

English Transcript

Worship-based Prayer

Lesson 7: Let's Give It A Try!

Welcome back to Worship-based Prayer: Everything changes when we seek God's face. This is Lesson 7: Let's Give It A Try. We will continue on page 27 of your handout. In this lesson, we want to describe how the 4/4 pattern for prayer based on Matthew 6:9-13 can be put into practice in your personal prayer life as well in a small group or a larger prayer gathering with your church.

The model prayer that Jesus gave us can be applied with any passage of Scripture. If I was helping a group begin to follow this prayer pattern, we would select a Psalm. After reading the Psalm together, I would lead the group through the 4/4 pattern, demonstrating how it inspires worship, flowing from the truths about God found in the passage. Following a time of worship, we then pray from the passage with the focus on the other elements of this prayer pattern.

Leading others to pray together in a group may incorporate a variety of methods such as guiding people to pray one at a time in response to prayer prompts from the passage, everyone praying at the same time, times of silence to reflect on a specific prompt from the passage, reading other Scriptures that relate to the passage, singing with music or a cappella. This prayer pattern can be used in private prayer or praying with a small group, or a larger group from your church. I have summarized this process from *Transforming Prayer* by Daniel Henderson (chapter 15: *This Is How We Do It*).

There are four simple questions to ask to bring focus to your prayer time and stimulate specific Spirit-led prayers from yourself or the group. I call them the *who, how, what and where* questions of practicing this 4/4 prayer pattern.

- *Who is God? (Reverence)*
- *How should I respond? (Response)*
- *What do I pray about? (Requests)*
- *Where do I go from here? (Readiness)*

I will talk through the 4/4 prayer pattern first in a general way and then we will practice it with a specific Scripture passage.

Reverence (the starting place): Who is God?

As you start with reading a Psalm or any passage of Scripture, the first question is “Who is God?” What does the passage reveal about God and His character? Invite the Holy Spirit to give you understanding of what the text tells you about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The goal is to discover truths about God’s nature, names, and person in the Bible text you are reading. You can mark these in your Bible or write out the list of truths with the associated verses.

Begin the prayer time seeking God’s face in worship using your own words. Whether by yourself or in a group, it helps to utilize simple “finish the sentence” prayers like,
“I praise You because You are _____”

Or you may focus on a particular attribute of God found in the passage, like His power:
“God, I have seen your power when or in _____” (And then describe the ways God has made His power known to you.)

Or you might focus on His grace with a prayer that says,
“I thank you for showing me your grace when _____” (And then honor God for the many ways you have experienced God’s grace in your life.)

The Holy Spirit will initiate a variety of ideas as you worship God directly out of the passage. We saw this when we read Psalm 103 together in Lesson 1. You can also blend in songs that support the truths you discover about God. This time does not need to be rushed. This could extend for fifteen minutes or more. Sometimes, this segment becomes the entire focus of your prayer time. God is honored and all is well.

Response (the Downward Stroke): How should I Respond

Remember that revelation from God demands a response. How do you want God’s kingdom to come and will to be done in your life in response to His character? Using cues from the passage you have read, you can pray, *“Father, be Lord of my _____”* or *“Lord, rule over _____.”*

You can submit specific areas of your life to His authority, like your mind, emotions, doubts, fears, plans, career, family, ministry, etc. Confess areas of your life that require fresh surrender to God’s will, like your thought life, friendships, marriage, finances, or children. Once again, you might supplement this time with songs of surrender and humility.

Requests (the Inward Stroke): What should I pray about?

It is amazing how our frame of mind changes during the reverence and response segments, so that our time of bringing requests to the Lord is energized by faith and conducted with a passion for God's will and glory. If you have a prayer list, you may utilize it here. However, let the passage of Scripture guide you in articulating your requests.

Often a passage will give you practical clues about how you can trust the Lord for the resources and relationships in your life. The Scripture you are using may address the issue of fear. You can begin to pray, *"Lord, I will trust you with my fears about _____.* Or you may pray for others, *"I pray for _____ (name) as they cope with fear in the midst of _____ (situation)."*

Perhaps the passage speaks of various struggles, needs, decisions, challenges, or longings. Turn these into specific prayers of trust as you commit various resource concerns (daily bread) and areas of relationships to the Lord. It is amazing to see how the Holy Spirit will expose needs and direct your prayers according to the will of God.

Readiness (the Outward Stroke): Where do I go from here?

Toward the end of your prayer time, thoughts tend to move toward the hours, days, or weeks that are before you. The "where?" question simply prompts you to think about the mission in your life and the spiritual warfare you can anticipate.

Many texts will speak of some challenges or spiritual enemy to overcome. These cues will guide you to identifying and anticipating practical spiritual battles. Just as Jesus used the memorized Word to defeat Satan, look for a promise or truth that you can pray over the temptations, trials, snares that await you beyond the door of your prayer room.

Perhaps the text speaks of God's power over His enemies. You might pray, *"Lord, I will rely on Your power as I face the enemy, or challenge, of _____."* Or perhaps there is a promise in the text. You might pray, *"Be my victory as I encounter _____."* Then quote that promise, repeatedly, as you list the battles you might face in your life. This is a great way to integrate Scripture memory into your prayer time as you become battle ready.

Reverence (the Upward Stroke): Who is God?

End where you began, with your eyes on God. You expressed your reverence in Scripture-fed, Spirit-led worship. You have responded in submission to God's kingdom purposes and will. You have trusted God with requests for the resource and relationship concerns in your life. You cultivated readiness in your heart and mind for the spiritual battles ahead. Now, with your eyes on God, declare, "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen"

(Matthew 6). This is a great moment to conclude with a song focused on God's lordship, power, and glory.

On page 27 you can try this for yourself. Using Psalm 46, you may follow the prayer prompts to work through each step of the model prayer from *Reverence*, to *Response*, to *Requests*, to *Readiness*, and then, ending in *Reverence*.

First read Psalm 46 below and follow the 4/4 prayer pattern on your own.

Psalm 46

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to *alamoth*. A song.

¹ God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

³ though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.

⁵ God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

⁶ Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

⁷ The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

⁸ Come and see what the LORD has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth.

He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Give it a try ...

Reverence: Who is God?

Read and prayerfully note truths about God:

Refuge and strength (v.1); All-present (v.1); Helper in trouble (v.1); Holy (v.4); Most High (v.4); Powerful voice (v.6); LORD of Hosts/LORD Almighty (v.v. 7,11); With us (v.v. 7,11); Refuge (v.v.7,11); Judges the earth (v.8); Brings peace (v.9); defeats His enemies (v.9); Exalted (v.10)

Reverence Prayer prompts:

- "I praise you LORD that you have been my refuge (v.1) when _____."
- "I praise you that you gave me strength (v.1) when _____."
- "I praise you that you have been (or are) present (vv.7, 11) when _____."

You get the idea. Turn the truths about God into springboards of practical and specific expressions of worship or reverence in your own life. Notice the repeated truths in verses 7 and 11. Because of the double emphasis, you might want to focus on expressions like:

- *"I praise You that You are LORD of Hosts, reigning today over _____."*
- *"I praise You that You are with me when _____."*
- *"I praise You that You are my refuge when _____."*

Of course, you can incorporate a variety of hymns or other worship songs that relate to the many truths about God. Sing to Him!

Response: How should I respond?

Based on your time in worship around the biblical themes on Psalm 46, how might you respond? How can you submit to God's kingdom purposes? How might you surrender to His will? What verses in Psalm 46 might guide your response to God? Here are a few ideas:

- *"LORD, I confess and surrender my fears (v.2) about _____."*
- *"LORD, I welcome your very present help (v.5) in _____."*
- *"LORD, I submit my thoughts and plans about _____ to the power and authority of your voice (v.6)."*
- *"LORD, I submit my _____ (situation thoughts, plans) to You. Help me to be still (stop striving, let go, relax) and seek Your glory along (v.10)."*

Requests: What should I pray about?

From this experience of worship and position of surrender, now you can pray from an abiding heart and in Jesus' name (as Jesus would pray). Here are some requests in the two categories of resources (daily bread) and relationships (forgiveness and restoration).

Resources:

- *"I ask for a sense of security (v.1) about _____."*
- *"LORD, strengthen me (v.1) today in order to _____."*
- *"I pray for your gladness and joy (v.4) in the midst of _____."*

Relationships:

- *"I pray for your presence and help (v.1) in _____ (specific relationship)."*
- *"Because you make wars cease (v.9), I ask you to work in _____ to bring peace and reconciliation."*
- *"Help _____ to be still and know that You are God (v.10) in his/her relationship with _____."*

Readiness: Where do I go from here?

As you prepare to enter the war zone and mission field, pray about the battles and struggles you may face. Get ready to experience the LORD's power and victory in these trials and temptations.

- *"I trust in Your presence and protection (v.v.7, 11) today as I _____."*
- *"I will trust you to overcome my struggle (v.9) with _____."*

Reverence: Who is God?

Close your prayer time with a "doxology" moment of praise.

- *"LORD, only You are exalted (v.10) among _____."*

Consider closing with a song of praise as you declare from your heart to God's, "Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

This example is intended to help make this 4/4 prayer pattern practical for you. The Holy Spirit will guide you through personal and corporate prayer times that are fed by the Scriptures. The goal is not to train you in a new technique but to motivate you to a life of prayer, based on the teaching of Jesus. In the simplicity of this pattern of prayer, you will also sense the sufficiency of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit in your praying and your living.

On page 28, I have provided an example of how you might apply this prayer pattern to a larger portion of Scripture. In this example, I have outlined Ephesians in the 4/4 format.

On pages 29 and 30, you are invited to read an article written by Daniel Henderson, that summarizes the fruit of worship-based prayer. Take time to read this on your own.

- **God is glorified!** When we pray, God gets the thanks and credit for what happens.
- **We are sanctified!** We are set apart and being made holy. We are transformed into a new creation and being transformed into the likeness of Christ.
- **The church is edified!** Discipleship happens. The church is strengthened as we pray together in this way.
- **The world is mystified!** The world is watching in amazement.
- **The enemy is notified!** Satan is powerful and supported by a myriad of demonic forces, but he cannot read our thoughts. The best he can do is observe our behavior, eavesdrop on our conversations and implement a strategy to send his fiery darts against our minds based on his understanding of our vulnerabilities and habits. When we are in the habit of experiencing transformation as we seek God's face, the enemy's efforts to defeat, discourage, distract, and destroy us are met with the reality of our victory that comes through intimacy with Jesus.

To Satan's dismay, he sees us praying, trusting God, and being conformed to the likeness of Christ. Satan is notified that we are engaged in a pursuit of the promises of transformation and an impact for the Savior. Satan knows he is a defeated foe.

Here are a few closing thoughts.

God's Word makes it clear regarding the priority and the purpose of prayer.

Colossians 4:2 says, *"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful."*

1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, *"Pray continually."*

Both of these are commands. This means that too little time, too many responsibilities, too many kids, too much work, too little desire, too little experience, none of this exempts us from the expectation to pray. God expects every follower of Jesus to be devoted to prayer and to pray without ceasing.

A few other prayer references: Psalm 32:6; Isaiah 55:6; Jeremiah 33:2-3; Matthew 7:7; Luke 18:1; John 16:24; Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; James 5:13,16

Prayer is not just commanded by God, it is a royal invitation.

Hebrews 4:16 makes this clear.

"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

This quote by Oswald Chambers summarizes much of what we have been discussing throughout this course. May we remain focused on seeking God's face and not just His hand.

"At the beginning of the Christian life we are full of requests to God. But then we learn that God wants us to get into relationship with Himself, to get us in touch with His purposes."

Now it came to pass, as He (Jesus) was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples. (Luke 11:1)

May this be our continual request and prayer, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Let us close in worship as we *consider the privileges, explore the possibilities, and imagine the provision* available to us because of God's gift of prayer. (From *Transforming Prayer* by Daniel Henderson, Appendix 1, pages 207-210)

Prayer has its privileges

Consider the privileges available to us in prayer:

- In prayer, we experience the most intimate and powerful spiritual exercise known to humanity (Psalm 131; Romans 8:14; Galatians 4:6).
- In prayer, we talk freely about our secret struggles, frustrated feelings, and our hidden motives with words that are raw and unfiltered, yet understood by an all-knowing, all-powerful God (Psalm 62:8; Hebrews 4:16).
- In prayer, we find protection when we are vulnerable and experience security when we are unsure (Psalm 34:4; 56:3; 2 Corinthians 1:8-11).
- In prayer, we accept our weakness, surrender our rights, and ask for help from the only One who can create permanent change (2 Chronicles 20:12; Psalm 40:17; Luke 22:42; 2 Corinthians 12:8-10).
- In prayer, we abide through intimate connection to the life-giving power of the risen Christ (John 15:4-5; Ephesians 3:16-19; Colossians 1:9-10).
- In prayer, we trade in our anxieties for the peace that passes all understanding (Psalm 29:11; Philippians 4:6-7).
- In prayer, we receive wisdom for the perplexities and doubts we face (2 Chronicles 1:10; Proverbs 2:3-6; James 1:5).
- In prayer, we cast our burdens on the One who has the power to work all things out for our good and His glory (Psalm 55:22; Romans 8:26-28; 1 Peter 5:7).
- In prayer, desperate and lost people receive mercy and grace that saves and transforms (Luke 18:13; Romans 10:13).
- In prayer, faith grows and God's people arise to call on Him boldly for miraculous exploits from His hand (Jeremiah 33:3; Mark 9:23-24; 11:23-24; Acts 12:5-8).
- In prayer, we receive grace to become like Christ, even when the problems persist and the burdens remain (2 Corinthians 3:18; 12:9-10).
- In prayer, we find the power and perseverance to defeat Satan and overcome his schemes (Luke 22:32; Ephesians 6:18; James 4:7).
- In prayer, we discover the beauty and power of intimacy and satisfaction in God (Psalm 27:4, 8; 73:25-26).

Explore the Possibilities

Consider the possibilities available through prayer:

- Through prayer, believers discover a level of trust and unity of heart that is truly supernatural, given our many differences in perspective and personality (Acts 1:14; 13:1-2).
- Through prayer, families receive grace, health, and persevering love to sacrifice and stay together (Psalm 127; Acts 16:31-34).
- Through prayer, God prompts, prepares, and propels Christians to become actively engaged in His evangelistic mission in this world (Matthew 9:28; Acts 4:31; 13:1-3).
- Through prayer, leaders receive supernatural insight into the truth of God's Word and wisdom for shepherding His people (Acts 6:2-4; 13:1-2).
- Through prayer, major revivals have been birthed, leading to dramatic and lasting transformation of lives, churches, communities, and nations (Acts 6:7).
- Through prayer, we receive boldness, wisdom, and opportunities to share the truth of the gospel (Ephesians 6:18-20; Colossians 4:3-4).
- Through prayer, God works powerfully to bring glory to Himself, not through human efforts but through humble dependence (2 Chronicles 20:18-23; John 17; 2 Corinthians 1:10-11).

Provision in Abundance

Consider the provision God has made for us to pray:

- For prayer, Christ went to the cross, offering His life and blood, demonstrating the price that was paid for the privilege of prayer (Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 10:12-14).
- For prayer, the Temple veil was miraculously torn in two to demonstrate the availability of the presence and power of God through the finished work of Christ (Matthew 27:50-51; Hebrews 6:19-20; 10:19-22).
- For prayer, sinful hearts are cleansed and become permanent temples of the Holy Spirit, who teaches and guides us into deeper intimacy and greater power (Romans 8:15-17; 26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12).
- For prayer, Jesus now lives, making perpetual intercession for us before the Father, as our sympathetic High Priest, that our prayers might be heard and answered (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).
- For prayer, the very Holy of Holies is now open 24/7 with a welcome sign that says to every true believer, "Enter boldly!" (Hebrews 4:14-16; 10:19-22).

As you meditate on these privileges, possibilities, and provisions related to prayer, I pray that you have been refreshed with a sound, biblical theology of prayer. But more importantly, your sense of worship and intimate relationship with God has been strengthened as a result of seeking Him, knowing Him, and loving Him. May that result in a life of abiding and obeying for His glory.

We will conclude this course with one more lesson that will walk you through the prayer resources in the Appendix of your handout starting on page 33. Thank you for your commitment to work through this course on *Worship-based Prayer: Everything Changes When We Seek God's Face*.