

Worship

Worksheet #1

Monday: Worship reinforces the truth of who God is and who we are!

Job 42:2, 5-6, *"I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted...My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."*

A surprising thing happens when we praise God for all that he is and everything that he does. We begin to see clearly the truth of God's nature. We grasp more fully the completeness of God's power and the greatness of his wisdom. When those things happen we start to see ourselves more clearly as well, particularly our sinfulness and our inability to control and order our lives. The purpose of seeing ourselves as we are is not so that we live as broken people bent under the weight of God's judgment. Rather God desires that we see and know him truly so that we might rely on him as the sole source of our strength and the only provider of the means by which we can become the men and women he intended.

Worship today in a way that leads you to know God so that you can know yourself!

Tuesday: Worship establishes the reign of God in our lives.

John 1:14 states, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father."* The stunning truth of God's presence is this: wherever God dwells, God rules. When I invite God into my heart to dwell in me, He sets up shop and begins his reign. When I offer my family to God, my study to God, my work or play to God...He establishes His authority and rule in that place. Worship is one of the main means through which I ask God to reside in me and to begin or continue the work of taking charge of each part of my life.

There are three older praise songs that help us invite God into our hearts, minds and lives. "Lord, Reign in Me" by Brenton Brown, "Glory to God" by Steve Fee and "Empty Me" by Jeremy Camp. How might singing one of these help you invite God into your life more fully?

Wednesday: Worship refocuses our thinking and feelings on God's nature and work.

The world is full of difficulties and problems. They confront us every day. We deal with sickness, sinfulness (ours or someone else's) trouble, suffering, and even death on a daily basis. If we focus only on the problems before us, soon those problems will grow larger until they overwhelm us. However, when we stop and remember God, who He is and what he has done, suddenly our problems begin to lose their power and our fear of the present and tomorrow diminishes.

Psalm 3 captures this reality. David cries, *"O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me; many are saying to me, 'There is no help for you in God.' But you, O Lord, are a shield around me, my glory and the one who lifts up my head. I cry aloud to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy hill. I lie down and sleep; I wake again for the Lord sustains me."* We **choose** those things for which we will praise God. We choose how long we will offer praise to God, how frequently we will worship Him and how intensely. In fact, we can choose to worship God when we don't feel like it. Doing so begins to change our minds and hearts back toward God and away from our present circumstances. Have you worshipped God today in a way that will let you rest today?

Thursday: Worship demands personal change and wars against our pride.

God loves to do good things in our lives. But our natures are such that we find comfort in the familiar, even when it isn't good for us. So, we steer clear of change especially when it involves God. We know in our hearts that God is all powerful and all knowing and we fear where He

might lead us if we surrender to his will. We struggle to trust his goodness and love. In our pride, we dig in our heels and resist the changes that would bring us life now and forever. You see our pride gets the best of us. We cling to trying to take God's place, even when we know that we don't have the power or the strength or the wisdom to pull it off. Worship strips away our pride because it exalts God and His nature and power.

This is why Psalm 25:8-9 says, *"Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees."*

How can you exalt God today, so that you return to your proper place in the scheme of things? How can you remember that God is in control...and that you aren't Him.

Friday: Worship is the path to deep fellowship with God.

When we worship we experience a deep sense of God's presence with us and at work around us. Worship actually helps us recognize God's hand at work in unexpected places in our lives and world. Psalm 22:3 joys in the truth that God *"is holy, enthroned upon the praises of Israel."* Think about that. God's throne is built upon the worship of his children. Isaiah 41:10 proclaims, *"Fear not for I am with you; be not dismayed for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."* How can you hear those words and not be encouraged to worship? (See also Joshua 1:9) As we praise God, we enjoy and know the deepest, warmest, fullest fellowship possible with our heavenly Father. He camps in the midst of our weakness and need when we invite him in.

When have you felt closest to God? What made that time and place special?

Saturday: Worship, through thanksgiving, celebrates the large and small blessings in my life and world. There are many of both!

Joy, grace, gratitude and thanksgiving all come from the same root: *"char"*. Grace is *"charis"*, God's unmerited favor. The fact that God meets our rebellion and sin with grace calls forth thanksgiving, *"eucharista"*. How can you not give thanks in light of God's stunning love? Joy, *"chara"*, follows gratitude! Joy bursts forth when we are hugely grateful. *"Charismata"*, gifts of grace, are the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit to enable us to live this new life in Christ. Thanksgiving naturally flows all over again from those gifts. This is why the Psalmist of Psalm 100 sings, *"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."*

What can you thank God for today, that will lead you into worship?

Sunday: Worship is the atmosphere of our lives.

Jewish theologian Abraham Joshua Heschel says, "Unless life is a form of worship; your worship has no life." All of life is to be an act of worship. Worship is the air we breathe. Worship is the beating heart of life.

How can each breath you take remind you to worship today?