

# Learning to Lead Worship-Based Prayer

[A working **definition of Worship Based Prayer** might be: The essential dynamic to the effective function and longevity of prayer gathering is “Worship Based Prayer,” Worship Based Prayer seeks God’s face (Who He is) before seeking His Hand (what we want Him to do). Modeled after the Lord’s Prayer, Corporate Worship-Based Prayer will shift the focus from you to God and you will begin to experience New Testament community as you bask in His Presence and grace as never before. Worship Based Prayer keeps you focused on God when you pray. Since He is the center of this kind of prayer, you will find a new intimacy with Him and great joy as you go into your world as an agent of His love, hope, and peace.]

As facilitators, we direct each division of focus throughout the prayer time. Our purpose is to seek God’s face through the use of Scripture, singing, prayer, and personal response. Our focus then, in the beginning, is vertical rather than horizontal. We recognize you may have other prayer concerns on your mind; however, beginning with worship causes us to become forgetful about ourselves and our concerns. God always inhabits the praises of His people.

## **Some Helpful Suggestions for Facilitating Worship-Based Prayer**

1. **FOCUS:** On the majesty, glory, wonder, and holiness of God – not asking for anything for the first fifteen to twenty minutes. We just want to worship Him for Who He is. Go to Scripture early and keep your Bibles open at all times. The Psalms are wonderful and full of adoration and praise.

**Scripture suggestions:** Is. 6:1-3; Rev. 4:9-11; Rev. 5:8-14; Ps. 96:1-8; Ps. 145:1-5; Ps. 105:1-5; Ps. 99:1-5; Ps. 63:1-5; Ps. 34:1-3; I Chron. 29:11-13; Neh. 9:5-6.

**Song suggestions:** Majesty; I love You Lord; We Exalt Thee; Holy, Holy, Holy: Great Are You Lord; I Worship You Almighty God; More Precious Than Silver; Oh Lord You’re Beautiful; Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down; You Are Awesome In This Place.

As you maintain a particular focus, use accompanying Scripture and song prompting an enhancement to the prayer time.

## **HORIZONTAL CHAINS TEND TO BIND US, WHILE VERTICAL WORSHIP FREES US.**

2. **HIDDEN AGENDA:** Have a list of appropriate Scriptures and songs ready for use on paper or in your head. Having an outline to follow is okay, but allow the Holy Spirit to change it if He desires.

**3. USE SCRIPTURE:** A good place to begin is with Scripture. Use it to conduct Worship Based Prayer. Refer to it often and pray using the Scripture. Keep your Bible open. Example: In Psalm 91:1-4, God is our Shelter, Almighty, Refuge, Reliable, Deliverer, Protector, Provision, and Faithful. Psalm 101 speaks of God being Merciful, Loving, Perfect, Loyal, Holy, and Just. Remember to PRAY THE SCRIPTURE!

**4. CONFIDENTIALITY:** Remind the participants that it is a safe place and that what is discussed in the group is not to be discussed outside the group. No one is required to say or do anything apart from the leading of the Holy Spirit.

**5. FEELING COMFORTABLE:** Give freedom for the participants to sit, stand, kneel or walk as they pray. Allow time for lifted heads and opened eyes. There may even be time when God brings laughter to us. Let Him direct.

**6. SET THE PACE:** If the facilitator does not set the pace, the impulses of the people will. Be audible, brief, and clear in communicating your sense of God's direction. Transitions must be clear for people to follow your lead. You may need to bring the focus back more than once.

**7. LISTENING AND TIMING:** Listening is crucial, and timing is important. Ask yourself, what is God doing? How is He speaking to us? What do I sense? What Scripture would reinforce our direction? Or what song?

**8. DON'T RUSH:** Allow time for trust to be built and for hearts to be touched and wills to be moved via the worship and the Word. Extended time in God's Presence will do just that.

**9. BE AWARE:** Observe the audience periodically to sense what God may be doing.

**10. RESPECT AND CELEBRATE DIVERSITY:** Be sensitive to different styles of worship and prayer (form vs function). There will be those who do not join in and those who dominate. Try to find a balance for both groups. Seek ways to include both (sentence prayers work well here).

**11. RESPECT SILENCE:** Don't fear silence that is Spirit lead. God has an agenda – trust Him. He will direct you (Ps. 32:8). There may come a time for a discipline of silence. If a period of silence does occur, either re-direct the prayers or direct the silence.

**12. ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION:** Allow time for people to respond to God as He moves on hearts and to publicly declare their love for Him. We respond to God's abiding Presence. He is our audience! Therefore, bless Him; celebrate Him; appreciate Him; adore Him; enjoy Him; and worship Him

**13. CONFESSION IS RESTORATION:** Confession should be encouraged, but not forced. Confession is the fruit of adoration and worship. It has a cleansing effect. Influence the direction by reading passages of Scripture that focus on acknowledgment, confession, and repentance.

**Song suggestions:** Search Me Oh God; In My Life Lord, Be Glorified; I Need Thee; Have Thine Own Way; I Surrender All.

- A. Confession should be God-centered, not man-centered.
- B. Be willing to admit your sin.
- C. Ask God for forgiveness
- D. Believe God hears and restores
- E. Give the person time to talk to God
- F. Reminder of God's sufficiency, relying on His resources.

**Scripture suggestions:** 1 John 1:9; Is. 59:1,2; Ps 32:1-5; Ps. 51; Ps. 103:8-14; Is. 55:6-9.

**14. THANKSGIVING BRINGS BACK:** Thanksgiving will lead you back to worship. Being thankful and saying thank you is always received by God.

**Song suggestions:** Our God Is an Awesome God, He Is Able, God Is So God. Thy Loving Kindness Is Better Than Life, Thank You, Lord, Give Thanks with A Grateful Heart.

# **HOW TO LEAD CORPORATE PRAYER**

## **PERSONAL PREPARATION**

### **COME WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE**

You're an example

Make things right before you come

### **BE YIELDED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Be filled with the Word

Be prepared

Be open

Find time to spend at least 4 hours alone, undisturbed, with the Lord (example: park, hotel, friend's home, etc).

### **BE EXCITED, PASSIONATE, AND RESPONSIVE**

Realize God wants to use you

He has invited you to serve Him as a facilitator.

Whatever He tells you to do, do it.

Delayed obedience is disobedience

### **CONFIDENCE**

Focus on Him, not ourselves

Intimidation is a focus on oneself

Rest in His sufficiency

## **STRUGGLES OF THE FACILITATOR**

Sin in one's life, undealt with

Lack of preparation

Lack of personal worship in private

Lack of familiarity with the music

Lack of team building

Lack of connecting to the moment

Being too eager (Allow others to pray, sing, read, share as God's Spirit leads)

Failure to allow timid people sufficient time before jumping in

Lack of sensitivity to honor silent time

# **CORPORATE PREPARATION**

## **TEAMWORK-SENSITIVITY-ANTICIPATION**

### **UNITY OF TEAM**

Converse with one another

Pray for and with one another

### **BE MINDFUL OF FATIGUE**

Particularly in the afternoon

Keeping eyes open, stand massage, etc.

### **INVOLVE PARTICIPANTS**

Be creative

### **LISTEN FOR WHAT MIGHT BE NEXT**

Try and stay ahead of the group

**FACILITATORS NEED TO TRULY WORSHIP ALSO WHILE KEEPING THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS FLOWING.**