

## Scripture Songs

We can hide God's Word in our heart and worship Him as He deserves when we sing scripture songs.

### **I Will Enter His Gates**

*Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!*

Psalm 100:4

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart.

I will enter His courts with praise.

I will say this is the day that the Lord has made.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad; He has made me glad.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad; He has made me glad.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

### **This Is the Day**

*This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.* Psalm 118:24

This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made.

We will rejoice, we will rejoice, and be glad in it, and be glad in it.

This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord has made.

### **Blessed Be the Name**

*Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore!* Psalm 113:2

Blessed be the name, blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord!

Blessed be the name, blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord!

Glory to the name, glory to the name, glory to the name of the Lord!

Glory to the name, glory to the name, glory to the name of the Lord!

### **Behold What Manner of Love**

*See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God . . .* 1 John 3:1

Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us.

Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us.

That we should be called the sons of God.

That we should be called the sons of God.

## Worship – Praying Together

With the Bible as our guide, we are able to worship God in a way that pleases Him. We've learned that Bible-directed worship includes listening to the Word being read and preached, praying, singing, and celebrating the sacraments. Last week we thought about preaching. This week we'll learn more about how public prayer is an act of worship that honors God.

Before we talk about praying in public worship services, we should understand a few things about prayer in general. Prayer is simply talking to God, and yet—for many people—prayer isn't very simple at all. Since we can't see God as we talk to Him, we might have a hard time focusing our thoughts on Him, or we might not really feel like He is listening. And since God already knows all our thoughts, we might not be sure what we should say in prayer. Thankfully, we can be sure that God wants us to come to Him in prayer (Philippians 4:6) and that the Holy Spirit will help us as we pray (Romans 8:26). Plus, we can learn from the many prayers in the Bible that our prayers should include these four elements:

- adoration – praising God for who He is,
- confession – admitting our sins to God and asking His forgiveness,
- thanksgiving – praising God for His blessings, and
- supplication – asking God for what we and others need.

The acronym ACTS can help us to remember these four parts of prayer. As with anything else, the more we pray, the more comfortable we will become with prayer and, as Richard L. Pratt Jr. writes “we can discover an ever-increasing assurance that our prayers are reaching God and that He is giving us His personal attention.”

Hopefully, you can see a little better what prayer is and why it is important for each and every believer. But why do we listen to others praying in public worship? Isn't prayer a private conversation between the heavenly Father and His child? Again, we look to the Bible to see what God expects from us, and in scripture we find that many times God uses leaders to pray on behalf of his people or to lead people in a time of prayer. Read these biblical prayers and talk about how the person praying includes adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication and how he uses the words “we” and “us” –not just “I” and “me” –to speak to God for the whole body of believers, not just for himself.

1 Chronicles 29:10-20 – David prays in the presence of all the assembly (v10) and the people follow his example (v20).

Daniel 9:1-19 – Daniel praises God for who He is and what He's done. Then, even though he is praying alone, Daniel confesses on behalf of the entire nation of Israel.

Matthew 6:5-13 – Jesus teaches the disciples to address God as *our* Father and to ask Him to supply *our* daily bread and forgive *our* debts.

We also see in Acts 2:42 that God's people devoted themselves “to the breaking of bread and *the prayers.*” These were the public prayers used when God's people gathered. In churches today,

congregations recite memorized prayers (like the Lord's Prayer) or prayers that are written out and read aloud together. In this way we unite our hearts and minds as we come before God in prayer.

We know then that public prayer is an act of worship that is pleasing to God. But more than that, as we see in David's and Jesus's examples above, public prayer *teaches* believers how to pray. When we listen to the pastor and elders pray during a worship service, we are learning from the examples of godly men how we should pray. And as we pray together as a congregation, we have the opportunity to see how God uses those prayers to accomplish His purposes. This helps our faith in God to grow and causes us to experience God's grace that He pours out to us as we lift our hearts to Him.

So when it's time for prayer in the worship service, read along thoughtfully or listen carefully to what is being prayed. Listen for words that adore God for who He is and words that thank Him for what He has done. Listen for confession of sin and for supplication on behalf of those with particular needs. When you pay attention to what is being prayed, you can add your silent "Amen" in the end to express to God that you are praying too.

## **Activity – Memorizing The Lord's Prayer**

The Lord's Prayer has been used by Christians in worship since the early days of the church. Traditionally the words from Matthew 6:9-13 are combined with an ending that comes from 1 Chronicles 29:11-12. Memorizing the Lord's Prayer will allow you to join with the congregation when it is recited in worship services and can be a guide for you as you pray on your own.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name.  
Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For your is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

## Hymn of Praise – “Come, My Soul, Thy Suit Prepare”

Near the end of his life, the writer of this hymn, John Newton said, “There are two things I’ll never forget: that I was a great sinner, and that Jesus Christ is a greater Savior!” Many people are familiar with Newton’s dramatic conversion story: he was the captain of a slave ship who became a minister and fought for the end of slavery. The awe and gratitude that Newton felt toward His Savior is evident in his most famous hymn, “Amazing Grace,” but it can be seen in this text too. For Newton, prayer was a wonderful gift from the Lord to His people, and through prayer Newton experienced a deep, personal, and joyful connection with His Savior. In the first stanza, Newton speaks to his own soul, telling himself to get his prayer requests ready (thy suit prepare) because Jesus loves to hear and answer the prayers of His people.

Come, my soul, thy suit prepare:  
Jesus loves to answer prayer;  
he himself has bid thee pray,  
therefore will not say thee nay;  
therefore will not say thee nay.

Thou art coming to a King,  
large petitions with thee bring;  
for his grace and pow'r are such,  
none can ever ask too much;  
none can ever ask too much.

With my burden I begin:  
Lord, remove this load of sin;  
let thy blood, for sinners spilt,  
set my conscience free from guilt;  
set my conscience free from guilt.

While I am a pilgrim here,  
let thy love my spirit cheer;  
as my Guide, my Guard, my Friend,  
lead me to my journey's end;  
lead me to my journey's end.

When we sing this hymn, we are reminding ourselves what a great privilege it is to come before God in prayer and what an amazing truth it is that God hears and answers us! We sing of His Sovereign power, His wonderful mercy, and His ongoing work in us as He guides and protects us all our lives.