

DISCIPLINE FOR GODLINESS

DISCIPLINE OF DEVOTION

Worship

The height of devotion is reached when reverence and contemplation produce passionate worship, which in turn breaks forth in thanksgiving and praise in word and song. **Jonathan Edwards** described his experience like this:

“I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break... I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations.... Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent.”

As we worship we can pray or read or sing God’s Word back to Him. The Psalms are perfect for this because they are a worship manual. For example, [Psalms 146–150](#), the last five Psalms, begin and end with “**hallelujah**” (i.e., “**praise the Lord!**”). And [Psalm 150](#) says, “**praise the Lord**” in every sentence.

There are some fabulous New Testament hymns as well — for example, those in Luke, beginning with Mary’s Magnificat ([Luke 1:46–55](#)). There is also the Christological hymn of [Colossians 1:15–18](#), and the Incarnational hymns in [John 1](#) and [Philippians 2](#), and the heavenly hymns of [Revelation 4](#) and [5](#).

And, of course, there is the music of the Church. **Bach’s** music is universally regarded as Christian meditation transposed into musical form. The hymns and spiritual songs of the Church are the richest sources of poetic praise set to music, with words by the likes of **Bernard of Clairvaux**, **Paul Gerhardt**, **Charles Wesley**, **Isaac Watts**, **George Herbert**, and **John Donne**. In addition, we could mention the beautiful Scripture songs which have risen in our day — so many conveniently in the first person.

Our private devotion ought to rise in lyrical extemporaneous praise from our heart’s adoration: “Lord, I love You, and I thank You for _____. Lord, glorify Your name through me.... ” We must prayerfully read and sing Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs back to Him.

Bible Study: Discipline for Godliness

Discipleship Series:

Pastor Eddie Idefonso

*May the mind of Christ my Savior
Live in me from day to day,
By His love and power controlling
All I do and say.*

—**Kate B. Williamson**

*We taste Thee, O Thou Living Bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still,
We drink of Thee, the Fountainhead,
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.*

—**Bernard of Clairvaux**

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

—**Isaac Watts**

*Thou art worthy,
Thou art worthy,
Thou art worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory, glory and honor,
Glory and honor and pow'r;
For Thou hast created,
Hast all things created,
Thou hast created all things,
And for thy pleasure they are created:
For Thou art worthy, O Lord.*

—**Pauline Michael Mills**

*I love you, Lord
And I lift my voice
To worship you, oh my soul rejoice.
Take joy, my king
In what you hear
May it be a sweet, sweet sound
In your ear.*

—**Laurie Klein**

Obviously the possibilities of praise are endless and exponential — a truth we will live out for all eternity.