

Types of Prayers

Invocation at the beginning of church service. The act of invoking or calling upon God for aid, protection, inspiration.

The **benediction** at the end of a church service. The **benediction** is for the pastor or church leader to pronounce a blessing of God on the congregation and to ask for guidance in the days to come. A **benediction** is an official dismissal. "Go with God".

One way to think about prayer in the Bible is to look at the different types of prayers that we find. Perhaps the easiest way to think about the major biblical modes of prayer is through the **acronym "ACTS."** It stands for **Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication**. The four types of prayer that go by these names are found in many places in the Bible. There are other types of prayer in Scripture beyond the four in the ACTS model but for now we will only look at these four.

Prayers of Adoration

A prayer of adoration is a prayer that praises God's goodness and majesty. In the Bible, we find prayers of adoration in the Psalms, which are often called psalms of praise.

Prayers of Confession

A prayer of confession is a searching prayer of the heart. When we confess, we bare our souls before God about our sins and shortcomings. Confession to God is also a model for the kind of mutual confession that believers in the body of Christ are called upon to make to one another (see James 5:16). But ultimately, since all sin is sin against God, we are called to confess our sins to God. A key part of the good news of Jesus is that repentance can bring forgiveness and new life. Indeed, the Bible assures us that sincere confession before God will be met with forgiveness. We see this in 1 John 1:9 which says, "If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (NRSV). So prayers of confession ought to be a regular part of our spiritual lives, as we become transformed into the people God would have us be.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

A prayer of thanksgiving is a prayer that recognizes the good things God gives us and offers thanks for them: our lives, our health, our families, and our faith. The apostle Paul told us, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:16–18 NRSV). A part of what it means to live faithfully is to live out of a deep sense of gratitude for all that God has done for us. Prayers of thanksgiving help us to do that. They give proper thanks to God and also shape us into thankful people at our core.

Prayers of Supplication (Morning Prayer)

A prayer of supplication is a prayer that lifts up requests before God. Supplications are often divided between those requests we make for ourselves (petitions) and those requests we make on behalf of other people (intercessions). God does answer prayer, also we need to be mindful that God's answers to prayer are not always the answers we want God to give!