

1. **Def of worship:** Psalm 95:6-- “Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.” John 4:23-24-- “But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

Shachah—“to bow down.” Proskyne—“to bow with respect and devotion”

“Worship is assigning worth and value to someone/thing, and then out of respect, gratitude, affection, devotion, or fear; bowing one’s life before that someone or something.” Original word—“Worship”

1. What are the prerequisites for truly worshipping God?

First, we must be **born again**. “No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11b).

Second, worshipping in spirit requires a **mind centered on God and renewed by His truth**. Paul exhorts us to “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Romans 12:1b, 2b).

Third, we can only worship in spirit by having a **pure heart, being open and repentant**.

“the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart” (Psalm 51:17). Praise and worship toward God cannot come from hearts filled with unconfessed sin.

2. Why does God command us to worship Him?

1. Fitting—Worship Me isn’t vain; it’s right. Psalm 19:1; Job 38; 1st commandment
Something wrong with not saying thanks to a wonderful blessing!

2. Fulfilling—It is for our benefit. When we praise God we...

A) Find our satisfaction and joy. “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is **fullness of joy**; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” Psalm 16:11

B) Get healed—spiritually, emotionally, physically. “*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will **draw all men unto me.***” John 12:32 “*But he was wounded for*

3. **How do we engage in this practice of worship?** To replace the “old w/ the new”?

A) The Psalms:

Bowing down before God; (95:6); Seeking His face (Psalm 105:3-4; Waiting for the Lord (Psalm 33: 20:21); Dwelling in His house (Psalm 27:4); Lifting Hands (Psalms 134; 2); Shouting to Him (Psalm 47:1); Singing to Him (PS 104:33).

B) Romans 12:1-2-- “*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of **worship.*** “*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind,** so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*”

C) Different personalities/relational styles—different ways of connecting w/God (People can and often are/use more than one)

- 1) Naturalists: those who feel inspired to love God when they are out of doors in natural settings.
- 2) Sensates: inspired to love God through art and music, even incense helps
- 3) Ascetics: quiet solitude and simplicity—opposite of a noisy time ☺ !
- 4) Activists: confronting evil and battling injustice in our society
- 5) Caregivers: loving and encouraging others, meeting their needs
- 6) Traditionalists: enjoying rituals, liturgy, symbols, and unchanging structures
- 7) Enthusiasts; expressive celebration—dancing, clapping, jumping, running, kneeling, etc (as mentioned in the Psalms earlier)
- 8) Contemplatives: love God through peaceful adoration
- 9) Intellectuals: studying with their mind; investigative research
- 10) Other?

Questions:

- 1) Describe worship in your own words based on the definition above.
- 2) What is the relationship between worship and service? Why is this important?
- 3) In which way(s) do you prefer to engage in worship as listed above? In what ways are you growing in your worship experience?
- 4) How did God’s truth speak to you this morning from His Word to your heart?
- 5) What adjustments do you need to make in your life as a result of this truth?

Spiritual Disciplines: Solitude and Silence

10/25/2020

“This is what the Sovereign Lord the Holy One of Israel, says: In repentance and rest is your salvation, in **quietness and trust is your strength.**”

Solitude from each of the four Gospels:

- “After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside **by himself** to pray. Later that night, he was there alone” (Matthew 14:23).
- “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a **solitary place**, where he prayed” (Mark 1:35).
- “Once when Jesus was praying **in private** and his disciples were with him, he asked them, ‘Who do the crowds say I am?’” (Luke 9:18).
- “Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, **withdrew again** to a mountain **by himself**” (John 6:15).

Solitude: Not just being alone, but being alone **with God**.

Why is this important?

Reason #1: Solitude is preparatory. Time alone with God strengthens us for upcoming ministry or life challenges. Matt 4:1-2; 18-25

Reason #2: Solitude is revealing. Time alone with God helps us see that God loves us unconditionally no matter how we’ve failed, he loves us and is on our side, helping us to stand up again and keep going. *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”* Romans 8:1

Reason #3: Solitude is restorative. Time alone with God helps us regain our bearings when we’re tired or confused, when we have forgotten who and whose we really are. By withdrawing, we can tune out all the other voices and hear the one voice that matters most. We learn to live for who we can’t lose. Read I Kings 19:1-4; 9-13

What Does the Bible Tells Us About Silence?

Silence is the absence of noise and commotion. To “practice the discipline of silence” is to consciously withdraw from the ruckus of television, music, conversation, podcasts, social media, minor “emergencies” at work or home, etc. The discipline of silence is making the deliberate choice to enter into the quiet. Once there, instead of filling time and space with words, we listen attentively. We do so because as Solomon wisely noted, there is a “time to be quiet and a time to speak” (Ecclesiastes 3:7)

Consider these passages from the psalms and the prophets that emphasize the important role being quiet plays in the spiritual life.

- “**Be still**, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” (Psalm 46:10)
- “But I have **calmed and quieted** myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content.” (Psalm 131:2)
- “But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep **silence** before him.” (Habakkuk 2:20, ESV)
- “The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the lord is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. Let him sit alone in **silence**, for the lord has laid it on him. Let him bury his face in the dust—there may yet be hope” (Lamentations 3:25–29).

Questions:

- 1) What are your own devotional life habits? What works for you the best?
- 2) When you’ve spent time alone in the presence of God, how have you sensed him speaking to you? How do you recognize His “voice” like Elijah did?
- 3) According to the verses on silence, what is gained by being that way?
- 4) How did God’s truth speak to you this morning from His Word to your heart?
- 5) What adjustments do you need to make in your life as a result of this truth?
- 6) Do you have any major decisions ahead of you that need prayer? Pray now.
- 7) Spend time this week in solitude and silence, journaling your thoughts and meditations from His word. What do you feel He is saying to you?