

Part Three: God Commands Worship

God's Prescription for Worship. **God commands worship in his prescribed ways.**

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. *John 14:26*

"Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you. *Exodus 25:8-9*

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." *John 4:23-24*

You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:
"These people honour me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.
They worship me in vain;
their teachings are but rules taught by men. *Matthew 15:7-9*

Part Four: The Importance of Worship

Simply the weight of Biblical documentation and emphasis that indicates worship priority – the broad spectrum of individuals and settings in which worship is highly esteemed. Through this Biblical documentation it is established that worship is God's priority for man.

"Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other." By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. *Isaiah 45:22-23*

Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed." *Revelation 15:4*

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. *1 Peter 2:9*

And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. *Deuteronomy 10:12*

The Westminster Confession of Faith sums up this point as well as anything that has ever been written stating that “*the chief end of man is to praise God and glorify Him forever.*”

The emphasis and the practice of worship that is demonstrated and encouraged in the Bible is distinctly different from that which is practiced and emphasised in the church today. There is a difference between what we say we value and believe, and that which we practice.

Worship as explained in the Bible

There is a broad spectrum of activity that gives expression to worship: praise, thanks, glorification, adoration, blessing and rejoicing. These are intertwined with worship and not separated. All are expressions that produce worship. All of the above come to the following explanation:

“To revere and pay homage to God; the act of profound adoration; to give God the glory due His name; to bow down before Him; to fall at his feet; to be as a puppy at his master’s feet; to turn towards and kiss; lifting our hands in absolute surrender, drawing near to God, blessing and ministering to Him to be in fearful awe, giving ourselves over to Him in loving affection; to do so by the Spirit in honesty.”

Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, 30 and Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, 31 and they believed. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped. *Exodus 4:29-31*

Ezra praised the LORD, the great God; and all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. *Nehemiah 8:6*

When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying,

"He is good;
his love endures forever." *2 Chronicles 7:3*

"Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers! I will sing to the LORD, I will sing; I will make music to the LORD, the God of Israel. *Judges 5:3*

Therefore I will praise you, O LORD, among the nations; I will sing praises to your name. *2 Samuel 22:50*

I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; before the "gods" I will sing your praise. I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word. When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted. May all the kings of the earth praise you, O LORD, when they hear the words of your mouth. *Psalms 138:1-4*

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. *Philippians 2:10*

Then a voice came from the throne, saying:

"Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
both small and great!"

Revelation 19:5

Praise is essentially the act of expressing thanksgiving to God; boasting in/about Him; confessing one's need of Him; magnifying Him or making music (instrumental or vocal) to Him. Praise can be soft or loud and involves a wide spectrum of expressions such as speech, shouting, singing, dancing, instrumentation or various physical postures. Praise is an expression of our personal relationship with God.

Rejoicing in the Lord centres in the releasing of joyful emotions in our relationships with God. The recurrent word "exult" (leap for joy, to be very glad or elated) most reveals what rejoicing in the Lord is all about. There are many verses telling us to "rejoice in the Lord". Apostle Paul tells us to "rejoice always". We express rejoicing by speaking to Him, shouting to Him; dancing to Him; leaping or twirling about; clapping our hands to Him etc. The joy of the Lord is our strength.

All will worship God: Those that have gone before us and all those that come after us.

All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations. All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him— those who cannot keep themselves alive. *Psalms 22:27-29*

All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praise to your name." *Psalm 66:4*

It is written: " 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.' " *Romans 14:11*

This is what the LORD says— the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel— to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: "Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you." *Zechariah 14:6*

Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed." *Revelation 15:4*

Worship is a voluntary discipline done in obedience. It is optional only in the same sense that the study of the Bible, fellowship and prayer are optional – ie. It's not!

Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." *Revelation 14:6-7*

Then David said to the whole assembly, "Praise the LORD your God." So they all praised the LORD, the God of their fathers; they bowed low and fell prostrate before the LORD and the king. *1 Chronicles 29:20*

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. *Psalm 95:6-7*