

The Results of Worship

Psalm 50:14

*Offer unto God
thanksgiving;
and pay thy vows
unto the most
High:*

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Forward

Imagine hearing the very voice of God!

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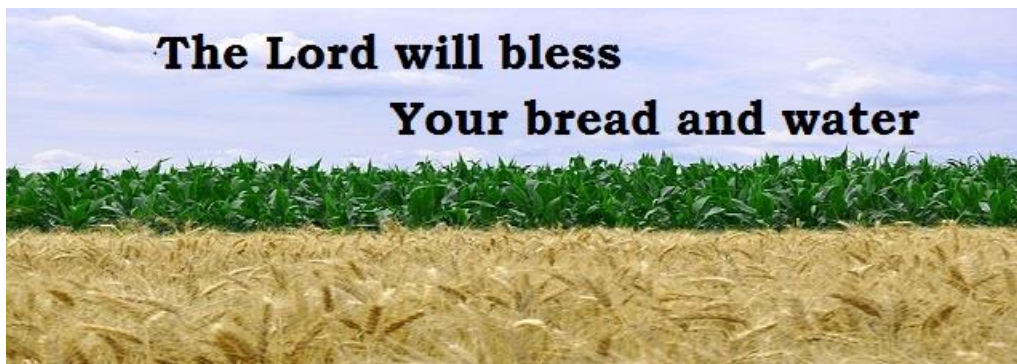
God sometimes spoke directly to his people to tell them the proper way to live. The Bible records these conversations to give us insights into God's character. How tragic when we take these very words of God lightly.

Like Moses, we have the privilege of talking to God, but God answers us differently—through his written Word and the guidance of his Holy Spirit. To receive this guidance, we need to seek to know God as Moses did.

When we recognize Jesus as Lord and trust in him with our entire life, salvation is assured to us. If you have never trusted in Jesus to save you, do so quickly. Your life can be filled with joy, just as the jailer's was (Acts 16:34).

When coming to God in prayer, first praise the Lord then bring your petitions before him.

Chapter 1



The Lord will bless your bread and water.

Exodus 23:25

"But you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst. "There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.

If you're in the furnace, it's easy to catch on fire. God warned the Israelites about their neighbors whose beliefs and actions could turn them away from him.

We also live with neighbors whose values may be completely different from ours. We are called to maintain a life-style that shows our faith. This can be a struggle, especially if our Christian life-style differs from the norm.

Our lives should show that we put obeying God before doing what is praised and accepted by society.

The obedient will be blessed in every way.

Deuteronomy 11:13-15

"It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.

“He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

After fasting, they anointed certain apostles.

Acts 13:2-3

While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

The church set apart Barnabas and Saul to the work God had for them. To *set apart* means to dedicate for a special purpose. We too should dedicate our pastors, missionaries, and Christian workers for their tasks. We can also dedicate ourselves to use our time, money, and talents for God's work. Ask God what he wants you to set apart for him.

This was the beginning of Paul's first missionary journey. The church was involved in sending Paul and Barnabas, but it was God's plan.

Why did Paul and Barnabas go where they did?

- (1) The Holy Spirit led them.
- (2) They followed the communication routes of the Roman Empire—this made travel easier.
- (3) They visited key population and cultural centers to reach as many people as possible.
- (4) They went to cities with synagogues, speaking first to the Jews in hopes that they would see Jesus as the Messiah and help spread the Good News to everyone.

God has chosen a fast to loose the banks of wickedness

Isaiah 58:6-11

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou sees' the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward.

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

We cannot be saved by deeds of service without faith in Christ, but our faith lacks sincerity if it doesn't reach out to others.

Fasting can be beneficial spiritually and physically. God says he wants our service to go beyond our own personal growth to acts of kindness, charity, justice, and generosity.

True fasting is more than what we don't eat; it is pleasing God by applying his Word to our society.

God spoke to Moses

Numbers 7:89

Now when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim, so He spoke to him.

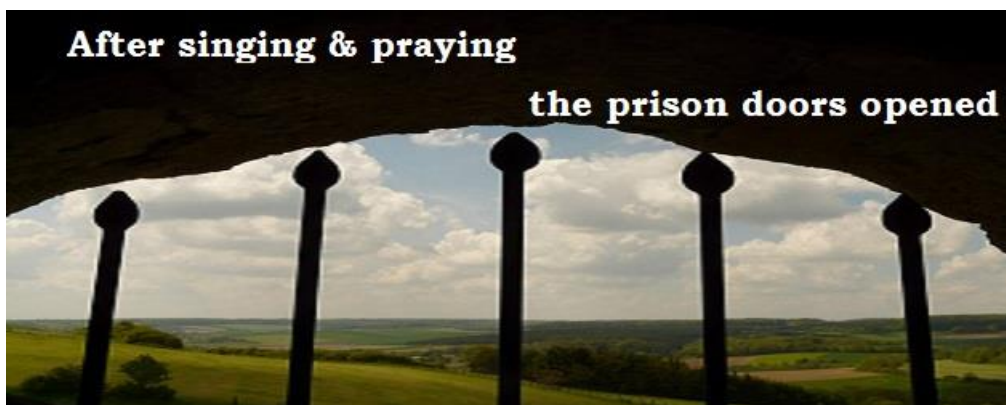
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Chapter 2



While singing and praying, the prison doors opened.

Acts 16:25-26

But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.

Paul and Silas were stripped, beaten, and placed in stocks in the inner cell. Despite this dismal situation, they praised God, praying and singing as the other prisoners listened. No matter what our circumstances, we should praise God. Others may come to Christ because of our example.

Stocks were made of two boards joined with iron clamps, leaving holes just big enough for the ankles. The prisoner's legs were placed across the lower board, and then the upper board was closed over them. Sometimes both wrists and ankles were placed in stocks. Paul and Silas, who had committed no crime and were peaceful men, were put in stocks designed for holding the most dangerous prisoners in absolute security.

The jailer drew his sword to kill himself because jailers were responsible for their prisoners and would be held accountable for their escape.

Paul and Silas's reputation in Philippi was well known. When the jailer realized his own true condition and need, he risked everything to find the answer.

The Christian Good News of salvation is simply expressed: Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved (see Romans 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Ephes. 2:8-9; Phil. 2:11).

When we recognize Jesus as Lord and trust in him with our entire life, salvation is assured to us. If you have never trusted in Jesus to save you, do so quickly. Your life can be filled with joy, just as the jailer's was (Acts 16:34).

Paul and Silas took the family unit seriously. So the offer of salvation was made to the jailer's entire household—family and servants.

Yet it was not the jailer's faith that saved them; they all needed to come to Jesus in faith and believe in him in the same way the jailer had.

Yet his entire family did believe and all were saved. Pray that God will use you to introduce Jesus to your family and that they will come to believe in him.

Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

Psalm 50:14-15

“Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and pay your vows to the Most High; Call upon me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor me.”

Some people glibly recite God's laws but are filled with deceit and evil. They claim his promises but refuse to obey him.

At times God seems silent. By his silence he is not condoning sin, nor is he indifferent to it. Instead, he is withholding deserved punishment, giving time for people to repent (2 Peter 3:9). God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked and wants them to turn from evil (Ezekiel 33:11).

But his silence does not last forever—a time of punishment will surely come.

They offered sacrifices to the Lord.

1 Chronicles 29:21-22

On the next day they made sacrifices to the LORD and offered burnt offerings to the LORD, 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams and 1,000 lambs, with their drink offerings and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. So they ate and drank that day before the LORD with great gladness.

And they made Solomon the son of David king a second time, and they anointed him as ruler for the LORD and Zadok as priest.

Drink offerings of wine were poured out as sacrifices to God to acknowledge his role in providing for his people.

The Levites sang praises with joy.

2 Chronicles 29:30

Moreover, King Hezekiah and the officials ordered the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David and Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with joy, and bowed down and worshiped.

A seer was someone who received messages from God for the nation through visions or dreams.

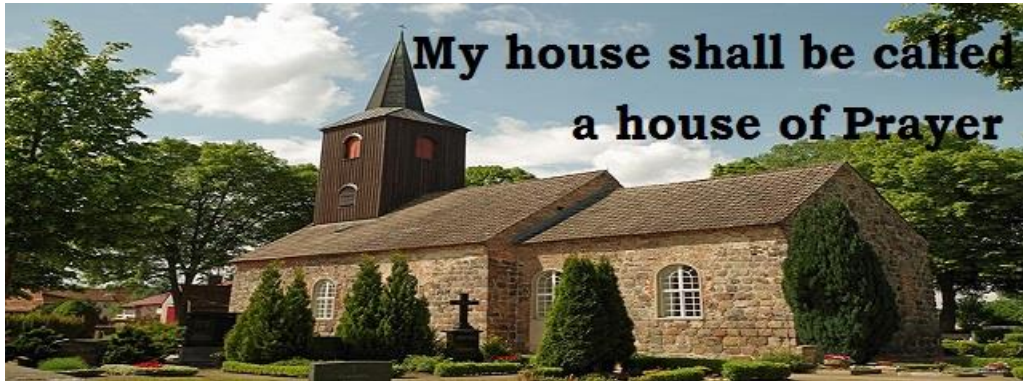
I will praise you oh God, my God.

Psalm 43:4

Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; and upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God.

The psalmist asked God to send his light and truth to guide him to the holy mountain, the temple, where he would meet God. God's truth (see 1 John 2:27) provides the right path to follow, and God's light (see 1 John 1:5) provides the clear vision to follow it.

Chapter 3



My house shall be called a house of prayer.

Isaiah 56:7

Even those I will bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar; For My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples."

Jesus quoted from this verse when he threw the money changers out of the temple (Mark 11:17)

They returned from worship with great joy.

Luke 24:52

And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

As the disciples stood and watched, Jesus began rising into the air, and soon he disappeared into heaven.

Seeing Jesus leave must have been frightening, but the disciples knew that Jesus would keep his promise to be with them through the Holy Spirit. This same Jesus, who lived with the disciples, who died and was buried, and who rose from the dead, loves us and promises to be with us always.

We can get to know him better through studying the Scriptures, praying, and allowing the Holy Spirit to make us more like Jesus.

Today Jesus' work of salvation is completed, and he is sitting at God's right hand, where he has authority over heaven and earth.

Luke's Gospel portrays Jesus as the perfect example of a life lived according to God's plan—as a child living in obedience to his parents and yet amazing the religious leaders in the temple, as an adult serving God and others through preaching and healing, and finally as a condemned man suffering without complaint.

This emphasis was well suited to Luke's Greek audience, who placed high value on being an example and improving oneself, and who often discussed the meaning of perfection.

The Greeks, however, had a difficult time understanding the spiritual importance of the physical world. To them, the spiritual was always more important than the physical. To help them understand the God-man who united the spiritual and the physical, Luke emphasized that Jesus was not a phantom human but a real human being who healed people and fed them because he was concerned with their physical health as well as the state of their souls.

As believers living according to God's plan, we too should obey our Lord in every detail as we seek to restore people's bodies and souls to

the health and salvation God has in store for them. If we want to know how to live a perfect life, we can look to Jesus as our example

His loving kindness if everlasting.

2 Chronicles 5:13-14

in unison when the trumpeters and the singers were to make themselves heard with one voice to praise and to glorify the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice accompanied by trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and when they praised the LORD saying, "He indeed is good for His loving kindness is everlasting," then the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

The first service at the temple began with honoring God and acknowledging his presence and goodness.

In the same way, our worship should begin by acknowledging God's love. Praise God first; then you will be prepared to present your needs to him. Recalling God's love and mercy will inspire you to worship him daily. Psalm 107 is an example of how David recalled God's enduring love.

The glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

1 Kings 8:10-11

It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

For 480 years after Israel's escape from Egypt, God did not ask them to build a temple for him. Instead he emphasized the importance of his presence among them and their need for spiritual leaders.

It is easy to think of a building as the focus of God's presence and power, but God chooses and uses *people* to do his work.

He can use you more than he can use a building of wood and stone. Building or enlarging our place of worship may be necessary, but it should never take priority over developing spiritual leaders.

The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle

Exodus 40:35

Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

Chapter 4



Every knee shall bow to the Lord.

Philippians 2:9-11

For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

At the last judgment even those who are condemned will recognize Jesus' authority and right to rule. People can choose to regard Jesus as Lord now as a step of willing and loving commitment, or be forced to acknowledge him as Lord when he returns. Christ may return at any moment. Are you prepared to meet him?

Jesus is alive for evermore.

Revelation 1:10-18

It was the Lord's Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard a loud voice behind me, a voice that sounded like a trumpet blast.

It said, "Write down what you see, and send it to the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. And standing in the middle of the lampstands was the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest.

His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were bright like flames of fire. His feet were as bright as bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his face was as bright as the sun in all its brilliance.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. I am the living one who died. Look, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.

Patmos was a small rocky island in the Aegean Sea, about 50 miles offshore from the city of Ephesus on the Asia Minor seacoast (see map).

1:9 The Christian church was facing severe persecution. Almost all believers were socially, politically, or economically suffering because of this empire-wide persecution, and some were even being killed for their faith. John was exiled to Patmos because he refused to stop preaching the gospel. We may not face persecution for our faith as the early Christians did, but even with our freedom few of us have the courage to share God's Word with others. If we hesitate to share our faith during easy times, how will we do during times of persecution?

The seven golden lampstands are the seven churches in Asia (Rev. 1:11, 20), and Jesus stands among them. No matter what the churches face, Jesus protects them with his all-encompassing love and reassuring

power. Through his Spirit, Jesus Christ is still among the churches today. When a church faces persecution, it should remember Christ's deep love and compassion. When a church is wracked by internal strife and conflict, it should remember Christ's concern for purity and his intolerance of sin.

This man "like a son of man" is Jesus himself. The title *Son of Man* occurs many times in the New Testament in reference to Jesus as the Messiah. John recognized Jesus because he lived with him for three years and had seen him both as the Galilean preacher and as the glorified Son of God at the transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8). Here Jesus appears as the mighty Son of Man.

His white hair indicates his wisdom and divine nature (see also Daniel 7:9); his blazing eyes symbolize judgment of all evil; the golden sash around his chest reveals him as the high priest who goes into God's presence to obtain forgiveness of sin for those who have believed in him.

As the Roman government stepped up its persecution of Christians, John must have wondered if the church could survive and stand against the opposition. But Jesus appeared in glory and splendor, reassuring John that he and his fellow believers had access to God's strength to face these trials.

If you are facing difficult problems, remember that the power available to John and the early church is also available to you (see 1 John 4:4).

Our sins have convicted and sentenced us, but Jesus holds the keys of death and Hades. He alone can free us from eternal bondage to Satan. He alone has the power and authority to set us free from sin's control. Believers don't have to fear Hades or death, because Christ holds the keys to both.

All we must do is turn from sin and turn to him in faith. When we attempt to control our lives and disregard God, we set a course that leads directly to hell. But when we place our lives in Christ's hands, he restores us now and resurrects us later to an eternal, peaceful relationship with him.

They spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:31

And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

Boldness is not reckless impulsiveness. Boldness requires courage to press on through our fears and do what we know is right. How can we be bolder?

Like the disciples, we need to pray with others for that courage. To gain boldness, you can

- (1) pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to give you courage,
- (2) look for opportunities in your family and neighborhood to talk about Christ,

- (3) realize that rejection, social discomfort, and embarrassment are not necessarily persecution, and
- (4) Start where you are by being bolder in small ways.

I will sing praises among the nations

Psalm 57:9

I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations.

David's firm faith in God contrasted sharply with his enemies' loud lying and boasting. When confronted with verbal attacks, the best defense is simply to be quiet and praise God, realizing that our confidence is in his love and faithfulness (Psalm 57:10).

In times of great suffering, don't turn inward to self-pity or outward to revenge, but upward to God.

Speak the word of God and do not be silent.

Acts 18:9-10

And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city."

In a vision, Christ told Paul that he had many people in Corinth. Sometimes we can feel alone or isolated, especially when we see wickedness all around us and when we are persecuted for our faith. Usually, however, there are others in the neighborhood or community who also follow Christ. Ask God to lead you to them.

Declare that God is among you.

1 Corinthians 14:24-25

But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.

The way the Corinthians were speaking in tongues was helping no one because believers did not understand what was being said, and unbelievers thought that the people speaking in tongues were crazy. Speaking in tongues was supposed to be a *sign* to unbelievers (as it was in Acts 2). After speaking in tongues, believers were supposed to explain what was said and give the credit to God. The unsaved people would

then be convinced of a spiritual reality and motivated to look further into the Christian faith. While this is one way to reach unbelievers, Paul says that clear preaching is usually better (1 Cor. 14:5).

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House
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