

Prayer As Worship

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Introduction:

1. Proper New Testament worship is GOD'S worship. GOD is the one to honor. So we must listen to Him.
2. We must have Bible authority for everything we do in the realm of religion (Col. 3:17).
3. What does GOD tell us to do in the church as acts of worship?
 - a. Congregational singing (Heb. 2:12).
 - b. Scripture reading (Col. 4:16).
 - c. Prayer (I Tim. 2:8).
 - d. Communion (Acts 20:7).
 - e. Preaching and teaching GOD'S Word (2 Tim. 4:1-4).
 - f. Giving (I Cor. 16:1-2).
4. Our subject today is PRAYER AS WORSHIP The subject itself indicates that prayer is worship.
 - a. In fact, prayer is the general word for worship and praise unto Jehovah GOD.
 - b. Prayer involves (Eph. 4:18; Phil. 4:6):
 - (1) Thanksgiving and praise
 - (2) Supplication or asking for what we need from GOD.
5. Worship means to pay homage and respect unto GOD. The prime meaning of worship is *"to bow down."* In worship we are to praise, adore, and exalt His Holy name.

I. THE IMPORANCE OF PRAYER.

- A. Prayer being the privilege of communion with GOD, is one of the great spiritual blessings we as Christians have after obeying the gospel of Christ.
- B. Yet the privilege of prayer is grossly neglected in the lives of Christians. And if one is too busy to pray then that person is just too busy.
- C. Prayer is a command of GOD.
 1. Luke 18:1
 2. I Thess. 5:17
 3. Phil. 4:6
 4. Lack of prayer is more than just weakness, it is a sign of unbelief, and it is a sin.
- D. Prayerlessness is a sin. Lack of prayer in one's life is:
 1. A sin against GOD
 2. A sin against oneself.
 3. A sin against our fellow man.
- E. *"Prayer will make a man cease from sin, but sin will make a man cease from prayer. Proper prayer will prevent one from sinning (Luke 6:12; Matt. 26:41; Matt. 7:7-8).*
- F. It is of extreme importance that Christians know how to pray. Prayer is a privilege and a duty. Prayer is the utterance of faith (James 1:6).

II. VARIOUS KINDS OF PRAYERS.

- A. There are different kinds of prayers:
 1. Private prayers (Matt. 6:6).
 2. Family prayers.
 3. Public prayers (Acts 2:42; I Tim. 2:8; James 5:16).
- B. When we assemble on the Lord's day for worship we pray together as an act of worship. We send up our prayers and petitions together to GOD'S throne.
- C. Yet there are dangers in public prayer. One of the dangers of public prayer, is the tendency to show off.

- D. The man who publicly prays to show that he is a saint is not a saint. It is so easy to try to impress someone in the audience, or to wonder what others are thinking.
- E. We must pray to GOD in sincerity. It is -when we are alone with GOD in secret prayer that we can most deeply realize our dependence on Him.
- F. If we are praying publicly we ought to put thought and preparation into our prayers. And if we are leading prayers publicly we should give thought to the needs of those we are leading in prayer.
- G. We should not use vain repetitions (Matt. 6:7).
 - 1. Sometimes we repeat the same words and expressions in prayer.
 - 2. So many times our public and private prayers consist of the same words and clichés.
- H. Our prayer life should be characterized by freshness, considering that each day brings new blessings and challenges.
- I. Those who lead in public prayers, should make their prayers uplifting, edifying, helpful, sincere and reverent.

III. TO WHOM IS PRAYER TO BE ADDRESSED?

- A. Prayer is to be addressed to GOD the Father (Eph. 3:14-15; Matt. 6:9).
- B. Jesus commanded us to pray to the Father (John 14:24).
- C. We are to close our prayers in the name of Jesus (John 14:24; Eph. 5:20).
- D. Prayer is to be addressed or directed to "*GOD the Father*" and never to Jesus.

IV. GOD ONLY ANSWERS THE PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE.

- A. GOD only answers the prayer of His people. One must be a Christian in order to have his prayers answered.
- B. All people are GOD'S creatures, but only those who obey the gospel of Christ are GOD'S children (John 9:31; I Peter 3:12).
- C. Some peoples prayers are not answered because they are religiously wrong (John 9:31).
- D. One must be a faithful Christian in order for GOD to answer his or her prayers. Sin in the life of a Christian will hinder his prayer life (Psm. 66:18).
- E. There are some people who don't pray (James 4:2). And there are others whose prayers do not reach the ceiling, because they ask for the wrong things and with the wrong motives (James 4:3).
- F. Prayer is conditional. We must ask according to the will of GOD (I John 5:14; Phil. 4:19).
- G. A Christian with some unconfessed, unrepented sins in his life cannot get his or her prayers answered.
- H. A worldly Christian cannot get his or her prayers answered (James 1:7-9; 4:4).

V. DOES GOD ALWAYS ANSWER PRAYER?

- A. Yes, GOD always answers prayer. Sometimes GOD says "yes" and sometimes GOD says "no" (2 Cor. 12:6-9).
- B. We must be willing to wait on the Lord's time in answering. Always remember that whatever GOD says, HE WILL DO (I John 5:14; Phil. 4:19)!
- C. We must pray in the right spirit and with the understanding (I Cor. 14:15).
- D. When GOD commands us to do something, He is not going to set that aside because we ask Him to. GOD will not save a man without obedience to the gospel (Rom. 1:16; 2 Thess. 1:6-9).
- E. When GOD commands us to do something that has got to be done; all the prayers in the world will not set that obligation aside.
- F. Prayer is not a substitute for work and intelligence.
- G. GOD will not interfere with the free moral agency of man. No mighty angels will descend to force men to do what they will resist.

VI. WE MUST BE SINCERE AND HAVE A SERIOUSNESS OF PURPOSE IN PRAYER.

- A. James 4:7 says, '*Resist the devil and he will flee* from you.' Prayer is a part of our warfare. And Satan will try to hinder us from praying.
- B. Satan can put thoughts into your minds, and he can take thoughts out (John 13:2). We must stand against the devil in prayer.
- C. The devil fears our prayers. The devil knows that we can defeat him with prayer.
- D. Another reason that our prayers are not answered is that our prayers are sometimes half-hearted, and soon forgotten.
- E. We must be serious about GOD and take Him seriously. Many times we don't mean business with GOD.
- F. James 5:16 tells us the prayer that is answered is fervent prayer.
- G. May GOD forgive the coldness, half-hearted, and lazy attitude that some have in their prayers.

Conclusion:

1. It is awfully important that Christians know how to pray.
2. We are commanded to pray.
3. Failure to pray is a sin. The reason that we enter temptation so easily is that we fail to pray as we should.
4. We are to come to GOD not only asking Him what we need but also praising His wonderful name.
5. Prayer is to be addressed to Jehovah GOD; and we are to close our prayers in the name of Jesus.
6. GOD does not answer a sinner's prayer; neither does he answer an unfaithful Christian's prayers.