

A Focus on God's Attributes

I've always been able to hold up my end of a conversation without difficulty. Except, that is, when it came to prayer, and particularly when I tried to express my praise to God. Attempting to begin and end my prayer times with praise and adoration, I often found myself flat-out speechless. I wanted to praise God with all that was within me, but I couldn't think of one sensible thing to say. I recently read a book called *Invading the Privacy of God* by Cecil "Cec" Murphey. The book describes how Cec's prayer life was revolutionized when he settled on the practice of praying God's attributes as praise. I began imitating that practice in my own times of praise, and over the course of a few months, I developed a "program of praise" that has proven wonderfully helpful. It has opened a door for me, and my praises to God now flow freely from my heart and lips during prayer. I focus on one attribute of my awesome God and Father each day, using the Scripture-based sentences as "praise starters." At the end of each month, I start the list over, combining traits when the month is shorter than 31 days.

1. God the Creator. "Creator God, I praise You because 'You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship You.'" (Nehemiah 9:6)
2. The Only God. "God, I praise You because You are 'the LORD, and there is no other; apart from [You] there is no God.'" (Isaiah 45:5)
3. The Almighty God. "'O LORD God Almighty, who is like You? You are mighty, O LORD, and Your faithfulness surrounds You.'" (Psalm 89:8)
4. The Everlasting Father, the Ancient of Days. "I praise You, Lord, as the 'Ancient of Days' (Dan. 7:9), the 'Everlasting Father' (Isaiah 9:6), who lives forever and ever."
5. A Loving God. "I praise You because You are a loving God, whose very nature is love."
(1 John 4:16)
6. A God of Justice. "Lord, I praise You and magnify You, who is 'just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.'" (Romans 3:26)
7. A Faithful God. "Heavenly Father, I give You my praise and adoration, because You are a 'faithful God, keeping [Your] covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love [You] and keep [Your] commands.'" (Deuteronomy 7:9)
8. A Merciful God. "'You are a gracious and merciful God' (Neh. 9:31), and I praise You for Your great mercy." Where is the end quotation? Is there another Scripture reference or does the previous one need to be moved here?
9. God, My Refuge, My Fortress. "I praise You, Lord, for You are 'my mighty rock, my refuge.'" (Psalm 62:7)
10. A Patient, Persevering God. "Father, I praise You because You are 'patient with [Your children], not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.'" (II Peter 3:9) Thank You for Your patience with me."
11. Eternal, Saving God, "I give praise to You, Father, 'the only God our Savior.' To You 'be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore.'" (Jude 25)
12. The Holy One. "Holy, holy, holy [are You] Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."
(Rev. 4:8)
13. A Personal God. "I praise You, God, because You are a personal God, who gives me the honor of knowing You personally, even inviting me to feast at Your kingdom's table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." (Matthew 8:11)
14. A Giving God. "All praise and honor be Yours, O God, because You are a generous God, who did not even stop short of giving Your own Son." (John 3:16)
15. A Providing God. "I praise You today, Lord, as my Jehovah-Jireh (the Lord Will Provide), who makes all grace abound in me and generously provides all I need." (II Corinthians 9:8)
16. God, My Shepherd. "I bless Your name and praise You as my Jehovah-Rohi (The Lord My

Shepherd), who will shepherd me and guide me in the paths of righteousness for Your name's sake." (Psalm 23:1-3)

17. God, My Victory. "Praise to You, my God, because You are my Jehovah-Nissi (The Lord My Banner), God, my victory, 'who always leads [me] in triumphal procession in Christ.'" (II Corinthians 2:14)

18. God, My Peace. "I praise You with all my heart, Lord, because You are my Jehovah-Shalom (The Lord Our Peace), 'the God of peace [who] will soon crush Satan under [my] feet.'" (Romans 16:20)

19. The God Who Heals. "Father, I praise You because You are the Lord who heals me." (Exodus 15:26)

20. The God of All Comfort. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort." (II Corinthians 1:3)

21. The God of Miracles. "Lord, I praise You because 'You are the God who performs miracles; You display Your power among the peoples.'" (Psalm 77:14)

22. A Forgiving God. "I want to bless You with praise, Father, because 'You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.'" (Nehemiah 9:17)

23. The Burden Bearer. "Praise be to the Lord, to God [my] Savior, who daily bears [my] burdens." (Psalm 68:19)

24. A Faithful God. "I praise You because 'Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the skies' (Psalm 36:5), and 'great is Your faithfulness.'" (Lamentations 3:23)

25. King of Kings and Lord of Lords. "All honor and praise be to You, my God, 'the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light.'" (I Timothy 6:15)

26. God the Liberator. "I will praise You because 'You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD.'" (Psalm 70:5)

27. The Lifter of My Head. "Father God, I praise You because 'You are a shield around me, O LORD; You bestow glory on me and lift up my head' when I am weary or despised." (Psalm 3:3)

28. God of Light. "I praise You, Lord, because You are 'my light and my salvation' (Psalm 27:1), and because You know 'what lies in darkness, and light dwells with [You].'" (Daniel 2:22)

29. God of Joy. "I give You praise, O Lord, because 'You have granted [me] eternal blessings and made [me] glad with the joy of Your presence.'" (Psalm 21:6)

30. The God Who Answers Prayer. "I praise and honor You, Father, because You are a God who loves to answer prayer and who begins to answer even before I pray." (Isaiah 65:24)

31. The God of All the Earth. "I praise and adore You, Lord, as 'the Holy One of Israel . . . [my] Redeemer . . . the God of all the earth.'" (Isaiah. 54:5)

Following this "praise program" has energized my praise life, helping me to worship and adore God more plentifully and purposefully in prayer. It has also enlarged my vision and awareness of the praiseworthy God I love and serve and, I believe, increased the evidence of His godly character in my life. I pray that it may do the same for you.

A Vocabulary of Praise

Goal: To spend an entire prayer meeting praising God for who He is.

Instruction:

Talk about the many things that scripture describes God as being. Begin to praise God for being these things. Spend the entire hour focusing on the attributes of God rather than asking Him for anything. Have different people come up and lead in a prayer of thanksgiving for who God is.

Example: "Lord, I praise you because you are Jehovah-Jireh, my provider..."