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## Understanding Worship Part 1

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### The Essentials to Worship God

Worship will be the central aspect of Heaven. Thus, it must be the central aspect of doing church, and of each Christian's life! The Essential aspect about worship every Christian needs to know is this, God is the audience and receiver. We praise, pour out and perform to Him. Worship is not about pleasing people or following trends or forms or types; rather, it is about pleasing Jesus Christ as LORD!

The changes over the centuries have been momentous, but the basics have remained the same:

1. **Honor God by reverence and awe** as respecting and honoring His Lordship and sovereignty. As a community of believers, we are to gather weekly to mentally focus on God, and pour our hearts out to Him (1 Samuel 15:22; Matthew 15:9; Luke 11:41-42; John 4:23; Acts 20:27; Galatians 2:20-21; Hebrews 10:24-25; 12:28-29; Revelation 1:10). Ecclesiastes 5:1 says, *Guard your steps when you go to the house of God.*
2. **Praise His Name** by singing of hymns/praise songs, prayer and/or liturgy/ Psalter (reading or singing the Psalms)--(Isaiah 6:1-5; Luke 11:41-42; Psalm 19; 29:2; 95:6-7; 150; Ephesians 5:19). The type and style of songs are not as important as the heart and intention of the leader and congregation. The words need to be Biblical and point to the Glory of Christ. The focus is glory and honor; it is never to be entertainment to the congregation. God is the audience and we are the performers to honor Him. It is OK to be creative in worship, such as skits, plays, and various expressions, but not for the sake of entertainment. The question to ask is, *does it distract people from the reverence and glory of Christ?* If not, it probably is OK. If it does, or could, then save the entertainment for the social times.
3. **Confession of sin:** We are to acknowledge our sin, and also offer our sincere repentance (Lev 4; 6:24-f.; 7:1-f.; 16:1-f.; 1 Kings 17:18; Ps 51:4-6; Isa 6; 53:10, 12; Matt 12:24, 31; Mark 7:20-23; John 1:5; 3:19-21; 8:31-34; 16:8-9; 15:22; Rom. 3:20; 5:12-20; 6:15-23; 7:7-20; 2 Cor. 11:3; Gal. 3:19-24; 1 Tim 2:14). We have to realize the impacting nature of sin, how it destroys, and how Christ paid our penalty for it! If you have any doubt, remember, the outward life is determined by the inner (Matt 5:17; 7:15-17).
4. **Prayer** must be the focus of the church, with intercession, and thanksgiving, as well as supplication (Acts 2:42).
5. **Reading of the Word:** We are to never forsake the reading of the Bible; if you do, you have a club and not a church (Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 3:17).
6. **Commentary:** The applying of the Word by the worship leader/ pastor is the sermon or homily. In the Reformed perspective, the whole church service should revolve

around the ministry of the Word. The sermon is central to the worship services. Everything else is either preparatory to, or a response to, the message from Scripture (Acts 2:47; 20:7-8; Col. 1:25; Philippians 3:3; 1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:24; Tit. 1:9).

7. **Fellowship** is to build up and honor one another in order to strengthen the church, the people of God (Eph. 4:12; cf. 1 Cor. 14:12).

## Questions to Ponder

### Read Philippians 2:10-11

1. What does it mean to you to fear God as in Proverbs 3:5?
2. What does it mean to you to praise His Name? What should it mean?
3. What are the essentials to Worship God?
4. How are they essential to you?
5. How can worship be more of the central aspect of doing church? What about your Christian's life?
6. How can you honor God by reverence and awe? How does respecting and honoring His Lordship and sovereignty affect your personal life? Your church? Your community?
7. What is the focus of your worship? What about your church?
8. What can you and your church do to take the seriousness of Confession and Sin?
9. How does the impacting nature of sin destroy? What does it mean to you that Christ paid your penalty for it?
10. The longer you are in surrendered worship and prayer, the deeper in the walk with Christ you become. How is this so? How can it be more for you and your church?
11. How are these essentials displayed in your church?
12. What can your church do to display these essentials more? How would that change your church?