

Where Are You When You Pray?

Isaiah and John saw God's throne room. By faith, every believer enters it whenever we pray

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

HEBREWS 4:16

AT A GLANCE

BIG IDEA	When we pray, we come before God's throne. Isaiah and John were allowed to see that throne room: blazing holiness, constant worship, and the Lord seated in glory. We can't see it with our eyes, but by faith in Jesus we are welcome there every time we pray.
SCRIPTURE	Hebrews 4:14-16 · Isaiah 6:1-8 · John 12:41 · Revelation 1:17; 4:1-11; 5:6 · 2 Corinthians 5:7
LENGTH	About 20 minutes
BEST FOR	Middle school and high school
YOU WILL NEED	Bibles; dim the lights for the Revelation 4 reading if you can

Start here: where do you picture yourself?

Ask: "When you pray, where do you picture yourself?" In your bedroom? In a car? At youth group? All true. But the Bible says that when a believer prays, something bigger is happening:

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession... Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace." **HEBREWS 4:14, 16**

Every time we pray, we come before God's throne.

1 The spiritual world is real

We can't see, hear, or touch the spiritual realm with our physical senses, but it is real. We "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). A few times in the Bible, God pulled back the curtain and let someone see that reality. Two of those people were Isaiah and John. Isaiah saw the Lord in a vision of the temple (Isaiah 6:1), and John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" (Revelation 1:10).

FOR THE LEADER

Students hear many claims about visions and spiritual experiences. Gently teach them to test every experience by Scripture. Many experiences people report have natural explanations, and some are spiritually deceptive. We don't need a vision to know where we are when we pray. God's Word tells us, and that is enough.

2 What Isaiah saw

Read Isaiah 6:1-4. "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple" (v. 1). Mighty angels called seraphim cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!" (v. 3). The doorposts shook, and smoke filled the house.

Isaiah was terrified. "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips" (v. 5). In the presence of perfect holiness, he saw his own sin. Then an angel touched his lips with a burning coal from the altar: "Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged" (v. 7). Only after he was cleansed could Isaiah say, "Here am I! Send me" (v. 8).

Here's an amazing detail: John's Gospel says Isaiah "saw His glory and spoke of Him" (John 12:41), meaning Jesus. The Lord on that throne is the same Lord who died to cleanse us.

3 What John saw

Many years later, the apostle John was exiled on the island of Patmos. He too fell down "as dead" when he saw the risen Jesus, but Jesus laid His hand on him and said, "Do not be afraid" (Revelation 1:17). Then John was invited to look around heaven's throne room.

PICTURE IT

Ask students to close their eyes and imagine a room as vast as the sky. Read Revelation 4:1-11 slowly. Pause after the throne, the rainbow like an emerald, the lightning and thunder, the sea of glass, the twenty-four elders with golden crowns, and the living creatures who never stop saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" (v. 8).

The scene ends with the elders throwing their crowns before the throne: "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things" (v. 11). And in the very next chapter, John sees in the middle of the throne "a Lamb as though it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). Jesus is at the center of heaven.

4 This is where you are when you pray

Isaiah came trembling until his sin was taken away. John came already reassured by Jesus' hand on his shoulder. Because of Jesus, our great High Priest, we can come boldly too. Not because we're good enough, but because He has cleansed us and opened the way.

You may be sitting in your room, but by faith you are standing before the throne of the King of the universe. That changes how we pray. We come with **awe**, because He is holy. We come with **confidence**, because Jesus is our High Priest. And we come with **hope**, because at His throne we "obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

TALK IT OVER

1. Where do you usually picture yourself when you pray? Has that changed?
2. Why do you think Isaiah reacted with "Woe is me"?
3. What stood out to you most in John's description of the throne room?
4. How can we come "boldly" to a throne that holy?
5. How might picturing God's throne change the way you pray this week?

TAKE IT HOME

Read Isaiah 6:1-8 and Revelation 4-5 this week. Before you pray each day, pause and remember where you are: before the throne of grace, with Jesus as your High Priest. Then pray with awe, confidence, and hope.

Wherever you kneel, by faith you stand before the throne of grace.

From fifty years of youth ministry by **Ron Whittam**. Share freely with your students and leaders. · The Youth Ministry Living Room · qrprogramming.com/livingroom

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