

Worship That Shakes the World

How prayer and worship unify believers as one voice before God, changing the spiritual environment of an entire city—and eventually the world

Worship and prayer are inseparable. Through worship, we agree with who God is, and through prayer, we agree with what He promised to do. I don't believe worship can be disconnected from prayer at all. The only thing that makes "worship music" worship is that we're talking to God; otherwise, it's just music.

Prayer is a dialogue with the Invisible, and there are many expressions of this conversation. Sometimes it is a contemplative meditation on Scripture. Other times it's a heartfelt plea for help, a cry for justice or a lament of repentance. Prayer also includes a declaration of who God is and gratitude for what He's done and will do, as well as a prophetic declaration of what He's saying today. Intercession, worship, praise and the prophetic are all one seamless flow involved in this holy conversation that we call prayer. When we combine these elements with music, there is a dynamic impact on our hearts—individually and corporately—that affects society at large.

Often we use these two words—*worship* and *prayer*—to mean singing and speaking our conversation with God. I believe there's a powerful connection between spoken prayers and those that are sung. In Revelation, we see both spoken word and song offered continuously around the throne. We see a harp, signifying music (Rev. 5:8), and a bowl full of the intercession of the saints (vv. 8-9). And we know that if this is the way it is in heaven, it's also a model for how it ought to be on earth.

Today we see prayer meetings springing up around the world

where the intercessors are being carried and sustained by enjoyable prayer (Is. 56:7). One way such prayer becomes enjoyable is through the combination of spoken prayer with prophetic, inspirational music and singing.

Music originated from God. The human spirit is musical because we are created in His image. There is something mysterious yet simple about song and the connection it has to our emotions, our memory and our ability to focus mind, body, soul and spirit. It is a beautiful gift God has given each of us.

Even if you don't consider yourself a singer or a musician, you are musical. Paul said that he sang spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). I doubt he was a worship leader, but he was a man of prayer, and he sang in the spirit to God (1 Cor. 14:15).

In our individual lives, singing our prayers is beneficial in many ways. One way is by giving us the ability to focus at a greater level. When we sing Scripture to God, it has a way of leading us into meditation, due to the repetitive nature of song. It also writes the truth on our hearts in a way the spoken word does not.

For example, if I said, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star," you would immediately remember the song and likely be able to sing it word for word. But if I said "Ephesians 1:17," many of us would not know that prayer at all. However, if we put this prayer of the apostle Paul to music, even children would remember it. Add in the spontaneity and development of Scripture a teacher would bring to such a text—yet do it through song—and you would not only remember the text, but you would also understand it.

In our corporate life, singing prayers has a dynamic impact too. Through song, we are able to become one voice and one heart as we sing the same thing to the same Man at the same time. Through song, we can also feel the same thing at the

same time while either declaring the truth or interceding for a breakthrough.

Song is a powerful tool to unify the body of Christ. Whenever you have the combination of spoken prayer and singing, an entire room or a whole stadium of people can come into agreement with what is being prayed through simple songs that make us one voice. I believe this unified intercession and worship is one thing that changes the spiritual atmosphere of a city or a region.

You don't have to add music to the conversation—prayer—you're holding with God, but music combined with prayer opens our hearts, writes truth on our minds, changes the atmosphere and facilitates sustainable, enjoyable corporate prayer that leads to a unified heart with one another and with God.

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