

## ENTERING THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

1. If we have a heart which desires God, we naturally desire to come near to him. We want to be in his presence.
2. Varying manifestations of the presence of God.
  - a. God is omnipresent; his presence is everywhere, all the time.
  - b. Where two or three are gathered in his name, he is there in the midst of them. Mat 18:20.
  - c. 2 Chron 5:13-14. The cloud of glory filling Solomon's temple when the singers and musicians lifted their harps in praise to God. A very special manifestation of the presence of the Lord.
3. Individual vs. Corporate worship.
  - a. Praise is not so much God coming into our presence as it is our going into his presence.
    - i. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.
    - ii. Praise God in his sanctuary. Ps 100:4; 150:1
    - iii. It is not God descending to us as us ascending unto him. Is 2:3; Ps 24:3
  - b. NASB Ps 22:3. He is enthroned on our praises. He is made King when we praise him, for we are declaring his kingship and Lordship to a world that does not recognize him as Lord.
4. The responsibility of the individual worshiper.
  - a. If we believe that all Christians are active members of the New Testament priesthood--that all of us are ministers before and unto the Lord--then we must begin to accept the proper responsibility for our role as ministers in the congregation.
    - i. The first and foremost responsibility of every worshiper is to minister unto the Lord. The responsibility to praise and worship does not rest on the pastor or the worship leader; it is my responsibility to offer up an individual "sacrifice of praise" to the Lord.
    - ii. Each has responsibility to prepare ourselves for worship. Get up early on Sunday and spend some time in prayer and praise. When entering sanctuary, spend time in prayer rather than to visit with others. Staying up late Saturday night to watch a "horror flick" is not a good way to prepare for Sunday worship.
  - b. Prepare for worship by dealing with any known sin in our lives before we get to the service.
  - c. Responsibility to prepare ourselves in prayer ahead of time. A prayerless saint will never become a worshiper. If we prepare ourselves diligently in prayer for the worship service, we will be amazed at our level of concern for and participation in the service.
  - d. We need to frequent the place of worship. Heb 19:25.
5. When coming into the presence of God, we ought not to come for a handout but should rather bring an offering. Ps 96:8.
6. Praise is not the response of those who have waited for some heavenly shower; it is initiated by those who approach God with a spiritual sacrifice.
7. We have a responsibility to be self-motivated in our praise and worship.

8. We should enter readily and wholeheartedly in the praise of God.
9. Our responsibility is to make our songs a praise from our hearts unto God.
10. Worshiping despite distractions.
11. We must be worshipers all week long.
12. The sacrifice of praise. Heb 13:15; 1 Pet 2:5; Ps 27:6; 54:6; 107:22; 116:17
  - a. A sacrifice speaks of something costly; the giving of something that is dear to us.
  - b. A sacrifice is not a sacrifice until it costs us something.

The cost of praise.

Praise is not a free commodity.

Cost of energy.

Cost of preparation.

Cost of time.

Perhaps this could be incorporated with "Becoming a Worshiper."