

Church of God

Sunday School



THE CHRISTIAN'S TOOLBOX — WORSHIP

DAILY READINGS:

- Monday:** You were created to worship God (Psalm 147:11; Psalm 148:5; Colossians 1:16).
- Tuesday:** God is looking for true worshipers (Exodus 34:14; Matthew 4:10; John 9:31).
- Wednesday:** God is worthy of your worship (Revelation 4:11; Revelation 5:9-12).
- Thursday:** Worship is not limited to a location (John 4:7-24).
- Friday:** True worship must begin in your heart (Psalm 9:1; Psalm 19:14; Isaiah 29:13).
- Saturday:** Family worship is in God's plan (Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 6:6-8; Ephesians 6:4).

MEMORY VERSE: *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."*

—John 4:24

What are you here for? For what purpose were you created? Just as a piano was created to be played or a plane was designed to fly, you also were made for a specific purpose. Revelation 4:11 says you were created for God's pleasure. Psalm 147:11 (AMP) tells us that God takes pleasure in "those who fear and worship Him." Jesus said in Matthew 4:10, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." God placed within everyone the need to worship. The question is not whether one is a worshiper, but rather are you a *true* worshiper? George Barna, a researcher studying the religious beliefs and behavior of Americans, said: "Virtually every church in the nation provides opportunities for worship, yet, we rarely really worship God. Most Christians admit they seldom feel like they have connected with Him." Could it be that most Christians do not understand what worship truly is?



What Is True Worship?

The word *worship* is heard often—worship service, praise and worship music, worship director, house of worship, etc. But what does *worship* actually mean? Is it something that one attends, a position in a local congregation, or a type of music? Or is it more than that? There are many verses in the Bible that tell us worship is important. God is seeking "true worshippers" (John 4:23), but many Christians believe that they worship God if they attend weekly church services, enjoy the singing, and hear a well-preached message. Is that God's definition of worship? The best place to find the answer to this question is in the Bible.

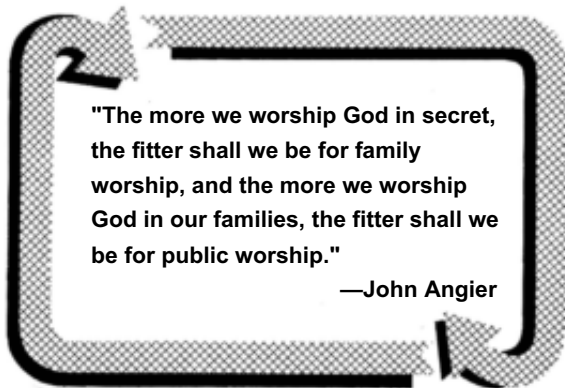
Worship in the Old Testament usually involved people bowing down, falling down, or lying prostrate (face down) on the ground in an attitude of reverence, honor, and submission. What was done physically in the Old Testament is a good portrayal of what should happen in the Christian's heart and life today. One of the New Testament definitions of *worship* is "to kiss the hand" (as a dog lovingly licks his master's hand or as a subject kisses his king's feet). This is not something you do physically, but it shows the loving, reverent, and humble attitude you should have toward God. The word *worship* comes from the old English word "worthship," which means worthy of worship. To truly worship God, you need to understand that He is worthy (deserving) of your worship. This comes through reading and studying your Bible, through hearing Sunday school lessons and preached messages, and by spending time in prayer.

True worship begins with an attitude of the heart. You cannot worship God if you do not believe He is worthy. Once you begin to develop an attitude of great respect and reverence for God, only then can true worship begin. Worship is not something that only takes place in your heart. You will begin to show the fruits (results) of your heart

attitude through "acts of worship." (Some examples of "acts of worship" include singing, testifying, and praying.) Just as loving God involves your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27), true worship is revealed through your attitude, words, and actions. This is how you show others that God is "worthy . . . to receive glory and honour" (Revelation 4:11).

Where Do I Worship?

The Samaritan woman at the well told Jesus that although the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem, the Samaritans "worshipped in this mountain [Mount Gerizim]" (John 4:20). Jesus let her know that soon worshiping would not be limited to a location. Yet today, many Christians believe that worship only occurs in a church service. The truth is that you can worship God anywhere and anytime, not just while attending church services. In the Old Testament, worship took place in the tabernacle or the temple. That was where God dwelled. Now, God's Spirit lives within the heart of everyone who has confessed, repented, and forsaken his or her sins. The Christian's body is God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16). That is what Jesus meant when He said "the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23), not only in a temple or a church building. True worship that begins in your heart should take place privately (personal devotions), with your family (family devotions), and publicly (church services).



How Do I Worship?

Worship includes every part of you. You can worship God as you listen (to the spoken Word, the preached Word, or others praising God through song or testimony). You can worship God when you speak (pray or testify or sing). You also can worship God with your body ("acts of worship," or service to God). All three ways of worship are important! All three can take place in times of private worship, family worship, and public worship.

PRIVATE WORSHIP: to be a true worshiper, you must set aside time daily to worship God through Bible reading, prayer, and meditation.

If you do not worship God in private, you have not developed the attitude of worship. Family worship and public worship are dependent on how often and serious you are about your private devotions. What are other ways to worship God during your private times? It is good to include thanksgiving and praise to God for what He has done for you. You might say it aloud in your prayers or you might write it down in a journal. Singing a song that tells of God's goodness is another way you can worship God.

FAMILY WORSHIP: the Bible clearly says family worship is important (Deuteronomy 6:6-8). Yet, many do not know what it is or why it is important. Family worship is a time of learning (Bible stories, Scriptures, moral lessons), a time of prayer (teaching through example and learning through practice), and a time to tell the family about answers to prayers (praise through testimonies). "In these evil times, hundreds of families of so-called Christians have no family worship, no restraint upon growing sons, and no wholesome instruction or discipline. How can we hope to see the kingdom of our Lord advance when His own disciples do not teach His Gospel to their own children?" (Source unknown).

PUBLIC WORSHIP: this is sometimes called "congregational worship" or "corporate worship." Public worship is not entertainment, nor is it a time to focus on yourself or others. It is a time when God's people meet together and worship God through prayer, praise, songs, and the Word. It is a time to learn more about who God is (through preaching and teaching) and to listen to what God has done for others (through songs and testimonies). It is also a time when you are to praise God from your own heart. This might be done through a prayer, a song, a testimony, or by raising your hand in praise. You might cry as you think of how good God is. Regardless of how you express praise, the focus is always on God.



Ask yourself: "Do I believe God is worthy of worship? What is my attitude of heart concerning God? Has my worship been limited to church services only? Does my family have family worship, and if not, how could we start it? Do I worship God during my personal devotions?" Ask God to help you begin to truly worship Him.

Bible Quiz



1. What is the specific purpose for which you were created?

2. What was bowing down to worship in the Old Testament a portrayal of in the Christian's worship today?

3. What does "worship" mean? _____

4. What are some false ideas concerning worship? _____

5. Where does true worship begin? _____

6. How do you come to understand that God is worthy of worship? _____

7. Where did the Samaritans and the Jews worship? _____ and _____

8. What did Jesus mean when He said "the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth"?

9. Describe the following types of worship:

Private Worship: _____

Family Worship: _____

Public Worship: _____

10. In Exodus 19:10-11 Israel made preparations for worshipping God. What are some ways that you can prepare your heart for worship (private and public)? (Read Ecclesiastes 5:1; Psalm 122:1; Proverbs 4:23.)

WANTED

Write T (true) or F (false) beside the descriptions of ways to worship

PRIVATE WORSHIP

- singing a song of praise or thanksgiving to God
- reading the Bible while thinking about something else
- praying with hidden sin in your heart
- praying the same prayer without meaning (repetitious)
- meditating on Scriptures
- having a humble attitude
- placing more importance on God's presence than having your prayers answered
- inconsistent; reading and praying whenever you remember
- coming with a pure heart

PUBLIC WORSHIP

- singing songs from memory without thinking about the words
- giving your personal testimony
- texting instead of listening
- talking during times of prayer
- raising your hand during a song
- thinking about the special singers (good or bad) instead of the words of their song
- sleeping during the sermon
- watching others (to see what they are wearing or if they are listening) instead of thinking about God
- coming to be entertained
- only worshiping in a church building

True Worshipers