

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## WEEK 4 WORSHIP NOW

*John 4:23*

The Lord desires hearts that authentically worship Him. Whether it be in song, conversation, prayer, or art, worship is an expression of gratitude, thankfulness, and love towards God, our Father. He is seeking people who worship Him with sincerity and authenticity, and in order to do so, our hearts must be surrendered completely to Him. We are called to fear the Lord, serve Him, and hold fast to His promises and truth (Deut. 6:13). Everything we do—really, all we are—should flow out of an abundance of praise and worship to the Lord. Let us surrender together, in humble submission to the Lord Jesus, and worship Him in spirit and in truth.

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## WORSHIPING OUT OF LONGING

PSALM 63:1

Have you noticed that during a season in the wilderness—dry and parched seasons—we end up seeking God, thirsting for Him, and longing for Him? When we've reached the end of our rope, we draw our eyes to Him. Even if it's desperation and emptiness that lifts our gaze, that is still worship.

It's in the wilderness that we have the space to recognize what's been true all along. If it's not Him, it's emptiness. He is the only living water. We want to experience Him more.

As we long for Him, He reminds us of His sovereignty—how He came through in moments of desperation and emergency, moments of great blessings. He recalls to our mind in each moment how He showed up, how He was there.

And so, we are reminded of how good our Father is. We are reminded of how wide, how long, how deep His love is for us. We are reminded that if we seek first His Kingdom and righteousness, all these things will be added. We worship a good and faithful God.

So, we praise Him. Whatever our wilderness looks like, with true and genuine hearts for God, we turn to worship, praise, and prayer. He is our Father, our Creator. He knows our past, present, and future. Why would we not worship in reverence to Him?



## REFLECTION PRAYER

Lord, we praise You that You are the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. No matter our season, You are sovereign over every detail. You are the manna in our lives providing at just the right moment. Thank You for loving us enough to let us come to the end of our own resources so that we see our situation for what it really is—a reminder that we need to utterly depend on You. In this place, You invite us to worship You with our whole heart. This is where we meet You as You're walking with us. We are grateful that You call us Your children. Amen.

## WORSHIPING AS CREATION

PSALM 150:6

The Psalms are an amazing example of finding ways to praise God through any circumstance and what it looks like to keep your focus on Him even when things seem completely out of control. Often, we allow our emotions to dictate what we believe about God and who He is. It can be a struggle to fully trust in His sovereignty, especially in difficult circumstances. It is a discipline to choose to focus on the truth of who He is and to shift our hearts to praise even through suffering and trials.

We long for Him to give explanations for things we do not understand—things like incomprehensible tragedies, suffering, and deaths. Our need for control often trumps our willingness to hope and rest in who God is. For if we stopped to meditate on who He really is and stood in awe of all creation, perhaps it would help us not to be so focused on needing to know our “whys,” but instead be drawn to praise and worship He who is due all the glory and praise.

Some things are not yet for us to understand, and faith is being OK with that and trusting that Yahweh, in His love, will reveal what needs to be revealed in its own time. For He alone in His sovereignty knows what is best for us. Let us praise Him in the light and praise Him in our darkest trials. Let all of us with breath praise the Lord!



## REFLECTION PRAYER

Lord, we thank You for Your incomprehensible love for us. We thank You and praise You for the gift of life and creation. While we struggle at times to believe You are still good, we will strive to anchor our hope in You and remember that You are sovereign. Help us to seek Your face and focus on praising You through all our circumstances. And we ask that You grow our character and reveal more of who You are in it and through it. We love You and praise You with every breath that is in us! Amen.

## WORSHIPING THE GOD WHO REIGNS

ROMANS 11:36

How can we comprehend fully surrendering our lives to a sovereign God? Paul gives us this simple yet overarching truth in Romans 11:36 of Jehovah Elyon, our God is sovereign. As we follow our God who reigns, our worship, family, home, calling, assignment, life, and our everything is not for us but rather from, through, and for Him.

As authentic worshipers, it is simple for us to justify holy places and moments as “for God.” Places like your church auditorium or a chair for prayer in your home. Moments such as when you experienced a miracle or an anointing on your life. What if we could see the mundane moments and places as from, through, and for God?

Could we allow the God of the universe to reign in and set apart everyday things in our lives? What if we view making dinner for friends and family as seeing God as our Provider and witnessing the fruit of kindness? What if we enjoy nature, books, music, film, or artwork that showcases the beauty of God’s creations? That exercise and eating well could be seen as stewarding God’s creation. We can even begin to see a pet that brings us love and joy as being from and for God.

Because of this scriptural truth, everything points us back to the Father. When we allow ourselves to see God in everything, the holy and the mundane, our natural response is worship. We experience gratitude, thankfulness, and love towards our Father and cannot help ourselves from giving God the glory and praise.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

God, we pray today that You open our eyes to see Your sovereignty in everything we experience. From simple moments, to the peaks of joy, to the valley of sorrow, may we see You at work in all things. Thank You, Lord, for the blessings in my life that I see and those I may never fully understand or recognize. I ask You to continue to reign in my life as I desire to point my life towards Your greatness. Let me worship You with every moment and breath—to You be the glory forever! Amen.

## WORSHIPING FOR HIS GLORY

## 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

As we focus this week on our lives being worship to God, we look at a common and often overlooked verse from Paul to the church in Corinth. Paul speaks here of the lessons that the Corinthians can learn from their ancestors in Egypt.

We often cling to this late verse in the chapter and use it as an encouragement to walk in daily holiness to the Lord. We view this verse as an internal statement, one that keeps us focused on our practices as we weigh the checks and balances of our daily decisions. But I challenge us to examine the passage entirely to see what Paul intends. He begins this sentence with a conjunction. When we see the word “so,” we can expect that whatever follows is the effect of a cause stated previously. Returning to verses 23–30, we see what the “so” references—the past laws of cleanliness and the focus of evangelism at the table.

This has been powerful in my home as we have pursued the evangelism of the table. Around meals, we see growth, vulnerability, and laughter. The table is where we are to show others how we truly live for God. Would we open up our lives to intersect with the normality of others? Would we begin to evangelize and worship at the table? Jesus invites us to His very own table, so let’s be a beautiful representation of the gospel as we pray for our lives to be a worshipful witness.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

Lord, continue to bring us closer to You. Would we walk in such a way that pleases You? Would You help us to be Jesus to those around us? Would they know us “as those that have been with Christ?” Thank You for this season of prayer. Allow us to have the courage to walk in the uncomfortable to bring You glory. Help us to be less consumed with the laws of our culture and more concerned about the evangelism of our rhythms. May our worship be pleasing to You. Amen.

## WORSHIPING IN GRATITUDE

## COLOSSIANS 3:16

Paul says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” I want to pause here and note that everything else Paul says in verse 16 is downstream of this. If we get what he says backwards, we run the risk of looking to ourselves to muster up “thankfulness in our hearts to God.” We’ll end up starting with what we must do rather than what’s already been done for us by Christ.

Instead, Paul begins with God giving us something to be thankful for, which takes the pressure off of us. We don’t have to generate gratitude on our own. So, what has God given us that makes us thankful to Him? The Word of Christ. Let’s meditate on Christ and what He’s done for us, and the rest of what Paul says to do will follow. Let us bring our worship and praise out of a heart that is set on Jesus. May our hearts overflow His goodness.



### REFLECTION PRAYER

God our Father, from You comes grace and peace to us. Incline our hearts to do what Paul commands, namely, to let the message of Christ, the gospel, dwell in us richly so that we’re able to teach and admonish one another in all wisdom. Father, make the gospel so real to our hearts that we can’t help but sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in our hearts to You. Jesus, in Your name we pray, amen.

## WORSHIPING AS A SACRIFICE

HEBREWS 13:15

It's common that when we hear a word like *sacrifice*, we immediately think of suffering. Of course, there are many instances where that is true—the sacrifices in the Old Testament, of the Old Covenant, were offerings to the Lord for the atonement of sins (guilt offering, sin offering, burnt offering, peace offering, grain offering) and were an act of worship. Before Jesus humbly and nobly paid the price for our transgressions, those sacrifices were necessary to restore humanity and mend the relationship between God and people.

Because of Jesus, we no longer have to offer sacrifices in the same way, but we do need to continuously draw close to Him. Like the Old Testament offerings, we need to restore our relationship with the Lord, worshiping Him through our actions—through our praise and adoration.

Sacrifice is deeply important—it draws us away from ourselves, reminding us of who we are in Christ. Our sacrifices mean nothing without the profound sacrifice of Jesus—everything we do, everything we offer, must be through faith and proclamation in and to the Lord.

Continuously offering God a sacrifice of praise not only means we are to worship the Lord, but we are to be sacrificial in the manner in which we devote ourselves to Him. Sacrifice and praise are woven together. Praise without sacrifice doesn't mean much—it costs us nothing. To sacrificially worship means that we lay down ourselves to draw close to Him, bringing forth all we have to offer.



## REFLECTION PRAYER

Jesus, we are so thankful for Your sacrificial love. We know that we often lose sight of worshiping You, especially in context of our own sacrifice. Would You teach us to humbly come before You and praise You exactly as You're calling us to? Forgive us when we believe we're praising You without any sort of sacrifice. Draw us closer, by Your Holy Spirit, to live our authentic faith in You to praise You in word and deed. Teach us to love You deeper as we openly profess Your name. Amen.

## WORSHIPING AS A SACRED RHYTHM

2 PETER 3:18

I once had a mentor who always said, “Context is king.” So, let’s look at the context of our verse for today, 2 Peter 3:18. Before we continue, take a moment to read the entire third chapter.

In this chapter, we see a dichotomy of warnings about the last, evil days and the beauty of the patient character of God with the promise of a new heaven and a new earth. So, where does worship fit into all of this?

My brothers and sisters, as we meditate on worship as a sacred rhythm, I would encourage us to see it as a rhythm we are beginning now that will never end for all eternity. Let us be found as followers of Jesus that praise and give glory in the difficult days here on earth and continue that praise while we get to stand in His glorious presence. Our acts of worship now are but a glimpse of eternity. The rhythms of work and arduous tasks and burdens will pass away, but our rhythms, which include worship to the one, true God, are what we can rest in. Glory and praise to the Lord is what lasts! So, “To Him be the glory both now and forever!”

How can you incorporate worship into your daily rhythms this week in ways that you’ve never tried before?



### REFLECTIVE PRAYER

Jesus, help me to pause. Help me to be still before You and worship You from a heart that is content and true. Would You help me see the larger picture of worship? Would my rhythms not be a distraction from Your presence but rather flow from worshipping You. You are worthy of it all. Amen.