



WHAT DOES MISSIO DEI BELIEVE ABOUT WORSHIP?

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. – Romans 12:1

The author of Romans is appealing to the church to live out their lives in such a way that is completely holistic. This daily living out of our lives is ultimately worship to God. But how do we understand or define what worship is according to Scripture? Much ink can be used to define the word worship, but [Matt Redman](#), a musical worship leader and author, gives us a simple definition: “*Revelation and Response*.”¹

We believe, and Scripture reveals this to us, that the primary way God leads us into worship is through His Word. “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”² God primarily reveals Himself through His Word.³

The more we read Scripture, the more the power and beauty of the Gospel is revealed to us. Additionally, the more fully we enjoy God for who He is and what He has done and is doing in our lives, the richer and more all encompassing our worship will be as a response to the good news of Jesus Christ. This response is not just pent up knowledge of the Gospel, but it must have a natural outflow into our daily lives.

As Christians, we respond in our words and deeds. As God reveals Himself to us through his Word and helps us understand by the Holy Spirit, this then leads us to do nothing else but respond faithfully in worship.

¹ Redman, Matt. “Revelation and Response,” [The Heart of Worship Files](#). Ventura, California: Regal, 2003, p 13

² [2 Timothy 3:16](#) (ESV)

³ [John 20:30-31](#) (ESV)

WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC AND SINGING

This response to the Word works itself out in many ways, one of which is through music. Most often, the ministry of music is found in the gathered worship context. This gathered context is where people of God come together, typically on a Sunday morning, and offer their praises and requests to the Lord and become transformed in a unique way by the Holy Spirit.

Regarding music, the issue is not loud or quiet, electric guitars or acoustics, choruses or hymns, fast or slow; but rather the content of the songs that we sing. When we come together, as God's chosen people,⁴ we sing songs, hymns, and spiritual songs to one another.⁵ We strive to sing songs that instruct/teach, re-remind us of God's grace and lead us to repentance and greater faithfulness and joy. We strive to sing songs that teach us sound doctrine, tell of the whole counsel of Scripture, and that ultimately lead us into the presence of God. For Missio Dei Church, we sing the truths of Scripture through the classic hymns, new songs that can be classified as contemporary, as well as some modern hymns.

On this side of eternal glory, we cannot achieve perfection. We understand the weight and responsibility that exists in leading people to the throne of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and therefore we strive for "*undistracting excellence*."⁶ Whether we are playing an instrument or singing the melody or harmony of a song, we want to do so in a way that leads others to sense the Holy Spirit dwelling richly within our midst.⁷ It is our prayer that the people of God would respond through song, lifting of holy hands, and repentance.

WORSHIP THROUGH SERVING

We see Jesus in John 13:1-20 humbly and lovingly serve his disciples by washing their feet. Jesus said "...the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."⁸ Christ served us sacrificially by giving up his life to die on a cross that we might have life. Therefore, in light of the Gospel, we too must serve others faithfully and sacrificially.

One time that worshiping through serving takes place is on a Sunday morning. This is done through our various ministry teams (music team, children's ministry, hospitality ministry, etc.) Sunday morning is a time for us to reflect the person and work of Jesus Christ by serving together as a family as we seek to welcome people from all walks of life. The

⁴ [Ephesians 1:4](#); [Colossians 3:12](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:13](#); [1 Peter 2:9](#)

⁵ [Deuteronomy 31:19](#); [2 Samuel 6:5](#); [Psalm 28:7](#); [Psalm 40:3](#); [Ephesians 5:19](#); [Colossians 3:16](#); [Revelation 5:9](#), [14:3](#)

⁶ Phrase taken from John Piper.

⁷ [Matthew 18:20](#)

⁸ [Matthew 20:28](#), [Mark 10:45](#)

Our Theology of Worship Pastoral Letter: Elders and Deacons

purpose of our serving one another is not just for pure hospitality, but to build one another up into Christ and to equip one another for a life of worship outside of Sunday.

Missio Dei Church strives very hard to be as orthodox as possible. We have a high view of Scripture and want to maintain the purity of its teaching. Our orthodoxy must have orthopraxy (a right way of doing). Romans 2 says, "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified."⁹ We are not worshiping if we are not putting into to practice the things Jesus Christ requires of His followers.

In May of 2011, the Consistory (Elders and Deacons) was re-reminded that the gospel is comprehensive. This comprehensive gospel is the gospel that comes both in proclamation (word) and demonstration (deed). Therefore from each individual to the whole church, we must engage with the gospel that is demonstrated by our deeds ([Matthew 5:16](#); [John 13:35](#); [Acts 4:32 – 33](#)) and proclaimed in our words ([Romans 10:14 – 17](#), [1:16](#); [1 Corinthians 1:21 – 24](#)).

Because of this comprehensive gospel, the Consistory decided to start what is called Fifth Sunday Serving as a way of putting our beliefs about worship into practice. Any month that has five Sundays, the whole church worships through serving. We take our gathered worship times to the streets during the time that we would normally be gathered in a building. Jesus has served and continues to serve us faithfully and sacrificially, so we too should then be good stewards of that gift and love our neighbor(s) well.¹⁰

WORSHIP THROUGH TREASURE

Jesus spoke plainly and frequently about how we worship with the financial resources we are entrusted with when he said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19 – 21)

We have three guidelines when we think about giving: tithe, sacrifice, and responsibility. The tithe guideline points us to believers who were required to give a tenth of their income to the church in the Old Testament. The New Testament doesn't specify a tithe, but we have greater responsibility for generosity this side of the cross. The tithe for us is a minimum. The Macedonian Christians demonstrate sacrifice. The Bible says "they gave as much as they were able and even beyond their means" ([2 Corinthians 8:3](#)). The responsibility

⁹ [Romans 2:13](#) (ESV)

¹⁰ [Matthew 22:34-40](#) (ESV)

guideline means balance, in [Acts 11:29](#) Christians give "according to their ability." Planning is necessary for Christians in order to give responsibly.

More important than that we give, is **why we give**. Giving must be a joyful response to God's grace! Paul put it this way: "I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich." ([2 Corinthians 8:8-9](#)). What a test! Paul says the difference between giving to gain favor with God and true Christianity is that a Christian wants to give as generously as he or she received. You always give effortlessly to those things that give your life meaning.

For Missio Dei Church, we believe that we are to give generously first and foremost to our local church. It is our hope, that as Christ continues to reveal himself to us, and we come to know this rich and generous God and discover more of the King of Kings that we would respond worshipfully and generously through our giving.

RESPONDING TO THE FIRST GENEROUS GIVER

"God the Father is the first generous giver, God the Son is the chief of generous givers, and God the Holy Spirit is the ongoing expression of God's generosity in us." – Gordon MacDonald¹¹

At the beginning of this paper, we noted Matt Redman's simple yet profound definition of worship: "*Revelation and Response*." As Christians, we are called to respond to the revelation of God's grace by worshiping Him with our whole lives. Our lives are to be marked with great worship-filled generosity that is growing day by day.

The Apostle Paul said, "*God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed*" (2 Corinthians 9:8). Four times in that short verse Paul uses the words "all" or "every." Twice he emphasizes "abound." He's saying that God will supply you with all you need for a worship-filled life and more if you will look to Him for it and give it to His work when He gives it to you.

"I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them." — C.S. Lewis

¹¹ Gordon MacDonald, [Generosity](#) (Alpharetta, GA: The National Christian Foundation, 2009) 6.