

## Worship and Worship Leadership

### I. Definition of Worship

- A. English word is from "Worth-ship," meaning to attribute worth
- B. Some Greek words used for worship
  - 1. *Proskuneo* - "To kiss toward, or prostrate oneself"
    - a. Used of specific acts of homage or reverence
    - b. Has a beginning and an end
  - 2. *Leitourgia* - "Worship, an official religious service"
    - a. Often used to refer to "priestly" service in worship
    - b. Can be translated either worship, or service, as long as you understand it specifically as service in a worship act or ritual
  - 3. *Latreuo* - To render religious service, carry out cultic duties
  - 4. *Threskia* - Religious service, external ritual, religion
  - 5. *Sebomai* - To worship, revere, stressing the feeling of awe
  - 6. *Eusebia* - Devotion, to act piously towards
- C. Some Hebrew words
  - 1. *Shachah* - To worship, prostrate oneself, bow down
  - 2. *Sarat* - To serve, minister, usually in a priestly capacity
  - 3. *Abad* - To serve, work, enslave
  - 4. *Abodah* - Work, service, service connected with religious duties  
(Note: The Levites played instruments, were scribes and reporters, and even door keepers, all of these were considered worship)
- D. Worship is the giving of service to and honor of God

### II. Basic principles of Christian Worship

- A. Response
  - 1. Worship is appropriate response to God
  - 2. Gen 4; Ex 15 - God provided, the response was worship
  - 3. Acts 22:16; 1 Cor 1:2; - God calls us, we respond by calling Him
  - 4. An understanding of the human condition is necessary
  - 5. An understanding of the character of God
- B. Christ centered
  - 1. Phil 2:5-11
  - 2. Rev 5:12-13
- C. Appropriate attitudes
  - 1. Heb 12:25-29 - Gratitude with reverence
  - 2. Ps 5:7 - Reverence, fear
  - 3. Ps 51:16-17; Lk 18:9-14 - Humility, brokenness
  - 4. Ps 32:1-5 - Honesty
  - 5. Ps 100 - Joy, thanksgiving
  - 6. Note: These involve both the head and heart, intellect and emotion
    - a. Worship is not merely a mental exercise
    - b. If so, there would be no need for music and poetry in it

- c. It is an artistic expression of adoration or lament
- D. Worship God does not want
  - 1. Mic 6:6-8; Jer 7:4-8; Is 29:13; Mt 6:1
  - 2. Acts 17:22-23; Rom 10:2-3
  - 3. Mt 5:20-24
  - 4. Mt 15:1-11
  - 5. Note: Emotion in worship is good, emotionalism is bad
    - a. Emotionalism is emotion for the sake of emotion
    - b. Worship with emotion involves the whole person
- E. Purposes of group worship, 1 Cor 14
  - 1. Edification
  - 2. Worship of God

### III. Worship Leadership

- A. What is worship leadership?
  - 1. Helping prepare & lead hearts and minds of worshippers to worship
  - 2. A worship leader both models and leads worship
  - 3. Desires to offer up the best (Mal 1:7-8, 12-14, 3:8-10)
- B. Worship Leaders must understand Worship, including group worship
  - 1. It is a heartfelt response and expression to our Lord
  - 2. The audience is God, all are participants
  - 3. It is an emotional as well as an intellectual action
    - Q: Is worship without emotion acceptable?  
(How would a gift given to a wife be viewed if only given as an obligation with no emotion?)
  - 4. Understands the goals of worship
    - a. Mutual edification, 1 Cor 14:17
    - b. God his honored and glorified
- C. Worship leaders can help worship be acceptable, or unacceptable
  - 1. Worship leaders must plan worship
    - a. All should know in advance their function in worship
    - b. All who lead should be properly trained and prepared
    - c. Occasionally vary the order and elements as appropriate
      - 1) Too much change for the sake of change is some cases can be distracting.
      - 2) Too much form and monotony can be just as distracting
  - 2. The more you teach a congregation about HOW to worship, the better they can participate
    - a. Explanations by worship leaders during their time in worship can contribute to this: eg. Explanation of a song, a big word in scripture, reminder of what we do this, etc.

- b. Explanations should be kept to a minimum, short, to the point.
- D. The place of worship must also be planned
  - 1. Songbooks and other materials need to be available
  - 2. Distractions from worship can even come from poorly planned worship environment
    - a. Temperature not set
    - b. Microphone not on
    - c. Bibles and Songbooks not in the pews
    - d. Building not cleaned or straightened up

#### **IV. Worship leaders should and must be adequately prepared for worship**

- A. They must be faithful Christians to lead worship
- B. He should understand the nature of the task he is doing
- C. He should ensure that he will not be distracting
  - 1. His appearance should not be distracting
  - 2. He should be prepared
  - 3. His volume, speech, etc. should be appropriate
- D. Hasty, last minute throwing together of ideas is not proper preparation
- E. Various worship leaders ought to communicate ahead of time as part of their preparation
- F. Good preparation enhances acceptable worship

## **Drills #1**

Walk to the podium and:

1. Introduce yourself
2. Tell a little about yourself
3. Tell how you became a Christian