

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

John 4:23: The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship in spirit and truth, **for such the Father seeks to worship him.**

GOD IS SEARCHING FOR A PEOPLE WHO (1) KNOW HOW AND (2) ARE WILLING TO WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH.

WORSHIP IS:

WORK.

Worship is something we do not something we go to attend.

Worshipers are active participants, not passive recipients.

During a service the “act-ors” are the members of the congregation and the “audience” is God.

The worship leaders are merely prompters.

**Worship is not a “show” put on for the congregation by up-front performers.
It is a service the congregation provides for God.**

OFFERING (to God).

Hebrews 13:15: Through him **let us continually offer up a sacrifice** of praise to God.

As the Jews in Jesus’ day were required to bring their best as their offering, our sacrifice of praise must be the best we can give.

RESPONSE.

Matthew 14:32-33: The wind ceased, and those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly, you are the Son of God.”

Matthew 28:29: They ... took hold of his feet and worshiped him.

St. Frances de Sales: He who prays fervently knows not whether he prays or not, for he is not thinking of the prayer he makes, but of God, to whom he makes it.

SUPERNATURAL.

Worship occurs when our spirit makes contact with God’s spirit.

John 4:24: God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

The most magnificent part of any worship service: God shows up.

Matthew 18:20: For where two or three are gathered in my Name, there I am among them.

William Barclay: True ... worship is not to come to a certain place; it is not to go through a certain ritual or liturgy ... True worship is when the spirit, the immortal and invisible part of man, ... meets with God who is immortal and invisible.

HUMBLING OURSELVES.

Revelation 4:10: The twenty-four elders fall down before the One who sits upon the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast down their crowns before the throne.

INTEGRATIVE.

True worship involves the whole person.

Psalm 103:1: Bless the Lord, o my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name.

True worship is all of who I am praising all of who God is.

PRIVILEGE.

John R. W. Stott: Christians believe that true worship is the highest and noblest activity of which humanity, by the grace of God, is capable.

The Holy of Holies was entered as a privilege one day of the year by one man coming from one designated family.

Matthew 27:50-51: Jesus ... yielded up his spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

The greatest Old Testament privilege is now offered to each of us in worship.

THE WHY'S OF WORSHIP

Jack Hayford: A worship service is convened (1) to serve God with our praise and (2) to serve people's need with his sufficiency.

WE WORSHIP GOD BECAUSE:

1. GOD DESIRES OUR WORSHIP.

Matthew 4:10: Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan. For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" (See **Deuteronomy 6:13**)

John 4:23: True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.

IS IT "BENEATH" GOD TO WANT OUR PRAISE?

Psalm 69:0-31: I will praise the Name of God. I will magnify him with thanksgiving. This will please the Lord more than an ox or a bull.

WHY PRAISE GOD? Our praise brings him pleasure.

More than your gift, God wants you.

When we bring our praise and our thanksgiving, like no other time, we are bringing ourselves.

2. **GOD DESERVES OUR WORSHIP.**

Our word “worship” comes from the word “worth.”

WHY IS GOD WORTHY OF OUR PRAISE?

A. He is our maker.

Psalm 95:6: Let us worship and bow down before the Lord our maker.

B. He is the earth’s creator.

Psalm 95:3-5: The Lord is a great God. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the heights of the mountains. The sea is his for he made it.

C. He is our savior.

Psalm 95:1: Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

3. **GOD EMPOWERS HIS CHURCH THROUGH WORSHIP.**

Great **praise from** the Church brings great **power to** the Church.

Luke 24:53: They were continually in the temple, praising God.

Acts 2: The Day of Pentecost: nonbelievers are “cut to the heart” when they hear the Gospel and 3000 are converted and baptized.

IN THE LIFE OF THE EARLY CHURCH, THE PRAISE OF GOD AND THE POWER OF GOD WERE CONSTANTLY LINKED TOGETHER.

Acts 2:46-47: Continued church growth.

Acts 13:1-4: The first missionary expedition.

Acts 16:25: An earthquake and a family’s salvation.

As God’s Church, we have important, spiritual work to accomplish which can be achieved only through the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the pattern we find consistently in the Scriptures is that God equips the Church with the Spirit’s power through worship.

4. **GOD BLESSES THE BELIEVER THROUGH WORSHIP.**

Psalm 42:1: As a doe longs for running streams, so longs my soul for you, O God.

We need a living, personal, powerful experience of God’s presence.

St. Augustine: You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you.

HOW DO WE OPEN OURSELVES TO EXPERIENCE GOD?

Psalm 22:3: You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

“**Enthroned**” means to sit down or to take one’s place.

The Point: Praise creates a place for God in the midst of your life. Whatever you are facing, praise brings God’s presence and power to your situation.

**IN WORSHIP WE GIVE OURSELVES TO GOD,
AND GOD GIVES HIMSELF TO US.**

THE HOW’S OF WORSHIP

John R.W. Stott: Christians believe that true worship is the highest and noblest activity of which humanity, by the grace of God, is capable.

Worship brings God’s _____ presence to his people.

Omnipresence: God is everywhere at all times.

Manifest presence: God’s presence becomes tangible.

Psalm 22:3: You are enthroned on the praises of Israel.

HOW DO WE WORSHIP GOD?

WITH ALL THAT WE ARE.

Psalm 103:1: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name.

A. WITH OUR MINDS.

John 4:22-23: You Samaritans worship what you do not know. (23) True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and **truth**.

In worship as in other aspects of our relationship with God, our minds matter.

If our beliefs are immature, shallow and distorted, our worship will be immature, shallow and distorted.

How do we develop beliefs that are mature and correct concerning God?

We use our minds to understand what God has revealed about himself in the scriptures.

B. WITH OUR HEARTS.

John 4:23: True worshipers will worship the Father in **spirit ...** True worship involves our spirits: it touches the deep places of who we are – our hearts and our emotions.

TWO ERRORS IN THE AREA OF OUR EMOTIONS:**1. To believe that feelings should be absent in worship.**

Psalm 103:1: All that is within me bless his holy Name.

John Wesley: Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift your voice with strength.

2. To believe that feelings are worship.

Worship should not be emotionalism, but it should involve the emotions.

C. WITH OUR BODIES.**EXAMPLES:**

Singing: Sing praises to God, sing praises to our King (Ps. 47:6).

Playing musical instruments: Praise him with trumpet sound, with lute and harp (Ps. 150:3).

Clapping: Clap your hands, all peoples, shout to God with loud songs of joy (Ps. 47:1).

Raising hands: I desire that people pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands (1 Tim. 2:8).

Also: kneeling, standing, and dancing.

DAVID OR MICHAL: WHO SETS THE TONE FOR WORSHIP?

II Samuel 6:16: But as the Ark of the Lord entered the city of David, Michal, the daughter of Saul, looked down from her window. When she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she was filled with contempt for him.

II Samuel 6:23: So Michal, the daughter of Saul, remained childless throughout her life.

D. WITH A SENSITIVITY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

God is the audience, we are the orchestra, and the Holy Spirit is the director.

John Wesley: Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him ... and see that your heart is ... offered to God continually.