

life groups' sermon guide

ready to run: worship



Life Groups exist at Kingsway to provide authentic relationships for spiritual growth, caring for one another, and reaching out to the unchurched.

For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship. Acts 17:23.

Let's start right off with two questions: What is worship to you? Give an example of how you would describe worship. Not the act of worship, but worship itself; what is it? Write down some of the responses we share:

How do you or we as a group worship? What are some of the ways we offer our worship? Again, jot down a few of the responses we hear:

According to Wikipedia, Worship is an act of religious devotion usually directed to one or more deities. The word is derived from the Old English worthscipe, meaning worthiness or worth-ship — to give, at its simplest, worth to something, for example, Christian worship. An act of worship may be performed individually, in an informal or formal group, or by a designated leader. Religious worship happens in a wide variety of locations: in purpose-built places of worship, at home or in the open. -- Wikipedia

There are as many ways in which we worship as there are people who actually worship. Some like to sing, for others is strictly preaching, and so on it goes as each, in their own heart find a way to communicate, to connect with God.

Let's take a look not at the types of worship but what worship is and how its done, hopefully, according to God, and we're going to start with this statement:

We, (Kingsway), are committed to approaching worship, focusing upon honoring God and encouraging those around us with selfless attitudes.

READING: Matthew 15:8

What is the purpose of our worship of God? Are we glorifying him or just paying lip service? Are we truly exalting Him or making a show of ourselves in how we speak and act in a worship service?

Q) How do we avoid the problem of human rules and worship God with our hearts?

We as sinful people will often struggle with worship so God has laid out guides to assist with this aspect of our walk as well. We can adjust our minds and hearts by looking over a few key verses about Gods position in comparison to our positions and how we can ensure our worship is more than just lip service...

READINGS:

Micah 6:8

Colossians 3:2

Isaiah 6:1-5

So we've seen what God is looking for from us and we have seen Isaiah's reaction to the realization of his, (our), position before God. So now we see our shortcomings yet we want and desire to worship God, What is the direction we take now?

John 4:23-24.

Notice how John uses the word "must." Looking at four different translations at BibleGateway.com each version included the word "must" as part of its translation. We've discussed language semantics before; the word "Must" as expressed here is an imperative. ***Meaning it HAS to be followed***, done in the manner described. In other words, it's not optional.

Q) So what is John saying about worship?

Q) According to John, who really gets to decide how we are to worship God? (not a type of worship like singing vs. praying).

Q) How do we worship God in Spirit and Truth, what does that mean for us?

It often seems that many Christians may have the wrong idea about worship and attending church. Have you ever heard someone say something about what they "get out of the service?"

Q) I agree that we can gain many insights and great 'things' from attending services. But is our primary goal to get something out of a service or is it to worship the Lord together?

Worship is God centered, not man centered. Has anyone of us fallen from that position? Are we worshipping to please us, to gain something for ourselves or to please God with our worship?

Q) Can there be unacceptable worship?

READINGS: Genesis 4: 3-5, Hebrews 11:4 and Mark 7:7, taken from Isaiah 29:13

Q) Can we draw any conclusions from these verses and if you think we can what are they?

Would you agree that at some point children strive to be like their parents, the people they most love and admire, or even worship as children do? As a kid I wanted to be a great gunfighter like Clint Eastwood. Don't we strive to become like those we admire or worship?

After looking over verses about how God wants us to be and to worship would you agree there has to be things we do gain from worshiping God? Some type of benefit?

One of the things I think I gain from true worship is that Worship helps me develop a God-like and Christ-like character.

Q) What are some of the benefits we gain from worshiping God?

What about those Christ like qualities like forgiveness, tenderness, justice, righteousness, purity, kindness, and love? The fruits of the spirit? Don't we learn them from a study of the word, from worshiping God?

And are these not the qualities of life that bring us inner joy now and prepare us for eternity with God in the life to come?

As we already read in Colossians 3:2, "*Set your mind on things above, and not on things on the earth.*"

So now, referring back to the worship statement on Kingsway's web site; *how do we commit ourselves to approaching worship focused upon honoring God and encouraging those around us with selfless attitudes?*