

PRAYER IS THE ACT OF WORSHIPING AND SERVING GOD

John 4:21-24

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: "Worship" is basically anything one does which honors God and demonstrates devotion to Him. When one goes to God in prayer, he/she is doing honor to Him by recognizing that He is the all sufficient One and that the one praying is truly insufficient or inadequate. Prayer is further evidence and honor for God and is also a service and ministry to and for God. True worship in spirit and truth always includes service to God and though prayer may take on various forms and roles, all prayer is clearly an aspect of worship in which both reverence and service to God is demonstrated as an expression of the believer being a Child of God.

I. THE TYPES AND ROLE OF PRAYER THAT IS WORSHIP

1. There is the confession of one's sin for if one's prayer is to be effective, sin must be dealt with and for one's prayer to be effective, sin must be dealt with. *Isaiah 59:1-2; Psalm 32:5; 1 John 1:9*
2. There is praise. *Hebrews 13:15*
3. There is thanksgiving. *Ephesians 5:20*
4. There is intercession, praying for others in specific requests as service to God as His Child.
- *Hebrews 13:18; 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Romans 10:1*
5. There is petition, praying for one's own needs in recognition of one's inadequacy and God's abilities.
- *Philippians 4:6*

II. THOSE TO WHOM THE BELIEVER PRAYS

1. Prayer is made to the Father, who is the provider for His Children.
- *John 16:23-26; James 1:17; Ephesians 1:17*
2. Prayer is made in the name of God's Son, Jesus Christ, the one through whom one has access to God the Father. *Ephesians 2:18; John 16:23-26*
3. Prayer is made in the power of the Holy Spirit. *Jude 20*

III. KINDS OF PRAYER

1. There is prayer for long range goals, plans. *Colossians 1:9-12; Matthew 9:37*
2. There is prayer for immediate goals and needs. *Colossians 4:2-4; Ephesians 6:19*
3. There is prayer for physical and support needs. *James 5:13-20; Acts 12:5; 13:3; Philippians 1:19*

IV. TIMES FOR PRAYER

1. There are scheduled times one makes to pray. *Psalm 5:3; 88:13; 119:147; Matthew 6:6*
2. There are spontaneous times when one prays. *Nehemiah 2:1-4; Psalm 56:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:17*
3. There are times when the family gets together for prayer. *Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4*
4. There are times when prayer partners get together and pray. *Acts 12:5; 16:25*
5. There is prayer in public. *1 Timothy 2:8*

V. THINGS TO DO BEFORE PRAYING

1. One must have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ as his/her Savior. *John 14:6*

2. One must be walking in fellowship with the Lord where sins have been confessed and the Holy Spirit is controlling one's life. *Psalm 66:18; 1 John 1:9; Ephesians 6:18*
3. One must be living by the Word of God. *Proverbs 28:9; John 15:7*
4. One must be praying in faith and trusting in the will of God. *Matthew 21:22; Hebrews 11:6; James 1:5-8; 1 John 5:14-15*

VI. THINGS THAT HINDER PRAYER

1. When one fails to even pray or ask God for help obviously there is hindrance. *James 4:2*
2. When one has false motives/reasons in his/her prayer, there is hindrance *James 4:3*
3. When there are broken relationships within one's family and friendships, there is hindrance. *1 Peter 3:7; Mark 11:25-26; Matthew 5:44.*
4. When one is not sincere and pretends to pray for whatever reason, there is hindrance. *Matthew 6:5-6*
5. When one gives up, stops praying, fails to wait on the Lord, there is hindrance. *Psalm 27:14; 37:7; Luke 18:1*

VII. WHY BELIEVERS NEED TO PRAY

1. Believers need to pray consistently because they are commanded to do so in God's Word.
2. Believers need to pray because God can provide any need the believer could possibly have.
 - God is the believer's heavenly Father who is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and cares for His children (believers) with the heart of a father. *Matthew 6:7-8; 7:7-11*
 - God, the Son, Jesus Christ is the one the believer has direct access to and who intercedes for each and every believer and is the believer's example of prayer.
 - *John 16:23-24; Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:25*
 - God, the Holy Spirit assures the believer of his/her relationship as a child and guides the believer in his/her prayer life, helping and interceding, enabling the believer to pray.
 - *Zechariah 12:10; Romans 8:14-15*
3. Believers need to pray because of their need to pray.
 - Every believer is inadequate to meet his/her own needs but God is perfectly sufficient and able to meet his/her needs for his/her entire life and with whom nothing is impossible.
 - *2 Corinthians 2:16; 3:4-6; Matthew 17:20*
 - Every believer is exposed to demonic powers and those powers are far stronger than any believer. Prayer is therefore needed to call upon God's power against the enemy. *Ephesians 6:10-18*
 - Believers are unable to be fruitful for the Lord apart from God's help. *John 15:5-9*
 - Believers are totally dependent upon God whether he/she realizes it or not for everything comes from God - food, clothing, housing, travel, sickness, ministry, open doors for service, etc.
 - *Colossians 4:2-4*
4. Believers need to pray because of what prayer accomplishes - Prayer can move mountains.
 - *James 5:16; Matthew 17:20*
5. Believers need to pray because of what happens when they don't - they faint and fail. *Luke 18:1*
6. Believers need to pray because it is part of their service to God and to others.
 - *1 Peter 2:5-9; Hebrews 13:15-16*
7. Believers need to pray because it glorifies the Lord. In prayer one acknowledges his/her own insufficiency and God's all-sufficiency, His love, Fatherly care and gracious provision.
 - *John 14:13; 15:7-8; Romans 15:6*

VIII. THINGS WHICH THE BELIEVER SHOULD PRAY FOR

1. One should pray for general needs. *Hebrews 4:16; 1 Peter 5:7*
2. One should pray for deliverance from temptation. *1 Peter 5:8*
3. One should pray for government leaders. *1 Timothy 2:1-4*
4. One should pray for his/her enemies. *Matthew 5:44*
5. One should pray for the sick. *Matthew 14:36; James 5:13-15*
6. One should pray for his/her fellow believer who has "backslidden" into sin again. *1 John 5:16; James 5:14-15*
7. One should pray for the great commission to be fulfilled - for people to witness, for there to be doors opened around the world for witnesses to go tell about Jesus and for boldness to speak about Jesus.
- *Luke 10:2; Colossians 4:3; Ephesians 6:18-20*
8. One should pray for Jesus to be edified and for believers to develop a Christ-like character.
- *Ephesians 1:15-18*

CONCLUSION:

1. Prayer is communicating with almighty God through His Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit's help.
2. Every believer in Jesus Christ should be continuously in prayer and living such a life that his/her prayer is always heard by the Lord God.
3. Prayer is worship and should be done so with that in mind.
4. How is YOUR prayer life?