



## *Dear Friends,*

In last week's sermon, I said that prayer is not speech that we initiate. Rather, to pray is to speak God's word back to him.

Have you ever wondered why we begin our church services with a reading from the Bible before we pray? We do that because we believe all reality begins with God's word. That's the case, whether it's the universe which was brought into existence by God's command (Hebrews 11:3), or the Christian who is a new creation that has "been born again...through the living and enduring word of God." (1 Peter 2:23) **The prayer after the Bible reading is intended to be a response to what we've just heard God say to us in the Bible.** We answer God back (in the best sense) with God's own words!

How might you do that in your own prayer life? Something I've found helpful is to read the Book of Psalms every couple of years. For the first time ever, this year I've decided to write down my prayers in a journal. So, what I do is read a Psalm, and then write down my prayer. I often focus on just one verse that grabs my attention, and shape part of my written prayer around that verse. I like the writing process because it helps me to slow down, and think about what I will say to God – though let me be clear, my written prayers are between God and me only, so they don't have to be well written. The aim of the exercise is to reflect on God's word, and to speak it back to him in a way that is also connected to what's going on for me and in my life.

How are you speaking God's word back to him in your prayers? If you'd like to send me an email about what you're doing, I'd love to hear from you.

God Bless  
Mark Adams