

Introduction: (“Worshipful praise and prayer is our response to the person of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the acknowledgement of God’s greatness.”)

What is prayer? The common word for prayer in the Old Testament is (palal), which means to “fall” or “to prostrate before” someone. It often signifies intercessory prayer. In the New Testament, the most common words are (euchomai) and (deomai), (euchomai) and its cognate (proseuchomai) are more general terms for prayer, while (deomai) has a specific idea of seeking for a particular need. Prayer is more than talking to God. It is intimacy with God. It is a reflection of our desire to know God. Prayer draws us closer to God, and it leads us away from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Praylessness is one of the greatest sins of American Christians. One of the greatest hindrances to worship, evangelism, transformation of lives, and community impact in our day is a lack of effective biblical prayer for evangelistic purposes.

But to many prayer meetings are like organ recitals. We pray for hearts, livers, and other organs. Very little praying is done for kingdom needs and desires. How much of our time is spent praying specifically for lost people, for laborers, and for God to honor himself.

R.A. Torrey summarized the significance of prayer: “Our whole life should be a life of prayer. We should walk in constant communion with God. There should be a constant looking upward to God. We should walk so habitually in His presence that even when we awake in the night it would be the most rational thing for us to speak to Him in thanksgiving and petition.”

S.D. Gordon said, “You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed.” Prayer is foundational to the Christian life.

“Entering God’s presence should impress believers with His worth. A sense of awe and reverence is the natural response to the presence of the greatest being there is. When believers meditate on who God is, a feeling of esteem for God fills their hearts. By concentrating on the perfection of God’s being, believers clear their minds of the clutter from daily life that distracts them from sensing God’s presence. Because God is spirit, He desires that His children worship Him ‘in spirit and in truth’ (John 4:23,24). God must be valued above all else as we approach Him in prayer.” (Newton, Gary C., *Growing Toward Spiritual Maturity*, Evangelical Training Association, 2008, pp.40.)

Effective worshipful prayer is God the Father focused, Jesus Christ focused, and Holy Spirit focused.

Sermon Title: The Fundamental Principle of Worship Part II

Sermon Text: Various Scriptures

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to practice the essentials of effective worshipful prayer.

Sermon Proposition: There are 3 essentials of effective worshipful prayer.

I. The effective worshipful heart of prayer should be God the Father focused. **Ps. 95**

This “enthronement psalm” calls for the people to acknowledge that the Lord is a great King above the gods. (Other enthronement psalms are 47; 93; 96-99)

After having exhorted the congregation to worship their Creators, the psalmist warned them against unbelief as in the days of the wilderness wanderings when God’s rest was not experienced.

A. Effective worshipful prayer should be worship-oriented. V.1-2

Psalm 27:4 One *thing* I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

B. Effective worshipful prayer should be God-oriented. V.3-7a

1. 95:1 Worship the Lord for His deliverance by singing.
2. 95:2 Worship the Lord for His deliverance by thanksgiving.
3. 95:3-5 Worship the Lord for His deliverance by recognizing His majesty.
4. 95:6-7a Worship the Lord for His deliverance by His Shepherding His people.
5. 95:7b-11 Worship the Lord for His deliverance by His faithfulness to His people.

The names given to the places reflect the incidents. Meribah (cf. Pss. 81:7; 106:32) means “style” and Messah means “testing” for the people strove with the Lord and tested Him. So God swore that they could not enter the land, but must perish in the wilderness.

The people of God must not resist His voice calling them to trust and obey. In the Bible the word hearts often means people's wills. To harden one's heart meant to refuse to obey. If this psalm's hearers also disobeyed through unbelief, God would keep them from attaining rest in the land. Notice the warning to Christians in the New Testament (Hebrews 3:7-12). In its fullest sense, that rest signifies the Lord's coming kingdom on earth, when believers will experience spiritual and eternal rest in the Lord. Believers, of course, enter that rest positionally when they cease from their works and trust in Him.

Psalm 5:2 Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, For to You I will pray.

Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you¹, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve².'"

C. Effective worshipful prayer should be **action**-oriented. V.7b-11

1. Bowing the knee - **Ephesians 3:14** For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ¹,
2. Looking up - **Psalm 5:3** My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct *it* to You, And I will look up.
3. Lifting the soul up - **Psalm 25:1** To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
4. Lifting up the heart - **Lamentations 3:41** Let us lift our hearts and hands To God in heaven.

II. The effective worshipful heart of prayer should be **Jesus Christ** focused. **John 5:17-30**

A. Effective worshipful prayer is Christ-focused because He is equal with God in **nature**. V.17-18

Acts 7:59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

John 14:13 "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** "If you ask¹ anything in My name, I will do *it*."

John 15:16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

John 16:23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. **24** "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Ephesians 2:18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Hebrews 10:19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

B. Effective worshipful prayer is Christ-focused because He is equal with God in **power**. V.19-21

C. Effective worshipful prayer is Christ-focused because He is equal with God in **authority**. V.22-30

III. The effective worshipful heart of prayer should be **Holy Spirit** focused.

A. The worshipper is **adopted** to pray in the Spirit. (Rom. 8:15-17)

Many bible students see no difference between the word translated "sons" in 8:14 and the word translated "children" in verse 16. In verse 16 the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence attests the believer's birth relationship to God (tekna "children" mean "born ones").

But in verse 14 the Holy Spirit's control and direction attests the believer's privileges in God's family as a "son" (huios) means a child mature enough to take on adult family privileges and responsibilities.

A son in God's family is led by God's Spirit. The word translated sonship in v.16 (huios) means "placing as a son" and is frequently translated adoption. Therefore Christians can approach God in an intimate way calling His Abba, Father. "Abba" is a Greek and English translation of the Aramaic word for father.

Romans 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

Galatians 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

- B. The worshipper is **built** to pray in the Spirit. (Jude 1:20)
1. The worshipper builds themselves up, by progressing in their knowledge and understanding of God and the Christian faith.
 2. The worshipper is to pray in the Spirit, by praying out of hearts and souls that are indwelt by the Spirit, illuminated by the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit. It is the idea of praying in the power of the Holy Spirit.
 3. The worshipper is to keep himself in God's love. The believer is nurtured as he is occupied with God's love for Him, and is in fellowship with Him.
 4. The worshipper is to expectantly wait on Christ's return

Jude 1:20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

1 Corinthians 14:15 What is *the conclusion* then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.

- C. The worshipper is **instructed** to pray in the Spirit. (Ephesians 6:18)

The worshipper is to pray in the power and sphere of the Spirit. When the enemy attacks and on all occasions Christians are to pray continually in the Spirit, with all manner of prayers and requests, which suggest the thoroughness and intensity of our praying.

Ephesians 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

- D. The worshipper is empowered to pray in the Spirit. (Rom. 8:26-27)

These verses point out that believers are not left to their own resources or strength in their weaknesses as a result of suffering. The Spirit helps (present tense) “keeps on helping” in our weaknesses.

It is not to be understood that the Spirit helps in those occasional times when Christians are weak; we live in a constant state of weakness and the Spirit continually helps.

The Greek word for weakness (*astheneia*) may include physical, emotional, and spiritual disability or weakness.

In our weakness both the content and the manner of proper effectual prayer eludes us, the Holy Spirit comes to our rescue and intercedes (present tense) “keeps on interceding”. He makes approaches and appeals to God on our behalf.

Even though the Spirit's words are not expressed, the Father knows what He is thinking, because there is intimacy within the Trinity. (Heb. 7:25)

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us¹ with groanings which cannot be uttered.