

We Give Thanks and Praise

This prayer service is best used at the conclusion of Chapters 3 and 4 of *Jesus Christ: His Mission and Ministry*.

Opening Reading

Leader: We gather to remember and give thanks for him who came to teach, reconcile, save, and reveal—Jesus, our brother and Lord.

Reader 1: A reading from the Letter to the Philippians (2:5-11)

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Invocations of Thanksgiving

Leader: Indeed for Jesus, all thanks to God are due. Let us offer our thanks and praise.

Take turns praying the following invocations. The response to each is "We offer thanks and praise."

For Jesus, acknowledged in the writings of the Gentiles . . .

For Jesus, the Promise of Ages . . .

For Jesus, gracious gift of the Father . . .

For Jesus, the Good News proclaiming and the Good News proclaimed . . .

For Jesus, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary . . .

For Jesus, King of Kings born in a stable, whose raiment was swaddling clothes . . .

For Jesus, heralded by angels, manifested to shepherds, adored by Magi . . .

For Jesus, hunted by Herod, exiled to Egypt . . .

For Jesus, nurtured in Nazareth . . .

For Jesus, teaching in the Temple, growing in good judgment and grace . . .
For Jesus, baptized in the Jordan, thrice tempted in the wilderness . . .
For Jesus, choosing disciples from the common lot . . .
For Jesus, siding always with the poor and the outcast . . .
For Jesus, teaching, healing, and forgiving . . .
For Jesus, offering himself in life-giving bread and saving cup . . .
For Jesus, suffering and dying to vanquish our sins . . .
For Jesus, rising for our justification . . .
For Jesus, ascending to the Father and sending us the Holy Spirit . . .
For Jesus, intimate of Abba God . . .
For Jesus, the great Amen . . .
For Jesus, revealer of the God who is three-in-one . . .

Hymn of Praise

Join in singing—or listen to a recording of—a hymn such as “At the Name of Jesus” or “To Jesus Christ, Our Sovereign King.”

Gospel Prayer

Reader 2: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (18:10-14)

Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, “O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.” But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, “O God, be merciful to me a sinner.” I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: The prayer of the humble tax collector forms the basis for a prayer central to Christianity—the Jesus Prayer, which has been practiced within the Church for more than 1,000 years. The prayer itself is just seven words: “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.” A longer form of the prayer also exists: “Lord

Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” The most common form, however, is the shorter, seven-word version. Let’s all offer that prayer together.

All: Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.

Leader: In his first letter to the Thessalonians (5:17) Saint Paul writes, “Pray without ceasing.” For centuries, Christians have taken Paul’s words to heart through the practice of the Jesus prayer. Perhaps the easiest way to offer this powerful prayer is with our breathing: Breathe in while thinking *Lord Jesus Christ*, and then exhale while thinking *have mercy on me*. Let us try this prayer again. I’ll say the words. You just think them and breathe in and out with the words.

Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.

Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.

Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.

Sign of Peace

Share a sign of peace. Then depart in silence.