

Worshipping God

What comes to your mind when you think of Worship? A group of people singing hymns and praise songs? Prayers that declare God's Nature and Attributes? You're right! But Worship is so much more as we'll see from the following Scripture passages!

1. Worship Affirms Who God Is

Ascribe to the LORD
the glory due to His name;
Worship the LORD
in holy array.

Psalm 29:2

- ❖ Circle the two things we are to do to the LORD.
- ❖ Underline what we are to 'ascribe to the LORD'.
- ❖ Underline how we are to 'worship the LORD'.

What does it mean to 'Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name'?

What does it mean to 'Worship the LORD in holy array'?

This verse is part of a contemporary praise song sung in many congregations. You cannot go wrong when you use God's very words as lyrics. But you can go wrong when the songs are sung in a manner that expresses spiritual apathy. How many times have congregants nonchalantly mouthed these words while ignoring their meanings? Remember, these are commands from our King and deserve our utmost devotion to their fulfillment!

We are commanded to give to our LORD the honor and respect due His Name! We are also commanded to worship, or prostrate ourselves before Him. When was the last time you fell on your face in worship of your LORD? It is at once a humbling and inspiring experience! And lest we think our beautiful buildings and fashionable apparel can garner God's pleasure, David instructs us to worship in holiness ... in the purity of our hearts and minds, for only such worship will God accept.

The Psalmist instructs us to do two things in this verse. It is important to note that both are in the form of a command and therefore, are direct orders from our God and King!

Note that the psalmist, David, uses the personal name for God here. He is not talking about a generic deity, but the God who is Creator of all things, and the One who established His covenant with Israel, and through Christ, with all believers.

The word 'ascribe' means to render or to give. We are to give to the LORD glory (honor or reverence) that is due His Name. And since His Name is higher than any other, the honor and reverence due Him must be absolutely supreme!

The word 'worship' means to bow down or prostrate oneself before another. It is an expression of surrender to the preeminence of another. In 'holy array' speaks of worship being brought in utmost purity and sanctity that befits the One who is Holy beyond measure.

If you have never spent time contemplating the excellence of God, you have missed one of your special privileges as a child of God. In obedience to God, practice the following:

1. **Purify yourself** by allowing God's Spirit to search your heart and mind for any sin that you have not confessed to Him. Confess them and claim God's forgiveness through the grace of His Son, Jesus Christ.
2. **Contemplate God's Nature and Attributes.** Complete this Guided Study if you have not already and/or read the recommended books from the Introduction (page 6).
3. **Meditate upon God** and consider each of His divine qualities in turn.
4. **Prostrate yourself before Him** and declare His excellence through your prayers, and songs of worship and praise.

Make the affirmation of God a regular part of your spiritual life. It is food for your soul and strengthens your faith!

2. Worship is Our Service to God

To many, **Worship** is something you do at church. But to God, Worship is everything you do for Him!

Therefore,
since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken,
let us show gratitude,
by which we may offer to God an acceptable service
with reverence and awe;
Hebrews 12:28

- ❖ Circle what we may to offer God.
- ❖ Underline how we are to offer God our service.

The word 'worship' is translated from various Hebrew and Greek words that convey at least two ideas. First, to revere or honor God and second, to render service to Him. Everything we do, whether at home, work or play, is potentially an act of worship to God if we do them with an attitude of service for God! Paul put it this way:

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31

Jesus combined the two ideas in His response to Satan when Satan asked Jesus to worship him.

Then Jesus *said to him,
"Go, Satan! For it is written,
'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD,
AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"
Matthew 4:10

Notice that Jesus did not rebuke Satan by telling him to simply worship God, but included service to God as well. Worship and Service are two sides of the same coin! If you want to know what you really worship look at what you serve. You will have found your god, be it money, power, status, material things or fleshly desires, when you discover what you are so willing to work hard for.

The test for anyone who claims to worship God is whether he serves God. Reverence for God is always evidenced by Service for Him, though the opposite may not always ring true (some serve God for reasons other than reverence for Him).

3. Worship is Completing the Work God Has for Us

Our ultimate service to God is the completion of the work He has given each of us to do. Paul reveals that God had more in mind when He saved us than simply preparing us for heaven.

For we are His workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand
so that we would walk in them.
Ephesians 2:10

- ❖ Circle what we are.
- ❖ Underline for what we were created.
- ❖ Circle when God prepared the 'good works'.

Paul makes it clear in Ephesians 2:10 that our lives are not accidents of nature, but works of God. He has preordained our days and prepared our acts of service to Him. Our destiny is to serve the King of kings and to fulfill His purpose for us.

A careful observation of this verse reveals a very disturbing truth. Not only has God created us for good works, but He has already prepared those works in advance! The caveat is that we must endeavor to 'walk in them'. That implies a life of faithful service to God.

The completion of the good works God has prepared for us to do brings glory to God, as Jesus testified to His Father.

"I glorified You on the earth,
having accomplished the work
which You have given Me to do.
John 17:4

❖ Underline how Jesus glorified God.

Near the end of His earthly life, Jesus testified that He glorified God by fulfilling the work God had given Him to do. Would we all be able to say that at the end of our lives!

In the busyness of living, it is too easy to miss the most important thing in life ... what God has created us in Christ Jesus to do. If you know God, if you love God, then serve Him with all of your heart and strength, in order that your life may become your ultimate act of worship to the One who alone is worthy!

John chapter 17 is Jesus' prayer to His Father on His disciples' behalf. It expresses Jesus' final thoughts just prior to His betrayal and eventual crucifixion.

Verse 4 reveals Jesus' commitment to honor His Father through His life. The word 'glorified' means to honor, to praise or to magnify. God was magnified through Jesus' devoted service to Him.

*"I urge you therefore, 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."
Romans 12:1*