

## Worship and Praise

### ***Psalms 100:1-5 (NIV)***

<sup>1</sup> Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

<sup>3</sup> Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

<sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

<sup>5</sup> For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

### **We've spent two weeks discussing worship. How would you define worship now?**

Worship technically involves the declaring of one's worth. However this is not simply an intellectual assent, but a life focus. We are to centre our lives on the worship of God, affecting every aspect of our lives. Declaring God's worth through our lives will demand all of eternity, and even then we will fall far short.

### **Why do you think praise is so important to God?**

### **Is worship for God's benefit or for ours?**

This is a tricky question. God is to be the sole object of our worship and all praise is to be directed toward him. However, God does not need our worship. He is not lacking in any way that he needs anything from us. God is not lacking in self worth such that he desperately craves our adoration.

### ***Acts 17:24-25 (NIV)***

<sup>24</sup> "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. <sup>25</sup> And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

God calls us to worship because "we" need to worship him.

### Why is it so essential for us to worship God?

- 1) Worship implies relationship.

**What do you think this means?**

When we worship something/someone we are giving that object a place of priority in our lives. We cannot worship God apart from a relationship with him. One cannot rebel against God and truly worship him at the same time. Worship brings us to oneness with what we worship and as a result it has the ability to shape our lives.

- 2) Worship defines the nature of that relationship.

**What do you think we mean by this?**

Our biggest challenge is that we constantly forget who God is. As a result we begin to elevate ourselves and demote God to a lesser role in our lives. True worship corrects that misperception.

***Psalms 100:3 (NIV)***

*Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.*

**What truths does worship help us remember about God and our relationship with him?**

God is our creator and we are the creation

I am not God

God owes us nothing, but in his grace gives us life. Everything we have we owe to God

God is our provider and protector

God alone is worthy of praise

He is holy; I am sinful

He is omniscient, omnipotent, omni-present, and unchanging. He is eternal.

I am created for him, not he for me.

Etc.

**Worship restores us to a proper perspective of God.**

**What is the ultimate expression of worship in the New Testament?**

The ultimate expression of worship is to identify Jesus as Lord over our lives.

True worship comes in the form of complete surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and being filled with his Spirit. Any area of our life not surrendered to him indicates a divided heart and incomplete worship.

***Romans 10:9 (NIV)***

*That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

***Philippians 2:9-11 (NIV)***

*<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**In what ways did Jesus change the nature of the relationship we can have with God?**

Jesus invites us to call him “dad”, to understand that he is our true father and we are his children. We can approach God with safety and confidence as a little child does to a loving father.

***Romans 8:15-16 (NIV)***

*<sup>15</sup> For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

**How did this contrast with the Old Testament?**

In the Old Testament God was to be worshipped from a distance. Every aspect of the temple was symbolic of the barriers between us and a holy God. The exterior wall, the gate, the altar, the wash basin, the building, the lamp, the bread table, the altar of incense, the curtain, the Holy of Holies, the ark of the covenant and even the priesthood itself, all these pictured separation from God.

***Exodus 24:1 (NIV)***

*Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. You are to worship at a distance,*

**Can you think of some times when Jesus revealed this new relationship approach with God?*****Matthew 6:9 (NIV)***

*“This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,*

***Matthew 19:14 (NIV)***

*Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”*

Jesus revealed that God is not a distant God, but through his presence they could now approach God as a little child approaches their dad. Worship takes the shape of a little child running to the dad they adore, throwing their arms around him and saying, “I love you daddy!”

This concept of worship could never be embraced before the work of Jesus and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We truly are the children of God and that changes everything.

**How does our perception of God tend to change how we worship?**

When we buy into lies about the character of God, it becomes impossible to worship him in spirit and truth. At these times we feel God is undeserving of our worship and so we withhold it as a punishment. Or in fear of his judgment we cower from God and do not dare enter his presence.

**Whenever there is a distorted picture of God we can not enter his gates with thanksgiving or joy.**

**What is wrong with our perspectives at these times?**

God does not change. How I choose to perceive my personal experiences does not determine the character of God and his worthiness of worship. The problem comes when we, from our limited perspective, judge the actions of God and find him wanting.

Job suffered with this dilemma and the solution was not found in any explanation from God, but a revelation of who God was in Job chapters 38-42.

***Psalms 33:1-3 (NIV)***

*<sup>1</sup> Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. <sup>2</sup> Praise the Lord with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. <sup>3</sup> Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.*

***Psalms 47:6-7 (NIV)***

*<sup>6</sup> Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. <sup>7</sup> For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.*

***1 Chronicles 25:6-7 (NIV)***

*<sup>6</sup> All these men were under the supervision of their fathers for the music of the temple of the Lord, with cymbals, lyres and harps, for the ministry at the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman were under the supervision of the king. <sup>7</sup> Along with their relatives--all of them trained and skilled in music for the Lord--they numbered 288.*

**Why do you think music plays such an important part of worship to God?**

Music breaks through our intellectual defenses and touches our emotions. When we worship without emotion we once again divide ourselves and do not worship in integrity. How can we worship the very character of God and not be touched emotionally in some way.

God desires that all of us (heart, soul and mind) embrace him in adoration. **Anything less means we are coming to him with a divided heart.**

**Music allows us to become emotionally open to our relationship with God. We are not to be controlled by our emotions, but neither are we to ignore them.**

Why do you think we see men get more emotional at a football game than we do in a worship service?

Circle the various forms of worship in the following passages.

***Psalms 95:6 (NIV)***

*Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;*

***Psalms 134:2 (NIV)***

*Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the Lord.*

***Psalms 47:1 (NIV)***

*Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.*

***Psalms 149:3 (NIV)***

*Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp.*

***Revelation 4:10 (NIV)***

*the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever.*

Why do you think we are sometimes hesitant to worship in some of these ways?

What are some ways we could begin to have greater integrity in our worship with regard to “how” we worship?

***Psalms 96:1-3 (NIV)***

<sup>1</sup> Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. <sup>2</sup> Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. <sup>3</sup> Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

***Psalms 18:49 (NIV)***

*Therefore I will praise you among the nations, O Lord; I will sing praises to your name.*

**Why do you think there is such a strong connection between worship and declaring God to the nations in scripture?**

When one comes to God, adoring him for who he is, they soon discover that they start embracing the heart-passions of God as well. God's passion has always been that people would turn back to relationship with himself. We were all created to be loved by God and to love God.

**Discuss the following quote:**

*"Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't."*  
*John Piper*

**How does worship and missions relate to our understanding that we were created for Relationship and Representation?**

They are two ways of saying the same thing. You cannot have worship without relationship and you cannot have relationship without worship. If you find your delight and joy from your relationship with God, you will desperately long for others to encounter and know our wonderful God.

**What does a lack of mission in one's life indicate about the nature of their worship?****What does a lack of worship reveal about one's mission focus?****How can we take steps to go deeper in both our worship and mission focus?**