

Some Common Questions Regarding House of Prayer

1. Where is the concept of the house of prayer found in the Bible?

The phrase "House of prayer" is drawn from Isaiah 56:7, where it is used twice. *"...These [foreigners] I will bring to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."*

Jesus refers to this verse when casting the money changers from the temple, as recorded in Mark 11:17. *"Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"* (Transcribed also in Matt. 21:13 and Luke 19:46)

The heart of the house of prayer is perhaps best captured by David's heart cry in Psalm 27:4, *"One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple."*

King David actually established one example of a house of prayer, known as the tabernacle of David. While referred to in many parts of the Bible, the best description of this biblical house of prayer is found in 1 Chron. 16:1 – 37.

We believe God is restoring the spirit and type of this expression of worship and prayer in a physical location. The best picture of what the house of prayer strives for can be found in the book of Revelation, in the many descriptions of the redeemed gathered before the throne of God in Rev. 5:8 – 9.

2. Is a certain prayer format important?

It's important for the house of prayer to be organized, so there is no confusion for leaders and participants. We believe God works through anointed leadership and this allows "freedom in the Spirit." While He is the Head, He looks to partner with us while we are here on the earth.

Each house of prayer in each city functions somewhat differently from other houses of prayer and usually takes on the "flavor" for which they are contending. The format at IHOP – One Thing Ministries is Harp and Bowl prayer and worship model in accordance to Rev 5:8.

3. Why are the concepts of “beauty” and “enjoyable prayer” important for the house of prayer?

The highest expressions of beauty are the beauty of God (Ps. 27:4) and the beauty He imparts to the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:27; Ps. 149:4). These two realms of beauty provide a solid foundation and fuel for night and day prayer.

Fascination: The heart of man was designed to be fascinated with who God is and what He looks like—never to be dull and lifeless. Part of our journey is rediscovering how amazingly beautiful and fascinating He is.

Confidence: As we begin to understand how amazingly beautiful He is, we also begin to understand that He has passed His own beauty on to us. We stand confident in His love and grace, sustained in affection; not in shame or fleshly motivations.

Pleasure and joy are indispensable to the house of prayer. He assured us through the prophet Isaiah that He would give us joy in the place of prayer (Isa. 56:7). The psalmist said, “*At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*” (Ps. 16:11)

In the house of prayer, we are operating under a paradigm of a God who is beautiful, fascinating and full of delightful pleasures. These qualities are inexhaustible on this side of eternity and are a worthy and wise pursuit for the human heart.

4. How does music and singing fit into a house of prayer?

We are in the midst of a global worship movement, focused on prayer and intimacy with God. It is vital that prayer becomes enjoyable for every believer. This releases a spirit of devotion, filling the heart with worship.

Many who have begun houses of prayer will attest to the “rock-pile” prayer meetings, where one feels as though he or she is simply chipping away little by little at the resistance around them with very little anointing and power. Fortunately, through God’s sovereign design, when worship is combined with intercession, a spiritual stirring occurs through the corporate body of believers.

Music awakens the heart to beauty. Since God is a musical being and we have been created in His very image, we have been made with a musical spirit. Almost every person finds solace, comfort or expression in music. Again, this is God’s design.

In heaven, music and verbal expression (i.e. prayer) are never separated from one another. We base most of our prayer meetings in the house of prayer upon this concept and value.

When King David instituted the tabernacle, he knew that worship and devotion were major components of day and night intercession. He must have possessed deep revelation of how heaven hosts a prayer meeting. We are seeking to emulate this heavenly model, found in Rev. 5:8. We call this particular model "harp and bowl intercession."

5. Why the use of Biblical Prayers and Apostolic Prayers?

The general rule is that God-centered intercessory worship is God's primary strategy for the Church to resist and dislodge demonic spiritual forces. As a general rule, we focus our proclamations directly to God. This will dismantle cultural strongholds by dislodging or wrestling with the disembodied evil spirits in the heavens.

There are exceptions to this general rule. Identification repentance as demonstrated by Ezra & Nehemiah is good and effective when the Holy Spirit orchestrates it in context to unity with governmental leaders in the Body of Christ.

Engaging in spiritual warfare is essentially done by agreeing with God and disagreeing with the enemy. Spiritual warfare operates through agreement with God's heart & is manifest in various ways:

- a. Worship is agreement with who God is. (e.g. Holy is the LORD; God is good)
- b. Intercession is agreement with what He promises to do.
- c. Repentance is coming into agreement with God's heart for us (e.g. holiness & purity) and breaking agreement with darkness in our hearts.
- d. Healing is coming into agreement with God's heart for healing and breaking agreement with sickness.
- e. Serving is coming into agreement with the servant heart of Jesus and breaking our agreement with selfish pride.

Biblical prayers are God-centered spiritual warfare. All of the approximately 25 – 30 NT prayers are directed to and focused on God instead of sin and the devil. There are no NT prayers directed at the devil or sin.

However, the Holy Spirit may lead the Church to war against a principality in a direct way. This is a governmental function that requires unity with the Holy Spirit on a divinely orchestrated occasion.

Biblical prayers are the actual prayer and worship text from the Bible. This is more than praying Bible verses, but locating and emphasizing the actual prayer verses of the Bible. Biblical prayers are prayers that began in God's burning heart. They have been given to the Church in the Scripture as a great gift for us to claim.

Apostolic prayers are prayers that the apostles prayed in the NT. The chief apostle is Jesus and the 12 apostles have prayers recorded in the NT. These apostolic prayers are God's very prayers.

Apostolic prayers focus on releasing God's grace instead of hindering or removing negative realities like sin or demons. There is a positive focus on the impartation of good instead of a negative focus on removing the realities of sin.

There is a place for "negative" dimensions of prayer that target confessing, resisting and renouncing the realities of the world, flesh & devil. But they are not the major focus of the NT model of praying. We embrace the negative dimension of confronting sin as based on the confession model of identification repentance used in Scripture by Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, etc.

Corporate confession of our fathers' historical sin is a part of biblical praying, but we must employ this dimension of prayer with Holy Spirit sensitivity instead of just doing it automatically by routine.

There are about 25 – 30 NT apostolic prayers. Example of apostolic prayer: Acts 4:24-31; Rom. 10:1; Rom. 15:5 – 7; Rom. 15:13; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Eph. 1:17-19; Eph. 3:16-19; Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-12; 1 Thes. 3:9-13; 2 Thes. 1:11-12; 2 Thes. 3:1-5