

Worship talk - Week 2 - What, Why and How

What is worship?

What does it mean to you? On your own in private, or together in church? Just Singing?
What do you think/expect when we say: The "worship" service or "A time of worship"? Our worship will start at then we'll have the notices, communion, tithes, talk, etc...???

Dictionary definition: from Old English *weorthscipe* worthiness, respect, from *weorth* worthy, worth + *-scipe* –ship (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/worship>), worthiness, merit, recognition given or due, honour, respect, reverence, adore, be full of adoration (Oxford Concise)

In Greek: proskuneo

- 1) to kiss the hand to (toward) one, in token of reverence
 - 2) among the Orientals, especially the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence
 - 3) in the New Testament by kneeling or prostration; used of homage shown to men and beings of superior rank
- (Thayer's definition)

Sebomai - to "revere"

Latreuo - to "serve"

Therapeuo - to "do service"

Ps 19:1-2 - the stars

Declaration, proclamation, speech, knowledge

Luke 19:37-40 – the stones

Joyful, praise, loud voice, thanksgiving, proclamation, cry out

2 Sam 6:12-15 – the steps – David's dancing

Rejoicing, sacrifice, dancing, shouts, instruments

Quotes:

"Worship is transcendent wonder." - Thomas Carlyle

"When we really worship anything, we love not only its clearness but its obscurity. We exult in its very invisibility." - Gilbert K. Chesterton

"Reverence is the highest quality of man's nature; and that individual, or nation, which has it slightly developed, is so far unfortunate. It is a strong spiritual instinct, and seeks to form channels for itself where none exists; thus Americans, in the dearth of other objects to worship, fall to worshipping themselves." - Lydia M. Child

"It is only when men begin to worship that they begin to grow." - Calvin Coolidge

Quotations from www.quotationsbook.com

Our response to God for who He is and for what He has done.

Created objects worship God when they fulfil the function for which they were created.
(Their beauty reflects their Creator).

So in the Psalms, the stars worship God Ps19 just by declaring their splendour. Jesus talks about the stones crying out if the people don't. "The trees of the field shall clap their hands"

The disciples worshipped Jesus after He walked on the water and got into the boat. Thomas worshipped Jesus when He saw the scars.

We worship when we fulfil the purpose for which we were created. Shorter Catechism says that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Specifically, what gifts should we be using for God?

Why do we worship?

We are created in God's image. We are spiritual beings. We are made to worship.

***Illustration: Born dead spiritually, need to be born - Connection to God (plug & socket), We need to grow: volume up (Keyboard) – time spent with God, worship, Holy Spirit, electricity.

He inhabits the praises of His people (Psa. 22:3, KJV)

If we don't worship God, we'll worship something else – football (the singing even!), pop-stars, fashion, jobs, careers, money, family, etc. We can't help it – it's our nature to worship. We really do have a "God-shaped hole" at the centre of our beings, which if not filled by Him, will be filled by something or someone else.

How do we know if something is getting out of balance? Priorities. What do we spend lots of our spare time doing? What do our thoughts drift to in idle moments? Idolatry takes God's place: it can't satisfy, God is a jealous God (marriage). Is Jesus our most precious treasure? Everything we have comes from Him. We only return to Him what is His already.

***Illustration: Think of a nice place to be, scenery, a sunset, or a marvellous work of art, or hear an amazing piece of music: we enthuse about it and complement it. It's the right and natural thing to do. We don't feel awkward. We say "wow". So should be our response to God.

Out of gratitude.

...a challenge...

- ▶ Has something or someone taken that central place in our lives where God should be?
- ▶ Is Jesus our most precious treasure?
- ▶ Everything we have comes from Him. We only return to Him what is already His.

How do we worship?

In spirit and truth – examine. With passion, truth and integrity. Not just words, but from the heart (February's theme). It involves 1) being honest with God, (we can't hide anything from Him anyway), 2) being real, genuine (Pharisee and tax collector) 3) from the heart (involves who we are, not just mouthing words whilst thinking of something else). Give Him time – not rushing in, preparation, linger long enough – go from thanksgiving, praise, then into intimacy (worship).

Thanksgiving: Thanks for what He has done.

Praise: Declaring who God is

Worship: respect, reverence, our surrender, bowing down, yielding to God, draw near, to kiss, show affection. Intimacy – we are His children.

Preparation, focus, not rushing, expectance, faith. Involves a balance of:

- a) **Intellect** Worship involves knowledge.
- b) **Emotions.** Our worship should involve our emotions
- c) **Will.** Worship involves our will. Submission, Lordship, Headship.

Private as well as congregational.

***Illustration: Football fan analogy: knowledge of team/players, choose to go to games, singing, chanting, making up songs about the team and individuals, raised arms, passion, emotional (highs and lows of goals scored and conceded), railings at the enemy (often the ref and the other team), sacrificial – travelling and financial. Fanatical or normal? What is a normal Christian?

Singing, words, body position etc. Corinthian church – Prayer, praise (hymns), reading of scripture, instruction, prophesying, tongues, benediction, Lord's supper, use of gifts, bringing words, etc.

Thanksgiving, reverence (because of who He is), praise (for what He has done), life must be worship.

Summary

- ▶ We worship when we fulfil the purpose for which we were created.
- ▶ We worship out of gratitude, because it's the right thing to do.
- ▶ Where are our priorities?
- ▶ We worship from the heart, in spirit and in truth, with reverence and intimacy.

...a challenge...

- ▶ Rev 3:15-16 - Laodicean church – we should not be lukewarm
- ▶ What is our temperature?