

Worship
the
Lord

Let the heavens rejoice,
let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound,
and all that is in it.
Psalm 96:11

Compiled by Dr. Harold Bollinger, D.A.

Forward

Worship is not based on likes or dislikes, nor is it based on personal preference.

True worship is based on the desire to honor God. It requires a personal revelation of God as found only in the Scriptures. It is a focus on Jesus.

We worship God because He comforts us in times of distress. We worship God because of His unfailing love for each and every one of us. He loves us with a love that goes far beyond anything we know. We worship Him in spirit and truth.

Worshiping God in spirit is to worship Him from the heart. The first and greatest Bible Commandment that Jesus gave?

Mark 12:30 'and thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.'

A full surrender to God must include dedicating our lives to worship and glorify him.

Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service".

Confess and believe on him now, and worship Him.

Table of Contents:

	Page
Forward:	3
Chapter 1 Role of symbols in worship	4
Chapter 2 Preparing for worship	9
Chapter 3 Proper attitude toward worship	15
Chapter 4 Worshipping for the wrong reasons	20
Chapter 5 How to worship all the time	24
Chapter 6 The pattern of worship	28
Chapter 7 Regular church worship	31

Chapter 1



Role of Symbols in Worship

The Hebrews put some manna in a special jar as a reminder of the way God provided for them in the desert. Symbols have always been an important part of Christian worship also. We use special objects as symbols to remind us of God's work. Such symbols can be valuable aids to our worship as long as we are careful to keep them from becoming objects of worship. Exodus 16:32

Why Israelites had trouble worshipping one God.

Then God instructed the people as follows:

"I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from slavery in Egypt.

"Do not worship any other gods besides me.

"Do not make idols of any kind, whether in the shape of birds or animals or fish.

You must never worship or bow down to them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not share your affection with any other god! I do not leave unpunished the sins of those who hate me, but I punish the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations

But I lavish my love on those who love me and obey my commands, even for a thousand generations.

Why were the Ten Commandments necessary for God's new nation?

At the foot of Mount Sinai, God showed his people the true function and beauty of his laws. The commandments were designed to lead Israel to a life of practical holiness.

In them, people could see the nature of God and his plan for how they should live. The commands and guidelines were intended to direct the community to meet the needs of each individual in a loving and responsible manner.

By Jesus' time, however, most people looked at the law the wrong way. They saw it as a means to prosperity in both this world and the next.

And they thought that to obey every law was the way to earn God's protection from foreign invasion and natural disaster.

Law keeping became an end in itself, not the means to fulfill God's ultimate law of love. Exodus 20:1-6

The Israelites had just come from Egypt, a land of many idols and many gods.

Because each god represented a different aspect of life, it was common to worship many gods in order to get the maximum number of blessings.

When God told his people to worship and believe in him, that weren't so hard for them—he was just one more god to add to the list. But when he said, “You shall have no other gods before me,” that was difficult for the people to accept.

But if they didn't learn that the God who led them out of Egypt was the only true God, they could not be his people—no matter how faithfully they kept the other nine commandments. Thus, God made this his first commandment and emphasized it more than the others.

Today we can allow many things to become gods to us.

Money, fame, work, or pleasure can become gods when we concentrate too much on them for personal identity, meaning, and security.

No one sets out with the intention of worshiping these things. But by the amount of time we devote to them, they can grow into gods that ultimately control our thoughts and energies. Letting God hold the central place in our lives keeps these things from turning into gods.

Old Testament sacrifices was a form of worship

Why were there such detailed rituals in connection with these sacrifices? Partly, it was for quality control. A centralized, standardized form of worship prevented problems of belief which could arise from individuals

creating their own worship. Also, it differentiated the Hebrews from the pagan Canaanites they would meet in the Promised Land. By closely following God's instructions, the Hebrews could not possibly join the Canaanites in their immoral religious practices. Finally, it showed Israel that God was serious about his relationship with them.

Notice the overwhelming emphasis on the holiness of God. The priests, the clothes, the tabernacle, and the sacrifice had to be clean and consecrated, prepared to meet God.

In contrast, today we tend to take God for granted, rushing into worship and treating him with almost casual disregard.

But we worship the almighty Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Remember that profound truth when you pray or worship, and come before him with reverence and repentance. Exodus 29:10-41

Behind the scenes tasks are important to worship.

The physical care of the tabernacle required a long list of tasks, and each was important to the work of God's house. This principle is important to remember today when God's house is the church.

There are many seemingly unimportant tasks that must be done to keep your church building maintained. Washing dishes, painting walls, or shoveling snow may not seem very spiritual. But they are vital to the ministry of the church and have an important role in our worship of God. Exodus 40:17-33

Rediscover why you worship as you do.

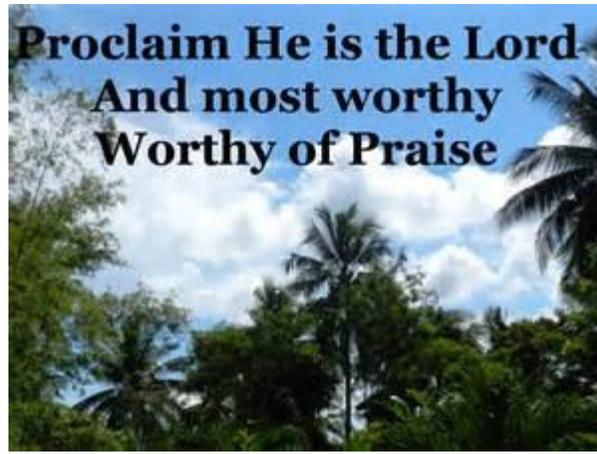
God gave his people many rituals and instructions to follow. All the rituals in Leviticus were meant to teach the people valuable lessons. But over time, the people became indifferent to the meanings of these rituals and they began to lose touch with God.

When your church appears to be conducting dry, meaningless rituals, try rediscovering the original meaning and purpose behind each. Your worship will be revitalized. Leviticus 7:38

Celebration an important part of worship

Worship involves both celebration and confession. But in Israel's national holidays, the balance seems heavily tipped in favor of celebration—five joyous occasions to two solemn ones. The God of the Bible encourages joy! God does not intend for religion to be only meditation and introspection. He also wants us to celebrate. Serious reflection and immediate confession of sin is essential, of course. But this should be balanced by celebrating who God is and what he has done for his people. Leviticus 23:44

Chapter 2



Benefits of preparing for worship

Offerings had to be brought regularly and presented according to prescribed rituals under the priests' supervision. Following these rituals took time, and this gave the people the opportunity to prepare their hearts for worship. Unless our hearts are ready, worship is meaningless. By contrast, God is delighted, and we get more from it, when our hearts are prepared to come before him in a spirit of thankfulness. Numbers 28:1-2

Important principles of worship

God placed many holidays on Israel's calendar. The Feast of Trumpets was one of three great holidays celebrated in the seventh month (the Feast of Tabernacles and Day of Atonement were the other two). These holidays provided a time to refresh the mind and body and to renew one's commitment to God.

If you feel tired or far from God, try taking a “spiritual holiday.” Separate yourself from your daily routine and concentrate on renewing your commitment to God.

The Feast of Trumpets demonstrated three important principles that we should follow in our worship today:

- (1) The people gathered together to celebrate and worship. There is an extra benefit to be gained from worshipping with other believers.
- (2) The normal daily routine was suspended, and no hard work was done. It takes time to worship, and setting aside the time allows us to adjust our attitudes before and reflect afterwards.
- (3) The people sacrificed animals as burnt offerings to God.

We show our commitment to God when we give something of value to him. The best gift, of course, is to give ourselves.

Numbers 29:1-2;

The Jews built the altar as one of their first official acts. It symbolized God’s presence and protection. It also demonstrated their purpose as a nation and their commitment to serve God alone. Zerubbabel sacrificed burnt offerings as the Law of Moses instructed (Leviticus 1-7). T

The sacrifices were essential because they demonstrated that the people were seeking God’s guidance, rededicating themselves to living as he commanded, and daily asking him to forgive their sins.

The Jews were afraid they were going to be attacked by the surrounding people—a mixed group whose ancestors had been conquered by the Assyrians.

Foreigners had been forced to resettle in the northern kingdom of Israel after Israel was defeated and her people taken captive in 722 B.C. (Ezra 4:1-2).

This resettlement procedure was a common tactic of the Assyrians to prevent strong nationalistic uprisings by conquered peoples. Some of the resettled people in Israel had migrated south near Jerusalem, and they may have thought the returning exiles threatened their claim on the land.

The Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days. During this time the people lived in temporary dwellings (tents, booths, lean-tos) as their ancestors had done years before as they journeyed through the desert on their way to the Promised Land. The Feast reminded the people of God's past protection and guidance in the desert and of his continued love for them. The Feast of Tabernacles is described in detail in Leviticus 23:33-36.

Almost immediately after arriving in the new land, the returning exiles built an altar.

The people began worshiping God through sacrifices even before the temple foundations were laid.

After many years in captivity, they had learned their lesson—they knew that God does not offer special protection to people who ignore him.

The Babylonians had carried them off when they were relatively strong; here they were few, weak, and surrounded by enemies.

If ever they needed to rely on God's power, it was at this time. They realized the importance of obeying God from the heart, and not merely out of habit.

If we want God's help when we undertake large tasks, we must make staying close to him our top priority.

These sacrifices were originally set up under the Law of Moses in Leviticus 1 and Leviticus 6:8-13. The feasts are described in Leviticus 23. Every month on the day of the New Moon, they held a special observance (Numbers 10:10). Ezra 3:5

How we worship other gods.

A *god* is whatever people put first in their lives. Some people literally worship other gods by joining cults or strange religions. In a more subtle way, many of us worship other gods by building our lives around something other than the one true God. If your greatest desire is for popularity, power, or money, you are devoting yourself to something other than God. To put God first,

- (1) Recognize what is taking his place in your life;
- (2) Renounce this substitute god as unworthy of your devotion;
- (3) Ask God for forgiveness;
- (4) Restructure your priorities so that love for God is the motive for everything you do;
- (5) Examine yourself daily to be sure you are giving God first Place in your life. Deut. 5:7;

Why was idol worship so bad? The Israelites had access to the one true God, but they constantly fell into worshipping lifeless idols made of wood or stone.

They put aside worshipping the Creator in order to worship the creation.

We are just as guilty when God no longer holds first place in our lives. When we think more about wealth, pleasure, prestige, or material possessions than about God, we are actually worshiping them as gods.

Because of idol worship, the people of Judah were eventually sent into captivity in foreign lands (2 Chron. 36:14-17).

We may not be sent into captivity, but discipline awaits all those who continually put earthly desires above spiritual priorities. 2 Chron. 31:1

Hebrews' emphasis on family worship

The Hebrews placed great emphasis on family worship. Whether offering a sacrifice or attending a great feast, the family was often together.

This gave the children a healthy attitude toward worship, and it put extra meaning into it for the adults. Watching a family member confess his or her sin was just as important as celebrating a great holiday together.

Although there are appropriate times to separate people by ages, some of the most meaningful worship can be experienced only when shared by old and young. Deuteronomy 12:12, 18

Replacing true worship with a homemade version.

A person was not put to death on the testimony of only one witness. On the witness of two or three, a person could be condemned and then sentenced to death by stoning.

The condemned person was taken outside the city gates, and the witnesses were the first to throw heavy stones down on him or her.

Bystanders would then pelt the dying person with stones. This system would “purge the evil” by putting the idolater to death.

At the same time, it protected the rights of accused persons two ways.

First, by requiring several witnesses, it prevented any angry individual from giving “false testimony.”

Second, by requiring the accusers to throw the first stones, it made them think twice about accusing unjustly.

They were responsible to finish what they had started. Judges 1

Chapter 3



Developing proper attitudes toward worship

The Corinthians' sincere and pure devotion to Christ was being threatened by false teaching. Paul did not want the believers to lose their single-minded love for Christ.

Keeping Christ first in our lives can be very difficult when we have so many distractions threatening to sidetrack our faith.

Just as Eve lost her focus by listening to the serpent, we too can lose our focus by letting our lives become overcrowded and confused.

Is there anything that weakens your commitment to keep Christ first in your life? How can you minimize the distractions that threaten your devotion to him?

The Corinthian believers fell for smooth talk and messages that sounded good and seemed to make sense. Today there are many false teachings that seem to make sense. Don't believe someone simply because he or she sounds like an authority or says words you like to hear. Search the Bible and check his or her teachings against God's Word. The Bible should be your authoritative guide. Don't listen to any "authoritative preacher" who contradicts God's Word.

The false teachers distorted the truth about Jesus and ended up preaching a different Jesus, a different spirit than the Holy Spirit, and a different gospel than God's way of salvation. Because the Bible is God's infallible Word, those who teach anything different from what it says are both mistaken and misleading.

Paul was saying that these marvelous teachers ("super-apostles") were no better than he was. They may have been more eloquent speakers, but they spoke lies and were servants of Satan.

Paul, a brilliant thinker, was not a trained, spellbinding speaker. Although his ministry was effective, he had not been trained in the Greek schools of oratory and speechmaking, as many of the false teachers probably had been.

Paul believed in a simple presentation of the gospel (see 1 Corinthians 1:17), and some people thought this showed simple-mindedness.

False teachers often used Paul's speaking performance against him.

In all our teaching and preaching, content is far more important than the presentation. A simple, clear presentation that helps listeners understand will be of great value.

The Corinthians may have thought that preachers could be judged by how much money they demand.

A good speaker would charge a large sum, a fair speaker would be a little cheaper, and a poor speaker would speak for free.

The false teachers may have argued that because Paul asked no fee for his preaching, he must have been an amateur, with little authority or competence.

Believers today must be careful not to assume that every speaker who is well known and demands a large honorarium is superior at explaining and applying God's Word.

Paul could have asked the Corinthian church for financial support.

Jesus himself taught that those who the people to whom should support minister for God they minister (Matthew 10:10).

But Paul thought that asking for support in Corinth might be misunderstood.

There were many false teachers who hoped to make a good profit from preaching (2 Corinthians 2:17), and Paul might look like one of them.

Paul separated himself completely from those false teachers in order to silence those who only claimed to do God's work. 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

Orderliness can aid in worship

The temple service was highly structured, but this did not hinder the Spirit of God. Rather, it provided an orderly context for worship. (Compare 1 Corinthians 14:40.)

Sometimes we feel that planning and structure are unspiritual activities that may hinder spontaneity in worship.

But order and structure can free us to respond to God. Order brings glory to God as we experience the joy, freedom, and calm that come when we have wisely prepared in advance. 1 Chronicles 24:1

Many ways people contribute to worship

There is more to prophesying than predicting the future.

Prophecy also involves singing God's praises and preaching God's messages (1 Corinthians 14:1ff).

Prophets could be musicians, farmers (Amos 1:1), wives (2 Kings 22:14), or leaders (Deuteronomy 34:10)—anyone who boldly and accurately spoke out for God and tried to bring people back to worshiping him.

From a large group of musicians David chose those who showed an unusual ability to tell about God and to encourage others in song.

There were many ways to contribute to the worship in the tabernacle.

Some prophesied (1 Chron. 25:1), some led in thanksgiving and praise (1 Chronicles 25:3), and others played instruments (1 Chronicles 25:6-7).

God wants all his people to participate in worship.

You may not be a master musician, a prophet, or a teacher, but God appreciates whatever you have to offer.

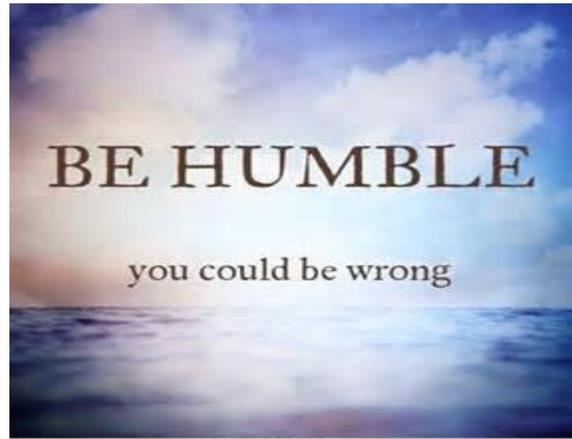
Develop your special gifts to offer in service to God (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:29-31) 1 Chronicles 25:1-7

Using items to help in worship

Hiram's items of bronze would look strange in today's churches, but we use other articles to enhance worship. Stained-glass windows, crosses, pulpits, hymnbooks, and communion tables serve as aids to worship.

While the instruments of worship may change, the purpose of worship should never change—to give honor and praise to God. 1 Kings 7:40-47

Chapter 4



Worshipping God for wrong reasons

The new settlers in Israel worshiped God without giving up their pagan customs.

They worshiped God to appease him rather than to please him, treating him as a good luck charm or just another idol to add to their collection.

A similar attitude is common today. Many people claim to believe in God while refusing to give up attitudes and actions that God denounces.

God cannot be added to the values we already have. He must come first, and his Word must shape all our actions and attitudes.

Israel was conquered because it had lost sight of the only true God and why it was important to follow him. When conquering the land, the Israelites were told to destroy the pagan influences that could lead them away from God.

Their failure to do so brought about their ruin. Here they faced an even greater influx of gods from the many pagan peoples moving into the land. 2 Kings 17:27-29

Letting aids to worship become objects of worship

Pots, shovels, and bowls—these are implements of worship unfamiliar to us.

Although the articles we use to aid our worship have changed, the purpose of worship remains the same—to give honor and praise to God. 2 Chronicles 4:11-16;

We must never let our worship of God be overshadowed by things we use to help us worship him.

The bronze snake had been made to cure the Israelites of the bite of venomous snakes (Numbers 21:4-9).

It demonstrated God's presence and power and reminded the people of his mercy and forgiveness. But it had become an object of worship instead of a reminder of *whom* to worship, so Hezekiah was forced to destroy it. 2 Kings 18:4

We must be careful that aids to our worship don't become objects of worship themselves. Most objects are not made to be idols—they become idols by the way people use them.

David helped bring music into worship.

David did much to bring music into worship. He established song leaders and choirs to perform regularly at the temple (1 Chronicles 25).

As a young man, David was hired to play the harp for King Saul (1 Samuel 16:15-23). He also wrote many of the songs found in the book of Psalms.

The builders and craftsmen had completed the temple, and the priests and Levites had been given their responsibilities for taking care of it.

Then it was time for another group of people—the musicians—to exercise their talents for God. Some of those who served with music are recorded here.

You don't have to be an ordained minister to have an important place in the body of believers.

Builders, craftsmen, worship assistants, choir members, and song leaders all have significant contributions to make.

God has given you a unique combination of talents. Use them to serve and honor him. 1 Chronicles 6:31

Preparing for worship

The priests and Levites put a great deal of time and care into worship. Not only did they perform rather complicated tasks (described in Leviticus 1-9), they also took care of many pieces of equipment. Everything relating to worship was carefully prepared and maintained so

they and all the people could enter worship with their minds and hearts focused on God.

In our busy world, it is easy to rush into our one-hour-a-week worship services without preparing ourselves for worship beforehand. We reflect and worry about the week's problems; we pray about whatever comes into our minds; and we do not meditate on the words we are singing.

But God wants our worship to be conducted “in a fitting and orderly way” (1 Cor. 14:40). Just as we prepare to meet a business associate or invited guests, we should carefully prepare to meet our King in worship.
1 Chronicles 9:22-32

Chapter 5



How to worship all the time

Worship in the Old Testament was more than a sober religious exercise. David's exuberance as he worshiped God with dancing and music is approved in Scripture.

Our worship should reflect a healthy balance: sometimes we should be reflective and serious (see Exodus 19:14ff), and sometimes we should show enthusiasm and jubilation. What do you need—more serious reflection or more joyous celebration?

Worship was the primary focus of many Israelites, whose vocation centered on the house of the Lord. Worship (appreciating God for his nature and worth) should occupy the core of our lives and not just a few minutes once a week. We too can worship at all hours if we stay aware of God's presence and guidance in all situations and if we maintain an attitude of serving him.

Build your life around the worship of God rather than making worship just another activity in a busy schedule. 1 Chronicles 9:33-34

Worshipping in the wrong way

Although the people worshiped God alone, they worshiped him in the wrong way. God had told them to make their sacrifices only in certain places (Deuteronomy 12:13-14).

This kept them from changing their way of worship and protected them against the dangerous influence of pagan religious practices.

Unfortunately, the people continued to use these places of worship, not realizing that

(1) They were adopting practices God opposed, and

(2) These places were against God's law. They were mixing pagan beliefs with worship of God. Blending religious ideas leads to confusion about who God really is. We must take care that subtle secular influences do not distort our worship practices. 2 Chron. 33:17

Confession must precede worship

The Hebrews practiced open confession, admitting their sins to one another. Reading and studying God's Word should precede confession (see Neh. 8:18) because God can show us where we are sinning. Honest confession should precede worship, because we cannot have a right relationship with God if we hold on to certain sins. Nehemiah 9:2-3

Relationship between music and worship

David instituted music for the temple worship services (1 Chron. 25). Music and worship go hand in hand. Worship should involve the whole person, and music helps lift a person's thoughts and emotions to God. Through music we can reflect upon our needs and shortcomings as well as celebrate God's greatness. Psalm 81:2-4

Evaluate your attitude toward worship

God alone is worthy of being worshiped. What is your attitude toward worship? Do you willingly and joyfully come into God's presence, or are you just going through the motions, reluctantly going to church? This psalm tells us to remember God's goodness and dependability, and then to worship with thanksgiving and praise! Psalm 100:4

When it is a chore to worship

Psalm 120 – 134 is called "Pilgrim Psalms" or "Songs of Ascent." They were sung by those who journeyed (and thus "ascended") to the temple for the annual feasts. Each psalm is a "step" along the journey. Psalm 120 begins the journey in a distant land in hostile surroundings; Psalm 122 pictures the pilgrims arriving in Jerusalem; and the rest of the psalms move toward the temple, mentioning various characteristics of God.

You become like the gods you worship

Those who worshiped idols were as blind and insensitive as the idols themselves.

They couldn't see or hear what God had to say. In subtle, imperceptible ways we become like the idols we worship.

If the true God is your God, you will become more like him as you worship him. What are your goals? What takes priority in your life?

Choose carefully because you will take on the characteristics of whatever you worship. Psalm 135:15-18

Is yours worship routine or real?

The people claimed to be close to God, but they were disobedient and merely went through the motions; therefore, God would bring judgment upon them. Religion had become routine instead of real. Jesus quoted Isaiah's condemnation of Israel's hypocrisy when he spoke to the Pharisees, the religious leaders of his day (Matthew 15:7-9; Mark 7:6-7). We are all capable of hypocrisy. Often we slip into routine patterns when we worship and we neglect to give God our love and devotion. If we want to be called God's people, we must be obedient and worship him honestly and sincerely.

Isaiah 29:13-14

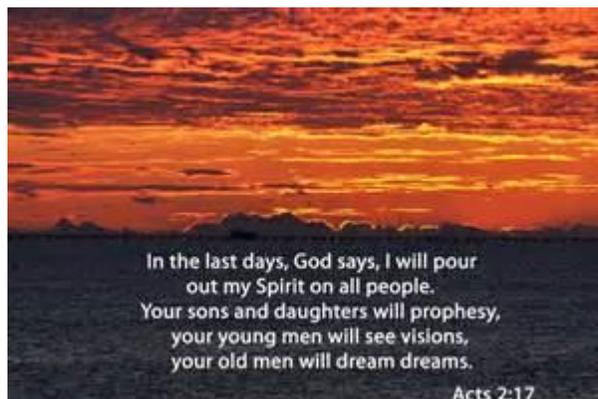
You can't worship while maintaining a sinful life-style

The people followed a worship ritual but maintained a sinful life-style. It was religion without personal commitment to God. We can easily do the same.

Attending church, taking communion, teaching church school, singing in the choir—all are empty exercises unless we are truly doing them for God.

It is good to do these activities, not because we ought to do them for the church, but because we want to do them for God. Jeremiah 7:2-3

Chapter 6



The place of not as important as the pattern of worship

Our place of worship is not as important to God as our pattern of worship. A church building may be beautiful, but if its people don't sincerely follow God, the church will decay from within.

The people of Judah, despite their beautiful temple, had rejected in their daily lives what they proclaimed in their worship rituals. Thus their worship had turned into a mocking lie. When you worship, are you saying words you don't really mean?

Do you pray for help you don't really believe will come? Do you express love for God you don't really have? Earnestly seek God and catch a fresh vision of his love and care. Then worship him wholeheartedly. Lamentations 2:7

Micah speaks against the perversion of worship

There are two sins identified in Micah's message—the perversion of worship (Micah 1:7; Micah 3:5-7, 11; Micah 5:12-13)

and injustice toward others (Micah 2:1-2, 8-9; Micah 3:2-3, 9-11; Micah 7:2-6). Rampant in the capital cities, these sins infiltrated and infected the entire country. Micah 1:5

Magi demonstrate essence of

Jesus was probably one or two years old when the Magi found him. By this time, Mary and Joseph were married, living in a house, and intending to stay in Bethlehem for a while..

The Magi gave these expensive gifts because they were worthy presents for a future king.

Bible students have seen in the gifts symbols of Christ's identity and what he would accomplish.

Gold was a gift for a king; incense, a gift for deity; myrrh, a spice for a person who was going to die. These gifts may have provided the financial resources for the trip to Egypt and back.

The Magi brought gifts and worshiped Jesus for who he was. This is the essence of true worship—honoring Christ for who he is and being willing to give him what is valuable to you.

Worship God because he is the perfect, just, and almighty Creator of the universe, worthy of the best you have to give. Matthew 2:11

Worship is our response to who Jesus is

Jesus is more than just a great leader, a good example, a good influence, or a great prophet. He is the Son of God. When you understand this profound truth, the only adequate response is worship. When you have a correct understanding of Christ, you will obey him. Matthew 17:5

The money changers interfered with worship

This is the second time Jesus cleared the temple (see John 2:13-17). Merchants and money-changers set up their booths in the court of the Gentiles in the temple, crowding out the Gentiles who had come from all over the civilized world to worship God.

The merchants sold sacrificial animals at high prices, taking advantage of those who had come long distances.

The money-changers exchanged all international currency for the special temple coins—the only money the merchants would accept.

They often deceived foreigners who didn't know the exchange rates. Their commercialism in God's house frustrated people's attempts at worship.

This, of course, greatly angered Jesus. Any practice that interferes with worshiping God should be stopped. Matthew 21:12

Chapter 7



The importance of regular church worship

Synagogues were very important in Jewish religious life. During the exile when the Jews no longer had their temple, synagogues were established as places of worship on the Sabbath and as schools for young boys during the week.

Synagogues continued to exist even after the temple was rebuilt.

A synagogue could be set up in any town where there were at least ten Jewish families. One leader and an assistant administered it.

At the synagogue, the leader often would invite a visiting rabbi to read from the Scriptures and to teach.

Jesus went to the synagogue “as was his custom.” Even though he was the perfect Son of God, and his local synagogue undoubtedly left much to be desired, Jesus attended services every week. His example makes our excuses for not attending church sound weak and self-serving. Make regular worship a part of your life. Luke 4:16

How the Holy Spirit helps us worship

“God is spirit” means he is not a physical being limited to one place.

He is present everywhere and he can be worshiped anywhere, at any time. It is not where we worship that counts, but how we worship.

Is your worship genuine and true? Do you have the Holy Spirit’s help?
How does the Holy Spirit help us worship?

The Holy Spirit prays for us (Romans 8:26), teaches us the words of Christ (John 14:26), and tells us we are loved (Romans 5:5). John 4:21-24

Society worships the wrong things

Many Jews considered the Good News of Jesus Christ to be foolish, because they thought the Messiah would be a conquering king accompanied by signs and miracles.

Jesus had not restored David’s throne as they expected. Besides, he was executed as a criminal, and how could a criminal be a savior?

Greeks, too, considered the gospel foolish: they did not believe in a bodily resurrection; they did not see in Jesus the powerful characteristics of their mythological gods; and they thought no reputable person would be crucified.

To them, death was defeat, not victory.

The Good News of Jesus Christ still sounds foolish to many.

Our society worships power, influence, and wealth.

Jesus came as a humble, poor servant, and he offers his kingdom to those who have faith, not to those who do all kinds of good deeds to try to earn his gifts.

This looks foolish to the world, but Christ is our power, the only way we can be saved.

Knowing Christ personally is the greatest wisdom anyone could have. 1 Corinthians 1:22-24

Church services must be beneficial to worshipers

Everything done in worship services must be beneficial to the worshipers.

This principle touches every aspect—singing, preaching, and the exercise of spiritual gifts.

Those contributing to the service (singers, speakers, readers) must have love as their chief motivation, speaking useful words or participating in a way that will strengthen the faith of other believers. 1 Cor. 14:26

Worship must be done with harmony and order

In worship, everything must be done in harmony and with order.

Even when the gifts of the Holy Spirit are being exercised, there is no excuse for disorder.

When there is chaos, the church is not allowing God to work among believers as he would like. 1 Cor. 14:33

Don't criticize the way other believers worship

Paul told the Colossian Christians not to let others criticize their diet or their religious ceremonies.

Instead of outward observance, believers should focus on faith in Christ alone.

Our worship, traditions and ceremonies can help bring us close to God, but we should never criticize fellow Christians whose traditions and ceremonies differ from ours.

More important than how we worship is that we worship Christ.

Don't let anyone judge you. You are responsible to Christ.
Col. 2:16-17

God alone is worthy of worship

Hearing or reading an eyewitness account is the next best thing to seeing the event yourself. John witnessed the events reported in Revelation and wrote them down so we could see and believe as he did.

If you have read this far, you have seen. Have you also believed?

The first of the Ten Commandments is "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).

Jesus said that the greatest command of Moses' laws was "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37).

Here, at the end of the Bible, this truth is reiterated.

The angel instructs John to "worship God!" God alone is worthy of our worship and adoration.

He is above all creation, even the angels. Are there people, ideas, goals, or possessions that occupy the central place in your life, crowding God out?

Worship *only* God by allowing nothing to distract you from your devotion to him. Rev. 22:8-9

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: New Living Bible translation.

Additional comments and charts are taken from:

***Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print**