

Lesson
3

Worship in Prayer

In Lesson 1 we learned that worship is fellowship and communion with the Lord. This is why God made us. He wanted to share His love with people who could love Him in return. What beautiful evenings those were when God walked and talked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden!

When mankind sinned they shut the door to that close relationship, but the great heart of God still reached out to His creation. Deuteronomy 33:3 says, “The Lord loves His people.” His ears are still open to hear them when they call. And we can still have communion with Him through the avenue of prayer.

Prayer is not difficult. Don’t we want to talk with someone who loves us and whom we love in return? As with earthly conversations, the more we talk the easier it becomes to talk.

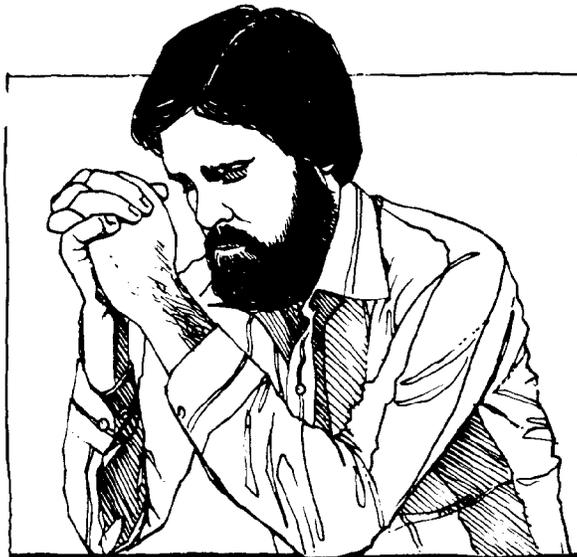
The more we pray, the easier it becomes to pray, to express our love in words and in worship.

In this lesson you will study. . .

Worshiping With Our Words

Worshiping With the Spirit’s Words

Worshiping Without Words



This lesson will help you. . .

- Describe how worship in prayer differs from other types of prayer.
- Identify Old Testament and New Testament patterns of adoration and praise.
- Explain how the biblical pattern of worship in prayer can be applied today.

WORSHIPING WITH OUR WORDS

Objective 1. *Identify examples of different kinds of prayer.*

When you pray, do you sometimes say, “Dear God, please help me with this problem”? This prayer is pleasing to the Lord because He loves to help us in our need—it is called the *prayer of petition*. You know what it is to thank the Lord for your food and the many other blessings He has showered upon you. This is also an important way to pray, one that could be called the *prayer of thanksgiving*.

Perhaps you have prayed for others, for people or nations in need. This is the prayer of intercession. God has asked His children to spend special time in intercessory prayer. But there is one type of prayer which does not depend on circumstances surrounding us. It depends only upon God and who He is. This is the *prayer of worship*.

When we worship in prayer, we take our eyes off ourselves and our need and even off the answers we have already received. We concentrate only on God, on His unchanging and eternal qualities—His power, faithfulness, love, and all the other attributes that are part of His character. Our attitude is not so much one of being open to receive, but one of being ready to give. We offer ourselves.

Many of the Psalms written by David are prayers of worship. When he was worshiping he praised God for who He is. “The Lord is King . . . The Lord is mighty. . . Holy is He!” (Psalm 99:1-3).

It is good to start our times of prayer with worship. This is what our Lord Jesus did when He taught His disciples to pray. Before bringing petitions to His Father, Jesus first honored Him in praise. He said, “Our Father in heaven: May your holy name be honored; may your Kingdom come; may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10).



For You To Do

- 1 Complete the following statements by referring to Matthew 6:9-10.
 - a God is our
 - b His name is
 - c He has a and
His authority extends over
and

Three things happen when we worship God. First, we take our privileged place as His children. Second, we put our enemy, the devil, in his place. We are declaring that he has no authority over us because we belong to God’s kingdom. God has promised to protect and keep us. Then, most important of all, we please the Lord. Proverbs 15:8 says, “The Lord is pleased when good men pray.” He delights in our prayers.

Take a few moments now to think about the Lord. If other thoughts keep pushing in, ask the Holy Spirit to help you in worship. He will make the things of God real to your heart and mind.

Never forget that the Lord is God. He made us, and we belong to him; we are his people, we are his flock. The Lord is good; his love is eternal and his faithfulness lasts forever (Psalm 100:3, 5).



For You To Do

- 2 Circle the letter in front of each TRUE statement.
 - a There are several kinds of prayer, all meaningful and beneficial.
 - b Worship is only a ritual which comes at a certain part of the service.
 - c Jesus taught His disciples to worship.
 - d The main purpose of worship is to get answers we really want.

- 3 Choose the correct completions to this sentence. If you cannot think of words to say when worshipping, you could
 - a) just forget it; God understands your limitations.
 - b) have your pastor write out words for you to memorize.
 - c) find Psalms or other Bible passages of worship and read them to the Lord.
 - d) ask the Holy Spirit to help you in your worship.

- 4 Draw a circle around the letter in front of each correct sentence completion. Worship differs from other forms of prayer in that it
 - a) does not mention our problems or needs.
 - b) must be a prayer for others.
 - c) depends on our circumstances.
 - d) only glorifies God for who He is.
- 5 Read the prayers on the left and write in front of each the type of prayer it represents.

PRAYERS

TYPES OF PRAYER

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| ... a "Please heal my headache." | P - Petition |
| ... b "Help those living in atheistic countries." | T - Thanksgiving |
| ... c "Thank You for friends." | I - Intercession |
| ... d "We praise You for You are merciful." | W - Worship |
| ... e "Save my family before it's too late." | |
| ... f "Hallelujah!" | |
| ... g "Thank You for protection as we traveled." | |
| ... h "Bless this food." | |

Check your answers.

WORSHIPING WITH THE SPIRIT'S WORDS

Objective 2. *List at least three ways in which worshipping in the Spirit helps the believer.*

Before our Lord ascended into heaven He gave specific instructions to His disciples:

“Wait for the gift I told you about, the gift my Father promised. John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:4-5).

Ten days later they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. The sign of their baptism was that they all began to worship in languages they had never learned. There were people standing around who saw and heard what was taking place. Of course they asked questions about it. Then Peter answered,

Each one of you must turn away from his sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God’s gift, the Holy Spirit. For God’s promise was made to you and to your children, and to all who are far away—all whom the Lord our God calls to himself (Acts 2:38-39).

After that, many more people were filled with the Holy Spirit—about three thousand in that one day! Because the promise was made to “all whom the Lord our God calls to himself,” believers are still being filled with the beautiful Holy Spirit. No one needs to be left out.



Have you ever wondered why anyone would want this experience? If you have already received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, then you already know some of the answers, but in this lesson we will mention a few of the benefits that are ours when we worship in an unknown language—in the Spirit’s words.

A friend who speaks three languages told me what happened to him when he “spoke in tongues” or in the language of the Spirit.

“I was so full of love for God,” he said, “that I worshiped Him with all the loving words that I know in Spanish. Then I used all the words that I knew in English, and then in German. But these were not enough. Suddenly I began to speak in a strange language and I knew I was still telling God how much I loved Him even though I did not understand the words. It was wonderful to know that finally the words were adequate because they were in a heavenly language. I had never before felt joy like the joy that comes with being able to worship God in tongues.”

We cannot over-emphasize the beauty and blessing of worshiping the Lord in the Spirit. During the writing of this course He made this truth very real to me. I faced a particularly hard trial, but when the pressure seemed too much I found strength by worshiping in my prayer language. The long sleepless hours at night became filled with the Spirit’s words as were spare moments during the day. Often the words flowed easily, but other times I worshiped because I decided to and not because I felt like doing so.

One day I cried to the Lord, “Why should I have to face this trial now? Why me, Lord?” Immediately I seemed to hear His very gentle words: “You are writing about the benefits of worship. I want you to personally know and feel that what you write is true.”

Let me assure you from God’s Word and from personal experience of the great blessing found in worshiping with the Spirit’s words. As I continued to worship my tension and self-pity left, the pain left my heart, and my smile became genuine.

It is the Holy Spirit who brings us the presence of God the Father (Ephesians 2:18). The Holy Spirit helps us pray with results (Romans 8:26). He brings us liberty from fear and gives us power, love, and self-control (1 Timothy 2:7). He reminds us of the hope we have of sharing God’s glory.

“This hope does not disappoint us, for God has poured out his love into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit, who is God’s gift to us” (Romans 5:5).

Worshiping in the Spirit lifts us beyond life’s temporary problems. We find release as we concentrate on the Eternal God who has all things under control. How beautiful to glorify Him as He truly deserves. When we worship in tongues we magnify God and praise His goodness (Acts 10:46).

If you have not received the marvelous experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, you can ask the Lord for it right now. He has promised it to every believer.



For You To Do

- 6 Which of the following completions are correct? Worshiping with the Spirit’s words means
 - a) using the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - b) praying in an unknown tongue.
 - c) magnifying God as He truly deserves.
- 7 List three of the many benefits a believer receives when he or she worships in the Spirit.

WORSHIPING WITHOUT WORDS

Objective 3. *Describe two purposes of silent prayer.*

Without words? How can we worship the Lord in prayer and not say anything? It is not only possible, but also necessary to pray sometimes without speaking aloud.

Two things can happen when we pray silently. One is that we can bring our innermost thoughts to the Lord. No one else needs to know them.

Lord, you have examined me and you know me. You know everything I do; from far away you understand all my thoughts. Even before I speak, you already know what I will say (Psalm 139: 1, 2, 4).

The second thing that happens when we are silent is equally important. During this time we are able to “wait on Him.”

To “wait on the Lord” means to keep still outwardly and inwardly while waiting for Him to speak to us. The Holy Spirit can bring thoughts to our minds that will help us, or bring verses to our remembrance to guide us. Here is where the fellowship and communion of worship take on their full meaning.



Fellowship is never a one-way activity. There is no real conversation taking place if only one person is speaking. Two people must speak if they are to share together. And God wants to talk with us. He said, “Call to me, and I will answer you; I will tell you wonderful and marvelous things that you know nothing about” (Jeremiah 33:3).

The Lord wants to give us understanding about ourselves and our circumstances. When we allow Him time to share His secrets with us, we in turn know better how to work and how to pray.

God is wise and powerful! Praise him forever and ever. . . it is he who gives wisdom and understanding. He reveals things that are deep and secret; he knows what is hidden in darkness, and he himself is surrounded by light (Daniel 2:20-22).

Perhaps in your quiet moments you have already “waited on the Lord” and you want to learn how to do it more. Find a place alone, free from interruptions, and ask the Lord to fill your mind with thoughts of Him. Ask Him to help you block out your own thoughts and to refuse whatever Satan might try to push in on you.

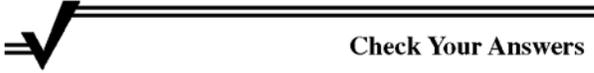
Then, just worship Him silently. Be patient and wait for Him to speak to you. When He does speak it will always be in accordance with His written Word, so listen with a Bible in your hand.

God says, “I will save those who love me and will protect those who know me as Lord. When they call to me, I will answer them” (Psalm 91:14-15).



For You To Do

- 8 What are two important reasons for praying silently?
- 9 Which of the following statements are TRUE?
 - a God hears only the spoken word.
 - b Silent worship helps us listen to God.
 - c We worship without words only if we are alone.
 - d God would never say anything contrary to His Word, the Bible.
- 10 Circle the letter in front of each correct completion of the sentence. When we “wait on the Lord” we may be
 - a) sharing secrets with our Heavenly Father.
 - b) waiting for an answer or for divine guidance.
 - c) just keeping still so our minds can wander.
 - d) quietly or silently worshipping.



Check Your Answers

- 1 a** Father.
b holy.
c kingdom, heaven, earth.
- 6** All of the completions are correct.
- 2** Statements **a** and **c** are True.
- 7** Your answers. You could include close communion with God, enjoying His presence, being filled with love, joy, peace, and power, and knowing you are praising Him as He is worthy of being praised.
- 3 c)** find Psalms or other Bible passages of worship and read them to the Lord.
d) ask the Holy Spirit to help you in your worship.
- 8** To bring our innermost thoughts to God and to “wait on Him” to speak to us.
- 4 a)** does not mention our problems or needs.
d) only glorifies God for who He is.
- 9** Statements **b** and **d** are True.
- 5 a** Petition.
b Intercession.
c Thanksgiving.
d Worship.
e Intercession.
f Worship.
g Thanksgiving.
h Petition.
- 10 a)** sharing secrets with our Heavenly Father.
b) waiting for an answer or for divine guidance.
d) quietly or silently worshiping.