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## Understanding Worship Part 3

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### Do you know what Worship is?

#### Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 100; Revelation 5: 8-14

*Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.*  
Psalm 100

Worship is a covenant and call from our Lord to come before Him and meet with Him with reverence, gladness, and joy. It is a call to know Him intimately and express appreciation to Him with praise and thanksgiving, doing so with passion, sincerity, conviction, and in reverent fear and trembling. Worship is the aptitude, attitude, and practice of expressing the desire to know our Lord and Savior further, and being grateful for Who He Is and what He has done for us. Worship is the giving of our best to Him. And, we do this because we are His; we give Him our heart that is already His. He has given His best to us already; in addition, we are enveloped into His eternal love and care for pure and useful purposes.

Revelation 5: 8-14 tells us, *Worthy is the Lamb*, this is a picture of all peoples saved in Him, celebrating their redemption. All peoples, tongues, and locations are unified in Christ (Gen. 22; Ex. 12:3; Isa. 53:8; John 1:29; 3:16; 2 Cor. 8:9). This passage is also a picture of our faithfulness reaching to God's awareness. The incense He desires is the love and trust we give to Him and to one another, and our obedience as we remain in Him. Our authenticity and closeness to Christ is what touches and resounds into eternity. These are the lyrics of the angel's songs of what Christ has done and how we are responding.

This passage in Revelation is a picture of worship, just as your congregation gathers to collectively praise and honor Christ and offer themselves to Him in sacrifice. John is actually calling his people, who are in dire straits, to forget their current struggles and picture themselves in a heavenly choir—worshiping Christ, surrounded by angels and breathtaking music, and receiving their reward and His love for their faithfulness. For the early church in persecution that was meeting in secret, fearing for their lives, this message came as a great comfort and reassurance that “doing” church and being a Christian community is meaningful, relevant, and important both for now and for eternity. The chorus we will be a part of in Him will be far greater than the “noise” we hear from our enemies and persecutors.

Psalm 100 gives us a general overview of what worship is. First, this Psalm calls us to worship, summoning us to appear before and meet with God. In so doing, we recognize who He is, as He is the Audience, Object, and Focus of our worship. The Psalm then tells us that we are to be passionate about Him. This is not an emotional

response, although it can be; it is more of a commitment to follow Him with all of our heart, soul, and mind. Our response is our duty from a heart He made in us. It is also a responsibility and a delight; we do it even when we do not feel like it because we do it to please Him and we find joy in that. Worship is giving our respect to Christ and expressing our joy for Who He is. We are the people whom He has made and redeemed so that as individuals, we can worship and honor Him in our hearts and attitudes, then come together collectively to praise and honor Him as Lord of our lives.

The next thing this Psalm tells us is to realize that worship has a real, effectual purpose to discover and glorify God as LORD over all, including our daily lives, even when we do not see it. He is the center and reason for our worship; He is the principle center of attention, the focal point, the centrality, and the Supreme One we reference, acknowledge, and glorify. Worship is our opportunity to commune with Him, to be in union with Him who is the Lord and Creator of all, to come into His presence at His throne room and allow our hearts to be broken so we can give Him our best, our primary attention, and our foremost adoration. And, we do this with exuberance; that is, we bring Him our excitement along with our reverence. It is about His greatness, holiness, and sovereignty and our realization, with trembling and telling Him so, of His awesome nature. We must see His holiness in contrast to our sin, His love for us, and our unworthiness to receive it, so our fear and joy can be shown to Him.

Oh, the incredible assurance, the inconceivable hope, His offering to us (who are unworthy yet we receive it anyway) of His incomprehensible love and His incalculable faithfulness! We can know for certain, regardless of what we have seen or experienced, that our God is good. He is compassionate, and He loves us. He is kind, He cares, He does not condemn us when we deserve it, and He is Worthy beyond measure to receive our praise. Then, we can convey our earnest gratitude to Him, all in deep, real, authentic joy. Worship is joy because we are in Him and for Him, and here our joy is exuberance (Psalm 24; Hab. 2:20; Matt. 4:10; 6:6; Rom. 8).

Worship is what the Christian life is about. It is our goal, purpose, and call. It is where we start and finish and what we do in eternity. Heaven is a place of worship and our church is a mere shadow of this—a rehearsal that pales in comparison. Worship is our heart pouring out to His. True worship of Christ by our submission to Him with earnestness, sincerity, and serenity helps create our character and maturity, and prepares us for life both now and for eternity. It lines us up to Christ and away from our sin and agendas. We must allow our pride to yield to the necessity of being accountable to one another. The more mature people in the Lord must model and disciple the immature. All of us are equal in the Lord; however, we must never allow our maturity and growth to be a source of pride or use it to put others down! Remember, others have their eyes on us. If we stumble, others will, too. If we succeed, others will, too!

## **Questions to Ponder**

### **Read Psalm 100**

1. What do you think the Christian life is all about?
2. What does it mean to you to be earnest and sincere? How does this help you

create your character and maturity? How does this prepare you for life both now and for eternity?

3. How does worship help you with your authenticity and closeness to Christ? What about to others around you?
4. Ask yourself these four questions to each of these phrases from Psalm 100:

First, *What does this mean to you?*

Second, *How have you done this?*

Third, *What blocks this from happening in you?*

Forth, *How can you do this with more heartfelt passion?*

- Shout for joy to the LORD?
  - Worship the LORD with gladness?
  - Come before Him with joyful songs?
  - Know that the LORD is God?
  - It is He who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture?
  - Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise?
  - Praise His name?
  - For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations?
5. How does true worship line you up to Christ and away from your sin and agendas? How can it be?
  6. How has your worship experiences been a great comfort and reassurance?
  7. If you are in dire straits, how can worship help you to forget your current struggles and picture yourselves in a heavenly choir—worshiping Christ?

**Principle Passages on Worship: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 50; Psalm 65:13; 79:13; 95:6-7; 100; 150; Matthew 4:10; 2:2,11; 14:33; John 4:23; 9:35-38; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 4**