregations. Much of the singing lacks serious thought and is devoid of everything like a devotional spirit. Its lustiness and sparkle may not only dissipate all the essential features of worship, but may substitute the flesh for the spirit. Giving thanks is the very life of prayer. It is its fragrance and music, its poetry and its crown. Prayer bringing the desired answer breaks out into praise and thanksgiving. So that whatever interferes with and injures the spirit of prayer necessarily hurts and dissipates the spirit of praise. The heart must have in it the grace of prayer to sing the praise of God. Spiritual singing is not to be done by musical taste or talent, but by the grace of God in the heart. Nothing helps praise so mightily as a gracious revival of true religion in the Church. The conscious presence of God inspires song. The angels and the glorified ones in heaven do not need artistic preceptors to lead them, nor do they care for paid choirs to chime in with their heavenly doxologies of praise and worship. They are not dependent on singing schools to teach them the notes and scale of singing. Their singing involuntarily breaks forth from the heart. God is immediately present in the heavenly assemblies of the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. His glorious presence creates the song, teaches the singing, and impregnates their notes of praise. It is so on earth. God's presence begets singing and thanksgiving, while the absence of God from our congregations is the death of song, or, which amounts to the same, makes the singing lifeless, cold and formal. His conscious presence in our churches would bring back the days of praise and would restore the full chorus of song. Where grace abounds, song abounds. When God is in the heart, heaven is present and melody is there, and the lips overflow out of the abundance of the heart. This is as true in the private life of the believer as it is so in the congregations of the saints. The decay of singing, the dying down and out of the spirit of praise in song, means the decline of grace in the heart and the absence of God's presence from the people. The main design of all singing is for God's ear and to attract His attention and to please Him. It is "to the Lord," for His glory, and to His honour. Certainly it is not for the glorification of the paid choir, to exalt the wonderful musical powers of the singers, nor is it to draw the people to the church, but it is for the glory of God and the good of the souls of the congregation. Alas! How far has the singing of choirs of churches of modern times departed from this idea! It is no surprise that there is no life, no power, no unction, no spirit, in much of the Church singing heard in this day. It is sacrilege for any but sanctified hearts and holy lips to direct the singing part of the service of God's house of prayer. Much of the singing in churches would do credit to the opera house, and might satisfy as mere entertainments, pleasing the ear, but as a part of real worship, having in it the spirit of praise and prayer, it is a fraud, an imposition on spiritually minded people, and entirely unacceptable to God. The cry should go out afresh, "Let all the people praise the Lord," for "it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely." The music of praise, for there is real music of soul in praise, is too hopeful and happy to be denied. All these are in the "giving of thanks." In Philippians, prayer is called "requests." "Let your requests be made known unto God," which describes prayer as an asking for a gift, giving prominence to the thing asked for, making it emphatic, something to be given by God and received by us, and not something to be done by us. And all this is closely connected with gratitude to God, "with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

God does much for us in answer to prayer, but we need from Him many gifts, and for them we are to make special prayer. According to our special needs, so must our praying be. We are to be special and particular and bring to the knowledge of God by prayer, supplication and thanksgiving, our particular requests, the things we need, the things we greatly desire. And with it all, accompanying all these requests, there must be thanksgiving.

It is indeed a pleasing thought that what we are called upon to do on earth, to praise and give thanks, the angels in heaven and the redeemed disembodied spirits of the saints are doing also. It is still further pleasing to contemplate the glorious hope that what God wants us to do on earth, we will be engaged in doing throughout an unending eternity. Praise and thanksgiving will be our blessed employment while we remain in heaven. Nor will we ever grow weary of this pleasing task.

Joseph Addison sets before us, in verse, this pleasing prospect:

"Through every period of my life Thy goodness I'll pursue; And after death, in distant worlds, The pleasing theme renew. "Through all eternity to Thee A grateful song I'll raise; But Oh! eternity's too short To utter all Thy praise."

E. M. Bounds