

Worship. proskuneo, pros-koo-neh'-o; from G4314 and a prob. der. of G2965 (mean. to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand); to fawn or crouch to, i.e. (lit. or fig.) prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore):--worship.

I. OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO WORSHIP GOD.

- A. 1 Chr. 16:29(1 Chr 16:29 KJV) Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- B. Ps. 99:9(Psa 99:9 KJV) Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.
- C. God created us to worship Him.

II. VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF WORSHIP.

- A. Worship is conversation between God and man, a dialogue that should go on constantly in the life of a Christian.
- B. Expression of the heart.
 - 1. Worship is one's heart expression of love, adoration, and praise to God with an attitude and acknowledgment of his supremacy and Lordship.
 - 2. Worship means "to feel in the heart." Worship means to express in some appropriate manner what we feel.
- C. Expression of love.
 - 1. True worship and praise are "awesome wonder and overpowering love" in the presence of our God.
 - 2. The heart of true worship is the unashamed pouring out of our inner self upon the Lord Jesus Christ in affectionate devotion.
 - 3. Worship is extravagant love and extreme obedience.
- D. Function of the Spirit.
 - 1. Worship is fundamentally God's Spirit within us contacting the Spirit in the Godhead.
 - 2. Worship is the response of God's Spirit in us to that Spirit in him whereby we answer, "Abba, Father," deep calling unto deep.

III. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRAISE AND WORSHIP.

- A. The outward forms of praise and worship are often identical. It is almost as difficult to separate praise and worship as it is to divide soul and spirit.
- B. The four expressions known as prayer, thanksgiving, praise, and worship are very closely related.
- C. Worship is an attitude of the heart; praise is an outward testimony.
- D. Praise can sometimes be distant, but worship is usually intimate.
 - 1. Drunkards witness to one another.
 - 2. Jesus said the rocks would cry out if his disciples did not praise him. Rocks do not have a relationship with God; no interaction of personalities.
 - 3. Relationship is a requirement for worship. It brings us close to the heart of God.
- E. Praise is always seen or heard; worship is not always evident to an observer.
 - 1. Praise is obvious to others.
 - 2. There is only one who knows whether or not we are truly worshipping.
- F. Praise is largely horizontal in its purpose, while worship is primarily a vertical

interaction.

1. Horizontally, we speak to one another and we declare his praise before each other.
 2. Praise does have some vertical functions.
 3. Praise is often preparatory to worship.
 4. Praise can be conceived as a gateway to worship. We sing in order to enter into praise, and sometimes we praise in order to enter into worship.
 5. Music is a catalyst for worship. It in no way guarantees or even denotes worship.
 6. Worship is not a musical activity but a function of the heart.
- G. We sometimes need to plunge into praise with an aggressiveness. Our spirit is willing to worship, but our flesh is weak and reluctant. Since praise is expressed through the flesh, it requires a stirring up of the flesh. Worship is more a function of the spirit; what is needed is not a stirring up of the flesh but an unlocking of the spirit.
- IV. Worship is not necessarily superior to praise. Sometimes it is appropriate to remain at praise for a period of time or to bring a service to an apex by concluding with high praise.
- A. What matters to God is that we enter into sweet communion with him, regardless of whether the song is written in the first, second, or third person.
 - B. Get focus off the mechanics and concentrate on pleasing the Lord by simply expressing our love to him.
- V. Many of the bodily activities employed in praise are employed in worship also.
- A. Shouting, clapping, singing, dancing can be used in worship.
 - B. But worship can also transpire without any outward activity, whereas praise is always characterized by some form of physical manifestation.
 - C. The highest of these two expressions is whichever is inspired by the Holy Spirit for the occasion.
- VI. When we praise, the Holy Spirit begins to stir our hearts, and we become more conscious of God's presence.
- A. His presence never comes and goes. We are the ones who change.
 - B. Our awareness of his presence changes.
- VII. Some services will begin with worship and end with a glorious sound of praise.
- VIII. Worship is not just a response to God's presence. There are times when we feel very far from God, and yet we need to worship him. Ex: Abraham offering up Isaac. "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship (Gen. 22:5).
- IX. There are times when our worship will not constitute the forming of words and phrases but will involve the humble prostration of our souls before God, revering his greatness in silence and stillness. Since worship is an expression of love, it frequently functions very similarly to marital love. Love does not need to be verbalized in order to be expressed or appreciated.

- X. The Holy Spirit and worship.
- A. Unregenerate man will never be able to worship in love.
 - B. The Holy Spirit is an integral part of our worship, and congregational worship is successful only as we submit to him as our divine Worship Leader.
- XI. Worship in spirit and truth. John 4:21-24.
- A. Jesus was showing that worship would no longer be bound to a certain time or place (neither in Jerusalem, where the Jews worshiped, nor Mount Gerizim, where the Samaritans worshiped).
 - B. It was going to be a function of the spirit of man reaching out to the Spirit of God.
 - C. Jesus knew the time was shortly to come when Mosaic sacrifices at Jerusalem would be outdated, and worship would occur within the New Testament temple, man himself (1 Cor 3;16).
 - D. As a function of the spirit, true worship is more than just an outward ritual. Worship is our spirit corresponding with God's Spirit.
 1. Under the old covenant, worship was a series of outward ceremonies that did not necessarily involve the heart response of the participants.
 2. Is 29:13. These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.
 3. Under the new covenant, our worship become more than merely the mouthing of empty cliches but can be the upright expression of a pure heart.
 - E. Jesus further showed that our worship would be greatly enhanced through the fullness of the Holy Spirit.
- XII. Worship in truth.
- A. Distinction between ignorant worship ("you Samaritans worship what you do not know" and intelligent worship ("we worship what we do know). Jesus spoke of worshiping in truth meaning that worshiping must involve the mind. The more we exert our minds in worship, the more meaningful our worship is likely to be.
 - B. The second application of worship in truth is that worship must be through Jesus Christ, who is the truth (Joh 14:6).
 - C. Third, we are to worship out of a heart that is true to God, with a life that displays truth and purity. Worship with integrity.
 - D. True worship is to be distinguished from hypocritical worship. Put on good "front."
 - E. Finally, in saying we should worship in truth, Jesus intends that we worship in accordance with the truth of God's word, for "your word is truth (Joh 17:17). It is not enough to worship in sincerity; we must also worship in truth. Millions worship in sincerity, but they do not worship according to the revealed truth of God in his word. Muslims worship Allah, believing they are worshiping the one true God. We can know we are a worshiper of the true God by getting to know him through the Scriptures. Worship flows out of relationship, and our relationship with God is strengthened by learning of him through his word. Our worship is no higher than our knowledge of God.
 - F. Worship inevitably works a changing and purifying within. Intimate fellowship

with God will of a certainty bring a refining in our lives; the inner recesses of our hearts will be illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and the dross will be purged, for “our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12:29).

(John 4:20 KJV) Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. (John 4:21 KJV) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. (John 4:22 KJV) Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. (John 4:23 KJV) 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. (John 4:24 KJV) God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

- G. Praise and worship foster a receptivity for the word.
 - 1. Hos 10:11. “Judah shall plow.” Praise plows the soil of our hearts so that we are prepared to receive the implanted seed, the word of God.
 - 2. Prepares the pastoral leadership for the delivery of the word. 2 Kings 3.

The inward ramifications of worship.

- A. Releases God’s people in an uninhibited expression of their inner selves.
 - 1. Whatever form we worship should be with all our hearts.
 - 2. Ps 24:7. “Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.”
- B. Provides a verbal expression of the feelings of our heart.
 - 1. May be difficult to vocalize just how much God means to us.
 - 2. We have hymns and choruses written by poets and writers of many ages who had a particular knack for expressing themselves with a pen. When words fail us, we can echo the words of Martin Luther, “a mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing!”
 - 3. These songs provide a vocabulary, coupled with an enhancing melody, to provide a meaningful expression from our hearts to the Lord.
- C. Worship increases our faith. When we worship, we may be hearing the word of God.
- D. As we worship, we also grow in holiness.
 - 1. If worship does not change a person’s life, the reason is simple: that person has not unveiled his or her face before God.
 - 2. “When he appears, we shall be like him.” Worship is seeing the Lord. When we see him on that day, we will be like him.
- E. Worship inspires a greater commitment to a life of worship.
 - 1. Congregational worship is intended to help inspire us to a consistent life of worship all week long.
 - 2. Church time is practise time.

Worship prepares us for the new thing God wants to do.

God is preparing a people.

Praise and worship have preparatory effects. Ps. 50:23

Worship softens our hearts and sensitizes our spirits, so that when God moves, we will know it.

(1 Chr 16:29 KJV) Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

(Exo 34:14 KJV) For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: