

The Spiritual Discipline of Worship

Bible study material taken from Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991)

1. Intro:

- a. Though we come to an event where He is the Guest of Honor, it is possible to give Him a routine gift, sing a few customary songs to Him, and then totally neglect Him while we focus on others and enjoy the performance of those in front of us¹.
- b. Godliness without the worship of God is unthinkable²
 - i. **Psalm 95:6** (ESV) 6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
 - ii. **Matthew 4:10**. Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.' "
 - iii. **Matthew 15:8-9** (ESV) 8 " 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 9 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' "

2. Worship is:

- a. Focusing on and Responding to God
 - i. An observation of worship
 1. **John 20:28** (ESV) Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"
 2. Revelation 4:8-11 (ESV) ...casting their crowns before the throne...
 3. Revelation 5:11-14 (ESV)...every creature...saying, To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"
 - ii. Definition of Worship:
 1. To worship God is to ascribe the proper worth to God, to magnify His worthiness of praise, or better, to approach and address God as He is worthy. As the Holy and Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, the Sovereign Judge to whom we must give an account, He is worthy of all the worth and honor we can give Him and then infinitely more.
 - a. The more we focus on God, the more we understand and appreciate How worthy He is.³
 2. We are giving God the attention He deserves and showing how much Worth we think God is to us.
 - a. Think of the most beautiful indescribable thing you have ever seen, who would you show it's worth?
 - iii. God's revelation on Earth
 1. **Romans 1:20** (ESV)²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

¹ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 86.

² Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 86

³ Donald S. Whitney, [*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*](#) (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 87.

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2. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** (ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
 3. As we increase our Bible Intake and meditate on what it means for God to be Holy, we should be moved to worship. Our desire to worship should be overwhelming.
 4. **John 1:18** (ESV) No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.
 - iv. Private and corporate worship has to incorporate scripture.
 - v. If we are not focusing on and responding to God, we are not worshipping God.
 1. If the music is not focused on God, it is not worship
 2. If our thoughts when we give an offering are not focused on God, it is not worship.
 3. If our minds are not focused on God's truth and how it applies to our life, it is not worship.
 - vi. Worship is the God centered focus and response of the inner man.
- b. Done in Spirit and Truth**
- i. Only people that believe and follow Jesus, can truly worship.
 1. **John 4:23-24** (ESV) But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."
 2. There is no such thing as a seeker friendly worship service.
 3. **John 14:15-17** (ESV) "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.
 4. **1 Corinthians 12:3** (ESV) Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.
 - ii. Being a Christ follower does not guarantee true worship, but it guarantees we can worship.
 - iii. We balance worshiping in spirit with worshiping in truth.
 - iv. We worship God as he is revealed in scripture, not as how we want Him to be.
 - v. Unless the heart is plugged in, there is no electricity for worship.
 1. Think of wedding anniversary and bringing home flowers and a gift. "Don't mention it, it is my duty."
 - vi. Psalm 37:4 (ESV) Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.
 - vii. Mark 12:30 (ESV) And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

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c. Worship is Expected Publicly and Privately

- i. **Hebrews 10:24-25** (ESV) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- ii. Our primary purpose when we gather together each week is to Worship God.
- iii. Christianity is not an isolationist religion. The New Testament describes the Church with metaphors like body (**1 Corinthians 12:12**), building (**Ephesians 2:21**), and household (**Ephesians 2:19**), each of which speaks of the relationship between individual units and a larger whole.⁴
- iv. We are not "meeting together" when we watch worship on television.
- v. We are to meet together, but we must also worship in private.
 - 1. Luke 5:16 (ESV) But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.
 - 2. If we do not meet together in worship with our Lord during the week can we expect to worship well on the Lord's day?

d. A Discipline to be Cultivated

- i. As we consider worship as a spiritual discipline, we understand that we need to cultivate and nurture and grow in our worship.
- ii. We tend to become what we are focused on.
 - 1. We emulate what we dream about.
 - a. Children pretend to be superheroes.
 - b. Teenagers dress like sports stars and pop stars
 - c. People trying to "make it to the top" of the ladder read books on success.
 - d. People focused on self, are less interested in others.
- i. We include children in our worship service so they can learn from their parents.
- iii. When we discipline ourselves to worship God, we will grow in Godliness.

⁴ Donald S. Whitney, [*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*](#) (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991), 92.