

Praise & Worship

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”
(John 4:24).

“Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD, Praise ye the LORD”
(Psalm 150:6).

Introduction

Many times we talk about praise and worship as the same thing, but this is not correct. I can “praise” many things – my children, my husband, a delicious meal – but I certainly do not “worship” them when I do that. What do these two closely related things mean?

To “Praise” Means to:

- Speak well of
- Express admiration for
- Compliment
- Commend
- Congratulate
- Applaud
- Eulogize (speak highly of)
- Extol (praise enthusiastically)

Praise is a vital part of God’s Word. There are many commandments which encourage our praise of God. The books of Psalms is full of them (Psalm 9:1-2; 18:3; 22:23; 52:9; 108:1, 3; 145). Psalm 107 alone tells us four different times: *“Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men”* (Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31).

“Praise God! . . . even when you don’t understand what He is doing.” – Henry Jacobsen

Praise is used in many ways throughout Scripture. In the article entitled “Praise,” found in the *Full Life Study Bible (KJV)*, we learn more about it:

- *Barak* – is usually translated in the *KJV* to mean “to bless” God.
- *Halal* – means “praise the Lord,” and this is where we get the universal praise word “Hallelujah.”
- *Yadah* – sometimes translated as “give thanks.”

In the Old Testament, to praise God is a common commandment.

- 📖 Moses commanded the children of Israel to praise God for the Canaan land that He had given them (Deuteronomy 8:10).
- 📖 When Deborah sang a song of victory, there was a commandment included for the people to bless the Lord (Judges 5:9).
- 📖 David praised the Lord in the writings about his life (2 Samuel 22:4, 47, 50; 1 Chronicles 16:4).
- 📖 The prophets urged the children of Israel to praise God (Isaiah 42:10, 12; Jeremiah 20:13; Joel 2:26; Habakkuk 3:3).

In the New Testament, praise gets much special attention:

- 📖 Jesus praised His Father (Matthew 11:25; Luke 10:21).
- 📖 Paul expects all the nations to praise the Lord (Romans 15:9-11; Ephesians 1:3, 6, 12).
- 📖 James tells us we need to praise the Lord (James 3:9; 5:13).
- 📖 John the Revelator writes of wondrous praise around the throne of God (Revelation 4:9-11; 5:8-14; 7:9-12; 11:16-18).

"To worship means to recognize supreme worth."
– Harold C. Bonell

"Worship" Involves More Than "Praise"

"Worship" means to:

- Express reverence
- Have a sense of awe
- Bow low or make obeisance
- Obey

Worship is the highest form of praise. Praise is only one of many ways we worship God. This brings some questions to mind, namely: How, Where, When, Why, and Who to worship?

How Do We Worship?

John 4:24 says we worship *"in spirit and in truth."* What is this speaking about? According to *The Full Life Study Bible*, (Donald C. Stamps, General Editor), we learn this:

"In spirit" points to the level at which true worship occurs.

- One must come to God in complete sincerity.
- With a spirit that is directed by the moving of the Holy Ghost.

"Truth" comes from the Greek *"aletheia,"* and is:

- Characteristic of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 15:8).
- Impossible to separate Jesus from “truth” – He was “truth” in the flesh (Ephesians 4:21).
- The spirit that would come and live in them, even the Holy Ghost (John 14:17).
- At the heart of the gospel (Galatians 2:5; Ephesians 1:13).

You cannot really worship unless you are doing so according to the truth and doctrines of the Word of God. What does God say about the way we are to worship? Does it give any guidelines? Of course! As with every other requirement for our salvation and victory, God’s Word plainly tells us how true worship should be practiced. This will answer the where, when, and why of worship.

The Practice of Worship

Who do we worship? The English word “worship” comes from an Old English word “worth-ship.” Worship is first those actions and attitudes that honor and exalt God for His worthiness as the great Creator of all things, both in heaven and on earth (Exodus 20:3-6). This definition answers the question “why” we worship God also.

We worship God because:

- 📖 He is worthy (Deuteronomy 33:29; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Isaiah 43:10-11; Revelation 4:11).
- 📖 We are called to worship (Exodus 32:11-14; Matthew 4:10).
- 📖 We were created for worship (Colossians 1:16; Ephesians 1:12).
- 📖 We need to worship something worthy (Genesis 32:24-29; John 4:15; Acts 2:4; Mark 10:35-37).

Attitudes of Worship – Worship begins as an attitude. But our attitudes must work in harmony with the Holy Ghost in order to produce true worship. We must be careful to have the following:

- 📖 Brokenness (Psalm 51:17; Jeremiah 23:29; Matthew 21:44)
- 📖 Humility (Luke 7:37-38; James 4:6)
- 📖 Love (Mark 12:30)
- 📖 Reverence (Psalm 89:7)
- 📖 Obedience (1 Samuel 15:22; Genesis 22:5)
- 📖 Boldness (2 Samuel 6:21-22; Mark 8:38)

These attitudes all speak of our relationship with God. It is also important that we have a correct attitude toward:

- 📖 Others – we must make things right before we can truly worship God (Matthew 5:23-24).
- 📖 Ourselves – we must be careful that our worship is not for show (Romans 1:21-25).
- 📖 Our Circumstances – we must be careful to worship God when things are going wrong, because He is still worthy (Revelation 4:11). Job is our example of such a difficult task. He

proved that it can be done (Job 1:20-22). We must give thanks no matter what comes our way. Our God is supreme, and He will work all things for our good (1 Thessalonians 5:10; Romans 8:28).

An Overflow – Worship becomes an overflow of those thoughts and emotions. They flow forth spontaneously. They should not have to be pumped up or forced out. Our cup, like David's should "*run over joyfully*" (Psalm 23:5).

The Actions of Worship – Worship finally becomes an outpouring of the soul in deep expressions of reverence, awe, wonder, and adoration.

- 📖 God commanded Abraham to go and worship (Genesis 22:5). This act of worship would cost Abraham his best offering. It was to be a "sacrifice of praise" (Hebrews 13:15).
- 📖 A life of worship demands everything we are and have (Romans 12:1-2). There has to be a complete surrender of self to God in order for us to become true worshippers. Worship touches every area of our lives.

The Truth about Worship – Biblical Principles by Eddie Jones, is a timely tract that gives us some interesting insight into the ways we worship:

Giving – true worship gives glory to God. I do not get anything, because I bless God not to receive a blessing, but to be one (Acts 20:35). What should I give?

- 📖 My substance (Exodus 23:15; Deuteronomy 16:16-17; Malachi 3:8-10; Leviticus 27:30-32; Mark 12:17; 1 Corinthians 9:13-14; Hebrews 7:4-10).
- 📖 My Time (Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 3:15; Isaiah 43:10).
- 📖 My talents (Acts 9:36-39).

Prayer – as worshippers, we need to communicate with God in order to commune with Him (Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18; Acts 4:31).

Praise – When we approach God (Psalm 100:4), and respond to Him (Psalm 103:2), there is always praise (Hebrews 13:15; Psalm 95:1; 149:1-3; Acts 15:14-17; Ephesians 5:18-19; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:19).

Lord's Supper – Communion is a memorial unto the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:26). It is important that we understand the purpose of this memorial service. It is also important that we practice it as we worship the One who made our salvation possible through His shed blood (1 Corinthians 11:28-30).

Foot washing is an act of humility that helps produce a bond of unity in our performance of worship. According to the Bible, this is connected with the Lord's Supper and was instituted by the Lord (John 13:8-15).

When to Worship? The Psalmist David had the right idea when he wrote: *“I will bless the LORD at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth”* (Psalm 34:1). David understood that a heart continually lifted toward God would be careful to avoid sin. All of the different forms of worship can be practiced no matter where we go – they are not just for a church service. However, every one of them should be practiced during a proper “worship” service today. This is the ideal setting and situation for each one. But do not limit your worship to when you are in church.

Where to Worship?

- 📖 No Scripture commands us to worship God only at church. However, many Scriptures command me to worship (1 Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 29:2; 96:9; Luke 4:8; Matthew 4:10).
- 📖 The only “church” ever commanded to be built by God was the Tabernacle in the wilderness. God gave Moses explicit instructions about its construction, and every aspect of worship there (Exodus chapters 24-27).
- 📖 God’s plan has always been to live in the hearts and lives of His people. When David desired to build a temple for his God, God agreed, and gave him the plans. But the idea did not originate with God (2 Samuel 7).
- 📖 God had another plan. Even with the Tabernacle, God had devised a house that was portable. God planned to make His next home in the hearts of His people. He would live inside of them, talk to them, and change them. They would worship Him everywhere, because He was right there with them (2 Corinthians 6:16).

The Rewards of True Worship

What happens when we are obedient to God’s plan for worship and understand that praise is only a small part of the plan? *The Full Life Study Bible* lists at least twelve of the blessings God has promised when we worship Him:

- 📖 Be in our midst and have close communion with us (Matthew 18:20; Revelation 3:20).
- 📖 Overshadow us with His glory (Exodus 40:35; 2 Chronicles 7:1; 1 Peter 4:14).
- 📖 Bless us with an abundance of blessings, especially peace (Ezra 34:26; Psalm 29:11).
- 📖 Impart to us an abundance of joy (Psalm 122:1; John 15:11).
- 📖 Answer the prayers of those who pray to Him in sincere faith (Mark 11:24; James 5:15).
- 📖 Freshly fill His people with the Holy Ghost and boldness (Acts 4:13).
- 📖 Send manifestations of the Holy Ghost among us (1 Corinthians 12:7-13).
- 📖 Guide us into all truth through the Holy Ghost (John 15:26; 16:13).
- 📖 Sanctify us by His Word and Spirit (John 17:17-19).
- 📖 Comfort, encourage, and edify us (Isaiah 40:1; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- 📖 Convict us of sin, unrighteousness, and judgment by the Holy Ghost (John 16:8).
- 📖 Save sinners who become convicted of sin at a worship service (1 Corinthians 14:22-25).

The Truth about Worship tract gives three more:

Transformation – we will become like Him (Psalm 115:4-8; Romans 1:23-24; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:2; 8:29; Galatians 4:19).

Victory – worship brings victory (Joshua 6:20; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Acts 16:25-26; 1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Heaven – our greatest joy will be to worship Him forever (John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelations 19:6-7; John 4:23). Here I am to worship!

Here I am . . . to worship God!

Study Questions

1. List eight (8) things that “praise” means.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____

2. “ _____ ” involves more than “praise.”

3. List four (4) things that “worship” means.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

4. Briefly explain the difference between “praise” and “worship.” _____

5. Define the following terms as referring to worship:

“in spirit” _____

“in truth” _____

6. List four (4) reasons why we worship God. Support each reason with Scripture.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

7. Explain the following statement: "All worship begins as an attitude." _____

8. According to the tract "The Truth About Worship" what five ways are we supposed to worship? Briefly explain each.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

9. List the fifteen (15) rewards of true worship given in this lesson. Support each with Scripture reference.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____

9) _____

10) _____

11) _____

12) _____

13) _____

14) _____

15) _____

Additional Notes
