

Before You Pray for Anything, Do This

Worship is the beginning of prayer. It is the first step, the starting point. Consider the fact that almost all man-made ideas for prayer or quiet times begin with worship, such as one of the more popular, ACTS: adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication. Yet of far more importance is the fact that the King of the universe began His model prayer with worship: "Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matt. 6:9b, Luke 11:2b).

The word for worship in the New Testament is *proskyneo*. It means "to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence." Worship is blowing kisses to God. It is an act of love, and it is a response to love.

Stop right now and ask yourself this question: How do you view God? How you view will determine how you approach Him in prayer. There are many people who do not view God the Father in a positive light. They may have had a dysfunctional relationship with their earthly fathers. For me, the revelation that God is my Father had life-changing impact. While I was growing up, my family had intimacy issues. My parents loved me deeply but struggled to express it. The result—I have had intimacy issues. But in recent years, I have experienced a profound spiritual restoration and physical healing that leaves me convinced I have a good and kind heavenly Father. Maybe that seems a little elementary to you, but God's role as Father is the most profound aspect of His person to me. As my heavenly Father, He is pure and holy, and I am convinced He is good. He is worthy of all my worship.

Understanding the Father's character is essential if we are to love and worship Him and enter into prayer with a pure heart. And that is what God is after. He is seeking true worshippers

(John 4:23), Jesus taught us that we must begin with worship and adoration (Matt. 6:9). He taught us this because what comes natural for most of us is asking for “stuff,” We don’t have to train children to ask for things; it comes naturally

Before we ever pray for anything, we need to meet the Lord in worship. For us to pray rightly according to His will, we must come to a place in worship where we yield to the majesty and sovereignty of our Father. In the place of worship is where we find freedom from our selfishness. There is a monumental difference between approaching prayer with our own agenda in mind (no matter how righteous it may seem) and waiting on God to know what is on His mind. This is the prayer of discernment, of indifference to personal desires. It simply says, “Not my will, but Yours, be done” (Luke 22:42b). Jesus demonstrated to the disciples that after they worshipped the Father, “hallowed be Your name,” they would be able to proclaim, “Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:9b-10).

We need to remind ourselves that what we call the Lord’s Prayer isn’t really the Lord’s prayer—it is the disciples’ prayer and our prayer. The disciples were the ones who wanted to be taught to pray. And just as Jesus taught them to begin their prayer with worship, He instructed them to end prayer with worship, He instructed them to end prayer with worship: “For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever” (Matt. 6:13).

Jesus taught the disciples and us that in prayer we are to pay homage to the reality that this is His kingdom. God has control over everything, and He can and will answer our prayers. He has infinite power to accomplish whatever we ask. There is nothing impossible with God (Luke 1:37).

All worship and praise are due our God for His mighty and wondrous works. As citizens of His kingdom we will worship Him forever. When, by the revelation of the Spirit of God, we

understand that His kingdom, power, and glory are forever, what other response can we give but to worship Him? God Himself, His character, and all that He accomplishes on the earth are worthy of all glory. All that He is reverberates throughout eternity.

Jesus wants each one of us, personally and intimately, to understand and appreciate the great mystery of His creation and His kingdom. Once we experience this revelation, there can be no other place to start or end prayer but with worship. Worship and prayer together become the gateway to His presence. {eoa}

✖ *Adapted from 40 Days through the Prayers of Jesus by Tim Cameron, copyright 2017, published by Charisma House. This 40-day journey will help you discover how God through prayer reveals His character and opens your eyes to see the miraculous in the mundane. As you examine the times Jesus prayed you will avoid hindrances and pray so you get the answers you seek. To order your copy, click on this link.*

Prayer Power for the Week of Oct. 7, 2018

As you continue in prayer this week, follow the Lord's example of beginning and ending with worship. Seek His agenda and not your own. Declare His will be done in your personal life, our nation and the world. Pray for God's order and authority to prevail in our nation. Pray that our Senate would have clarity of mind and purpose as they tackle and vote concerning legislature and the Supreme Court. Read: Matthew 6:13, Luke 1:37, John 4:23.