



# How to Effectively Engage in Corporate Prayer and other Worship Services

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Scriptures: Matthew 6:9-13; 16:19; 18:19-20; Ephesians 1:3; 2:6; Psalm 9:10; Psalm 100:4-5; Nehemiah 2:1-5; I John 5:14-15; Mark 11:22-24; I Thess. 5:17-20; Luke 18:1

## **Why pray at all?**

Men ought always to pray and not faint (Luke 18:1). Do we simply bring a list of our needs/wants to the Lord? Jesus says He already knows what things we have need of. The Almighty is not waiting for us to enlighten Him on what is going on. He sees the end from the beginning. Our prayer may be more revelation of Himself to us. Is the basic purpose of prayer to get things from God? Certainly not! The Bible assures us that God hears us and, in response, gives us what we need. But is that the basic reason Jesus taught us to pray? Absolutely not! Prayer itself is the thing we need. Communion with God the Father, which is my definition for prayer, is what my soul needs above all else. Prayer is also a supernatural exchange between earth and heaven. The Father in heaven wants us (on earth) to know Him. The Psalmist says those who know your name (your character, essence, reality) will trust you (Psalm 9:10). We affirm strength and confidence in prayer, through face-to-face talk with our God. Father's purpose, in prayer is not to make us "beg," but He wants us to know Him. Prayer is one method of bringing the Father to us, in whatever form we may need Him (I Am that I am, Exodus 3:14). God could give us everything without our asking, but our coming to Father and asking is one way of our communing with Him, and His way of getting things of the heavenly kingdom to earth (Matthew 6:10). Prayer can also be a way to cooperate with the Father's Will and help bring it to earth (I John 5:14). When our prayers are answered, we sing the Father's praises; we tell others of His Goodness. Men on earth hear of the Father's work and glorify Him who is in Heaven.

## **How do we pray?**

In Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus gives us an outline that teaches us to pray "after this manner .

. .”. This outline can guide us in our individual prayer, as well as in corporate prayer. (1) Recognize and honor God, the Father, the One to whom we pray. (2) Recognize and agree with the Father’s will and purpose of bringing the heavenly Kingdom to earth. (3) Request our needs of (daily bread), sustenance, health, etc. Here we can request things for ourselves and others. (Note the Scripture says our daily bread, including others). (4) Humble ourselves and ask the Father for forgiveness. (5) Thank the Father for leading us away from pitfalls of temptation and sin. He knows what things we can bear, and Father bears us up on His Strength.

### **How can I participate during corporate prayer?**

During corporate prayer, when my need or request is “called out” and the leader comes forward to pray, it may serve me well to stand, kneel, or raise my hand in agreement with the person who is praying. I do something to show agreement with the one praying. It may be my need, or a need for someone else. Agreement is an essential element when two on earth are asking (touching and agreeing on) anything. Jesus says it shall be done for them of my Father in heaven. (Matthew 18:19). He continues in verse 20 that He will be in the midst of them who are gathered in His name. What a blessed assurance to know Jesus is in the meeting! Our attitude while in the meeting is one of confident trust! Whatever our petition, we praise God for it; we believe for it; we act like that petition is granted, because it is. We rejoice, hilariously! I open my mouth and utter something deep from within me; it may even come out in “tongues.”

### **What is my responsibility in corporate prayer meeting?**

Stay focused! Don’t allow yourself to be distracted by sights or sounds around you, or opinions and thoughts within you. Disregard all your opinions; concentrate on the purpose of the meeting: communing with the Father, that the heavenly kingdom may come on the earth. Christian meetings, especially times of prayer, facilitate life in the Church. In the Acts of the Apostles, we see the saints met daily. Hebrews 10:25 encourages us to build a habit of gathering with the saints. (Some were forsaking to gather with the saints.) Meeting in corporate prayer is one way we can participate in the life of the Body.

The Church is the Body of Christ. When the Body meets together as one, Holy Spirit flows to and through every cell. Just as in the human body, the blood flows and brings healing, nourishment and cleansing to every cell, so it is with each of us in the prayer assembly, or, worship meetings. We have a responsibility to participate, to allow the flow of the Spirit to meet the needs of the body, the Church. Prayer is like breathing for the Believer. Prayer is both simple and profound. Simple, in that nothing is too small or too large to bring to the God of the Universe. Profound in that the Father in Heaven grants to the Believer on earth what has already been granted in heaven. We pray the Father's will which has already been settled in Heaven. Just as we cannot live without oxygen in our lungs, we cannot live without communication with God (prayer). There is no certain language, except it is of the heart!

I expect Father God to meet our needs and answer our requests. I adjust my attitude and state of mind to come into His (God's) gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise (Psalm 100:4-5). In ancient times it was unacceptable for one to come before the king with a sad face and cast down spirit (Nehemiah 2:1-5). Notice Nehemiah was afraid when the king mentioned his sad countenance. Such an expression implied the king had not met the needs of his subjects. This certainly cannot be said of our King. So, we come before the Father's Presence with thanksgiving and praise, knowing He has promised and provided good for us. We rejoice because our needs are met and we have been granted an audience with our great King!

God is calling for a fresh, new, honest way of meeting together. No more dull ritual and regulation where we wait to be entertained, or see what happens next. God is seeking to express Himself through our spirits. Jesus said Father is seeking true worshipers to worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). We must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

Open your mouth in thanksgiving and praise. Don't try to analyze or consider; dismiss your human thought. (This promotes doubt!). Turn to the Spirit: Open yourself to the Lord. If you know any Scripture, this is a good time to fill your mind and mouth with it. This quells human thinking because you are speaking what God says in the Scripture. You may also hallow the Father's name. Tell Him how wonderful He is. Follow the leader; don't try to lead from the back seat. Follow the flow. Is the meeting

intense and hilarious, or low and pensive? You may not be able to describe the mood or flow in human terms, simply allow the Holy Spirit to use your spirit. He will guide you. Allow Spirit to work through you for your brother/sister. Without wandering thoughts and complaining attitudes, we facilitate God's flow in the congregation. After a few times of practice, we won't need to be told or reminded how to enter the prayer. If you are already doing this in the service, continue, and help the rest of us. Soon we'll all get better at participating with the Spirit's flow!

## **What do we pray?**

Jesus taught in Matthew 6:9-10 we are to pray the will of God. How do we know His will? The Holy Spirit knows the will of God. If Jesus told us to pray this, then it must be possible! It is the Father's Will that His Kingdom come on the earth— whatever is in heaven, may come to the earth. The Father reigns in heaven, in His kingdom. Under the Father's rule love reigns; justice abides. Obedience is the watchword. Satan has no influence; thus, in heaven there is no sickness, no disease, hatred, malice, fraud, or opposition to truth! That is our prayer: the rule of Heaven might exist in the earthly realm. Come, even so, Lord Jesus! I pray that my earthly life will be governed by Your heavenly principles.

Ephesians 1:3 says we have been blessed with heavenly blessings, Holy Spirit-given blessings in Christ Jesus. What are those blessings in Christ Jesus? Well, if they are given of the Holy Spirit, they must be gifts of the Spirit (See Galatians 5:22f) Also Ephesians 2:6 tells we are seated with Christ Jesus in heaven, the spiritual realm that the Father might show His exceeding riches of grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. The Father is gracious and kind. He wants to show to powers and principalities what He will do for those who receive His Son. Though you may be seated in the middle section, row #3, seat #5 in the sanctuary, you are also seated far above in the spiritual realm with Christ Jesus. You are in both places; it is a mystery. What do I see my Father do in heaven? What do I hear my Father say in heaven? Watch and listen closely. Father may reveal his doings to us (Duet. 29:29). He will lead and teach us (Psalm 143:10). By faith we desire better (Heb. 11:16). I am confident His Kingdom will come.

We pray from and with eternal perspective, and see the Kingdom and our King in triumph. (I can use my “holy imagination” (my own coined term). Our wait for Christ’s rule throughout the earth and His coming on earth make our prayer/worship essential and exciting to daily victory in Christ. Our needs are met daily as we come boldly and confidently before the Father’s throne of Grace to find help in time of need. We affirm God’s majesty and power through the answers to our prayer. We display His glory in referential awe!

### **The End of our Prayer**

After prayer, tarry in His presence; linger in the Atmosphere of worship. Wait quietly before the Lord. Does Father have something to say? Is some gift to be manifested or given? Wait on God. You may not hear Him personally speak until later that evening, but honor His Word for you. The Father’s word to you is often more important than what you may say to Him. He knows all things; you are seeking to know. Yield, surrender to the Great One! Thank you, Jesus. Amen.