

Worship - What, Why, How?

I. What is worship?

Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. - John 4:22-24

“The scriptures include or allude to just about every approach to worship there is: organized, spontaneous, public, private, simple, complex, ornate, or plain. Yet there is no comment anywhere about any one way being preferred over another. Rather, it is the spiritual condition of the worshipper that determines whether or not God is at work. This fact alone countermands the tendency to assume that if we could find just the right system or style, all will be well and God will come down.” (*Harold Best - Music Through the Eyes of Faith – pg 146*)

“Worship is not simply something that happens in the congregation when we think we feel the presence of God. Worship can happen when we are in our darkest hour and we affirm His sovereignty regardless of our circumstances (*Bob Sorge - Exploring Worship – pg 73*)

Worship - “*an act, process, or instance of expressing reverence - to honor or reverence - to regard with respect, honor or devotion.*”

Offer, offering - “*a presenting of something as an act of worship.*”

Three scripture passages go to the heart of worship.

1. Romans 12:1 - *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

2. John 4:23-24 - *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*”

3. Psalm 29:2 - *Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*

True worship is confessing your need of God when everything around is crying out, “*God is unjust. He does not care about you. He does not love you. He has forsaken you*”. The true worshipper says, “*The Lord is God. Blessed be His name. You can have this entire world. Give me Jesus.*”

Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted. For the LORD is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.-

Psalm 89:15-18

SONG – Give Me Jesus

II. Why do we worship?

“Once we understand the majesty and omnipotence of God, our expression of love for Him will become as natural as the way we express amazement for an artist after looking at a great masterpiece.”

C. S. Lewis

Worship is a natural expression of our love for God. Worship is our response to our understanding of all He has done for us.

We love him, because he first loved us. - **1 John 4:19**

The important question to ask is, *Do we love the act of worshipping more than loving the God we worship?*

1. We are commanded to worship God.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. - **Matthew 4:10**

For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. - **Exodus 34:14**

2. We worship God because it will lead others to worship God.

But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. - **1 Corinthians 14:24-25**

3. We worship God because we see Him for who He really is.

And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. - **Job 1:21**

(my paraphrase) I know You can do everything, that no thought is withheld from You. I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. - **Job 40:1-5**

King David understood the greatness of God. As an old man he proclaimed,

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed. - **Psalms 37:25-26**

“A person cannot praise God, only unless he understands that there is nothing in himself worthy of praise, but that all that is worthy of praise is of God and from God. But since God is eternally praiseworthy, because He is the infinite Good and can never be exhausted, therefore they will praise Him forever and ever.”

Martin Luther

4. We worship because He has saved us.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.- **Romans 5:8**

Do you remember when you first met Him? Weren't you like the blind man who received his sight? When asked who this Jesus was, he replied,one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see - **John 9:25b**

SONG – Do You Remember the Time?

III. How Do We Worship?

We are to worship with our whole heart.

The real problem with all the worship wars that I mentioned before is matter of a difference of music taste. One person likes this style of music while someone else likes another style.

Remember, worship is not primarily music. And music is such a small part of our worship to God. Besides, to the true believer, music style should never be an issue.

The real problem is with the heart. The varied forms of worship we may see today do not affect the heart that truly worships God. And there is only one way to worship – from the heart. It is really hard to criticize something that has been offered from the heart. God desires our worship to come from our heart.

I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.- Psalms 9: 1

Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation. - Psalms 111:1

We have to get out of our thinking that worship is primarily music. It is not. It encompasses our entire life. It is everything we do, and we saw earlier that if it was primarily music, then we don't do very much of it. And worship is not "doing it our way."

The truth is, our way is not often God's way. And I'm pretty sure that God is not even concerned with what our way is. In the end, it is not about us anyway. It is about Him. It is not what we get out of worship – it is about what we give. It is not about whether our needs are met – it is about whether His name is exalted.

(Marty Parks – Quiet Moment for Worship Leaders – pg 92)

"The purpose of God in sending His Son to die and live and be at the right hand of God the Father was that He might restore to us the missing jewel, the jewel of worship; that we might come back and learn to do that which we were created to do in the first place – worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

A.W. Tozer

Have you ever wondered what will happen when we get to heaven? Will we bow? Will we stand? Will we shout or keep silent? One thing I know will happen. We will worship God forever and ever. The book of Revelation tells us there are angels that circle the throne of God night and day saying "*Holy, holy, holy. Lord God Almighty, which was and is, and is to come.*"

All the angels around the throne will be saying, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." There will be never-ending praise and glory to God our Father and His Son Jesus Christ. We can only imagine what it will be like.

SONG – I Can Only Imagine

Closing prayer