

Holy Habits: Worship

Worship is placing trust, value, and worth on something or someone through allegiance, gifts, and service.

Worship...the act of acknowledging God's value and prioritizing your life around that value.

Worship is more than singing, though singing or celebrating is a big part of worship. Worship is not an event or another name for a church service. Worship does not just happen on Sundays. It happens every day. Worship is personal and done alone. Worship is collective and accomplished with others. Worship is not confined by a particular emotion. Worship can be done through lament, celebration, and adoration. Worship can affect our attitude and our hearts towards others. Our attitude and heart towards others can affect our worship. Worship can be misplaced. Anything or anyone that we put value and trust in to give us life could be an idol in our hearts.

We are worshipping someone or something in everything we do whether we realize it or not. We could be worshipping pleasure, justice, money, romance, power, politics, work, luxury, science, acceptance, etc. There is nothing wrong with having those, but good things can become god-things. And Jesus said we cannot worship both God and those other things:

"Then Jesus told him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him." Matthew 4:10

"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." Matthew 6:24

Worship goes beyond a unique activity we do on Sundays. Worship should be seen in everything we do and say (1 Corinthians 10:31). We are to worship at work. We are to worship at home. We are to worship while out with friends. We are to worship while on social media. We are to worship while we work on our finances. We are to worship while we fill our week with activity. It is a way of life to acknowledge God and to place trust and value in Him through those things.

"Therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship." Romans 12:1

Therefore, worship starts with the heart and the mind. One could worship with their lips, but if their heart is not in it...it is vain worship:

"Hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you when he said: "These people honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. They worship Me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commands of men." Matthew 15:7-9

God desires sincere worship placed in truth. Some can be sincere in their worship but misplaced with false beliefs about God. Worshipping with our emotions without doctrinal and Biblical truth...and worship that is grounded in Biblical truth but lacks a heartfelt affection...is incomplete or misplaced or false worship. Worship must be grounded in spirit and in truth.

"But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." John 4:23-24

Worship is highly personal. And yet it is expressed and shared with others. Even though our personal devotion to God is what God seeks, He does not separate our vertical relationship from our horizontal (human) relationships. Loving God but not loving others is false love. Worship can be hindered when our relationships with other Christians are strained (Matt 5:23-24). Our love for one another in the family of God directly impacts our worship to God. Our ability to forgive and seek forgiveness and reconciliation is a must.

"you yourselves [plural], as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:5

God is placing us with other “living stones” to offer a larger and more visible worship than what one stone could do alone. When we withdrawal from corporate worship, the sacrifice of worship to God is not as impactful. When we have anger or bitterness or hurt among the church, the sacrifice of worship to God is lacking. A building not fitted well together cannot stand. A building fitted together, even though it has some gaps and oddly shaped stones, will stand. Our horizontal relationships affect our vertical worship.

Worship lets us get rid of our grief, anger, sorrow, and selfish desires and cling onto God. Worship resets our hearts from the hurts and worries of this world to lean on the truth of God and His comfort. Worship refocuses our attention from the things of this world to the things of more importance. Worship reveals where we may have misplaced our value. Worship gives us opportunity to seek forgiveness, offer mercy, and live in God’s love.

- 1. How did you define worship before this study?*

- 2. How do you typically worship?*

- 3. How could you worship at home or at work?*

- 4. Is there anything you are going to do differently now?*