

# Prayer that Brings Glory to God

**By Kim Butts**

The Westminster Shorter Catechism asks and answers many questions about the Christian faith. The first question asks: “What is the chief end of man?”

The answer? “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”

The second question in the Catechism is, “What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?”

The answer? “The word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.”

If our main purpose is to glorify God—and Scripture is the way God has given us to bring Him glory—it follows that when we pray according to Scripture, God will receive glory!

## **Giving Voice to Prayers**

As an example, let’s look at the ACTS acronym for prayer that most of us have used: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication.

The Book of Psalms (and many other Scriptures) can help give voice to our scriptural prayers that bring glory to God. The practice of praying the Word of God assures we are praying in the perfect will of God.

**1. Adoration: We give Him glory through our worship and praise.**

Speak out this prayer: “All your works praise you, Lord; your faithful people extol you. They tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom” (Psalm 145:10–12).

*Scripture-informed prayer:* We give You praise, Lord, for You alone do things we cannot even comprehend. We give praise to Your glorious name forever! Father, the heavens You created declare Your glory. The skies proclaim the work of Your hands. May the whole earth be filled with Your glory! (Psalm 72:18–20, 19:1, 29:2).

## **2. Confession: We give Him glory when we confess our sin and change our behavior.**

God gets glory when we recognize our sin, confess it to Him, repent, and turn our lives and hearts around. God then forgives and washes us clean “so that” we can teach the ways of Jesus to others who struggle with sin.

When we pray the Word, it is useful to personalize the pronouns: “Help us, God our Savior, for the glory of your name; deliver [me] and forgive [my] sins for your name’s sake” (Psalm 79:9).

*Scripture-informed prayer:* Loving Father, help me acknowledge my sin to You rather than ignore it or try to cover it up. May I be quick to confess my wrongdoing and receive Your amazing forgiveness. Please keep me from my desires and temptation to sin intentionally when I know it grieves Your heart. Protect me so that my sins will not rule over me. I want my life to bring You glory (Psalm 19:13, 32:5).

Psalm 51 is an amazing prayer from the lips of King David, following his sinful behavior with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband. Take time to pray through this deeply heartfelt prayer, replacing David’s sin with your own.

### **3. Thanksgiving: God receives glory when we are thankful.**

God's Word clearly teaches that we are to bring glory to God through our thanks: "I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving" (Psalm 69:30).

*Scripture-informed prayer:* Lord God Almighty, thank You that I am a sheep of Your pasture. I will enter Your gates with thanksgiving and Your courts with praise, giving thanks to Your holy name because of Your righteousness! I will give thanks to You and tell others of Your unfailing love and the wonderful things You have done in my life. I give thanks to You because You are good and because Your love goes on forever and ever (Psalm 100:3–4, 7:17, 9:1, 107:8, 118:19, 21).

**4. Supplication (prayer, request, plea, petition): We give God glory when our prayers become more about God's Kingdom than our own needs.**

"So that" prayers will transform a prayer into one that glorifies God and His Kingdom. Psalm 67:1–2 is a powerful example: "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us [this part is about us]—so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations [about Him]."

*Scripture-informed prayer:* Lord, may Your name alone receive glory because of Your love and faithfulness. May Your faithful people tell of the glory of Your Kingdom and speak of Your might *so that* all people may know of Your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of Your Kingdom (Psalm 145:10–12).

May every prayer bring glory to Your Name and to Your Kingdom.

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