

Worship - Prayer

Worship is where we give honor to God. It's this posture of love and adoration, the bowing of your heart to something greater than yourself.

Worship is not just a song. It's not just a gathering of God's people. True worship is a lifestyle.

This morning in the Worship Series, we're going to look at prayer. Do you pray, not just for your wants and needs in life, but as worship? Do you pray in a way that honors God? That says, "I love and adore you Jesus?"

"God I want to know you more than I want to know the answers to all my questions." ~ Pete Ohlin

See church, that's the thing we often forget in prayer. Prayer is worship and worship is more about the One you worship than it is about your needs or questions.

"We keep wanting the good Lord to show up in our name, but for some reason He insists on only showing up in His." ~ Vance Brown

Right now I know everyone joining us this morning has prayer needs. There are things that weigh on your mind. There are areas in your life that are in pieces. Listen...everyone's life is turned upside down right now...we're all being forced to live differently than we want to!

But can I tell you that this is a call to draw close to Jesus? These areas in our lives...these concerns...needs even...they are temporary. I don't just mean temporary as in our economy will pick back up (but it will). I don't mean temporary as in we will be able to gather again at church, at our kids sporting events, in each other's homes, in restaurants (although we will).

I'm talking about the fact that as you look around, most of your LIFE is temporary. The things that tend to be the heart of even our prayer life are things that will not stand through the fire. This is a call to get Kingdom minded...to develop an eternal focus.

Jesus' disciples asked Him one day, "Lord, teach us to pray." This is in Luke 11, but if you look back in Luke 10, Jesus had sent them out, 70 people in pairs. He sent them out to pray, to heal the sick and cast out demons. Yet here they are just a couple days later saying "Lord, teach us to pray."

Guys as I read this, my heart gets happy...they knew "HOW" to pray...they have been doing it. They have seen results. They have seen some pretty cool things in response to prayer. Good things.

What I see in the disciples is hunger. Hunger for eternity. Hunger for the Kingdom. I see this request to learn how to pray as a desire to know how to worship!

God has done great things...but how do we honor Him? Love and adore Him?

Matthew 6:9 (NKJV)

In this manner, therefore, pray:
Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.

“Our Father in heaven. “

This shows the intimacy of prayer. It's not a salvation prayer, someone who has never prayed or rather, never been born again, doesn't pray "Father", they might just say "God". (that's ok)

Father is a name of endearment. It expresses worship and adoration for your Father....meaning you are His child. While God CREATED everyone, not everyone is His CHILD.

John 1:12 (NKJV)

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

IF you have received Jesus, if you have been born again by giving your life to Jesus and He is your Lord, then He is your Savior and you have become a child of God.

Ephesians 2:13 (NKJV)

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

See a son or daughter is brought near, is pulled in close and secured tightly.

Galatians 4:6 (NKJV)

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

Abba, Father. Only a child of God would cry Abba Father, Dearest Father, Daddy....

We must know that when we pray, when we come before the Lord and pour out our heart, good or bad, we are talking to our Father. He's not some far off God, not if you belong to Jesus. He's near.

So when you receive Jesus as Savior you can boldly, confidently pray "Our Father...". You know when you pray "Our Father" you aren't saying "Our" like mine and yours (although that's true).

When you say "Our Father" you are saying mine and Jesus' Father. Because Jesus is the link to the Father, it's through Him you have access AND relationship. He paid membership dues. He punches your frequent visitor card. Jesus is the gate to the Father. Jesus is how you become a part of God's FAMILY !

Do you need to know Him like this? You don't need to wait until the end of this message to hit your knees and cry out to Jesus, He's waiting for you! He is the Way, the Truth, the Life, not one comes to the Father but through Jesus! Ask Him to save you now!

If you know God in this intimate way, as a Father. It changes everything. It shifts the relationship.

Because you move from seeing God as a genie that can grant wishes to a loving Father who CAN do anything for you but always does what's best for you.

When I was a kid, sometimes I would want some money (ok always, I would want some money). The first thing I would do is ask my dad. Why?

1. Because he loves me. 2. Because He had money.

And sometimes he would give me \$5, and I would be happy. Other times he would tell me no, not today, not right now...so what would I do? Probably stomp off and pout...but then I'd ask again later. And he might say "go pull weeds or mow the grass" then I'll give it to you. Or he might say "go ask the neighbor if you can mow their grass for \$5"

Now in all of these things, all of these options, one way or another I'd usually be able to get the \$5 I was wanting. My dad gave it to me or provided a way for me to get it. Because he is my dad. He loves me, wants good for me.

Did I always like it? NOPE. Sometimes I really disliked it. But he did it for my good. Even though I didn't always understand at the time.

But the next time I was in need, guess where I went first? Not to the neighbors, but to my dad. It always came back to that relationship. Because he's my dad, I'll go to him before others. I trust him no matter the answer. He wants good for me.

We've got to come to God first because of who He is. Our Father. We must stand on the truth that there is no one like Him. He is completely "other." He is holy.

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.

His name is holy. It's set apart from every other name.

This is important church...there are people who will say it doesn't matter who you pray to because all roads lead to God, or they are all different names for the same God, we all worship the same God in different forms....NOPE "We" don't....

My God has a name that is set apart from every other name. And there is no one like Him.

My God is alive! My God died on a cross to save people from their sin and then He rose from the grave so that we could live with Him forever! And His name is Jesus!

And it does matter who you pray to because you worship who you pray to! And who you worship CERTAINLY matters:

Luke 4:5-8 (NKJV)

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. 7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

If you should worship only the Lord your God, and serve Him only....you should pray to Him ONLY.

Anything else you pray to is dead or demonic. Yeah I know that's a bold statement but it's true.

Above all things, I am here to preach the truth and lead you to Jesus. And today you've got to know that prayer matters. How exactly we pray is much less important than who we pray to and our relationship to Him.

Our world needs hope today. But it doesn't need false hope! Buddha is false hope. Allah is false hope. Government is false hope. Systems are false hope.

Just encouraging people to pray is not enough. They need to be introduced to Jesus. Maybe they need RE-introduced to Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

This sounds great...but what good is this scripture if you don't know God as your Father who is holy and unlike any other?

And what access do you have if you don't come through Jesus?

We need hope. Some would say that hope is this feeling that we will get what we want or that things will turn out ok...but I think that's worldly hope.

In Jesus, hope is expectation. I have an expectancy to receive what I ask when I pray to the Father in the name of Jesus because of my relationship with them. Because of the power of the Holy Spirit that is IN ME.

Psalm 39:7 (NKJV)

“And now, Lord, what do I wait for?
My hope is in You.

That's the question you need to ask yourself today. Is your hope in Jesus? If not, today is the day to make that decision. If He is your hope...what do you wait for?

Pray.

Jesus made a way for your prayers to get right into the throne room of heaven.

Have you ever tried to get a hold of someone important and you can't get past the secretary?
“Yeah, I'm sorry but he's not available right now, can I give him a message?”

It used to be that way with God...but Jesus...Jesus made a way. When He died on the cross, the veil in the temple was torn...the veil that kept people out where only the high priest could enter into God's presence...

Now Jesus is our High Priest. And He is victorious, seated on the throne in heaven at the right hand of the Father...He made a way!

This is why ALL my hope is in Jesus. My expectation is in Him!

Matthew 7:7 (NKJV)

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Jesus said that...and it gives me the right to have an expectation that He will move because of my relationship with Him!

Luke 18:1 (NKJV)

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

Through Prayer:

There is no problem that cannot be solved.
There is no sickness that cannot be healed.
There is no burden that cannot be lifted.
There is no storm that cannot be calmed.

Through Prayer:

There is no sorrow that cannot be comforted.
There is no sinner that cannot be saved.
There is no hurt that cannot be mended.
There is no fallen that cannot be lifted.

Through Prayer:

There is no backslider that cannot be revived.
There is no broken relationship that cannot be restored.
There is no difference that cannot be resolved.
There is no sin that cannot be forgiven.

Through Prayer:

There is no heaviness that can't be covered with the garment of praise.
There is no thirst that can't be quenched.
There is no hunger that can't be filled.
There is no dry ground that can't be flooded.

Through Prayer:

There are no ashes that cannot be turned into beauty.
There is no congregation that can't be revived.
There is no virus that can't be eradicated!
There is no mess that can't be turned into a miracle!