

Praise, Thanksgiving and Prayer (as a sacrifice)

'By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name' –Hebrews 13:15.

- Thanksgiving: gratitude for what God has done
- Praise: adoration of God for who He is
- Prayer: our innermost interaction with God which may include thanksgiving, praise or our petitions

***Scripture instructs us to offer all three above with a sacrificial heart or as an offering to God (Hebrews 13:15; Psalm 107:22; Psalm 116:17; Psalm 141:2, etc).**

-What does it mean to offer praise, thanksgiving, prayer as a sacrifice to God?

- A sacrifice is costly

***Two things God desires for an acceptable sacrifice**

- Obedience (1 Samuel 15:22; Jeremiah 7:22-23)
- Mercy (Micah 6:6; Mathew 9:13; Mathew 12:7)

It is clear from above verses that God desires an agreeable state in a man's inner life before even his thanksgiving, praise and prayer are acceptable before Him (Psalm 66:18- *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*). In fact, the Bible calls the sacrifice of the wicked man an abomination before God (Proverbs 15:8; 21:27).

God delights in the praise, thanksgiving and prayer of His people, but He searches the heart first. Everyone who receives anything good from God is likely to thank Him (receiving a new-born child, for example), but God desires above all and accepts with delight the sacrificial thanksgiving, praise and prayer of a heart fully submitted to Him in Christ Jesus; one living in obedience to His word, showing mercy to others and walking in humility before Him.