

FOUNDATIONS

Track One : Believer to Disciple

Lesson 06 : Praise and Worship

This lesson is designed to teach us the basics of praise and worship as revealed in the Word of God. Topics dealt with include what praise is, what worship is, and the purpose for congregational worship.



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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version.

1. Understanding Praise And Worship

1.1. What Is Praise

Psalm 100:1-5 Psalm 150: 1-6

'Praise' in the dictionary = 'to commend; to applaud; to express approval or admiration of; to extol in words or in song; to magnify; to glorify'.

Praise is the verbal **expression of adoration, thanksgiving, rejoicing and celebration** of who God is, for what God has done and for what He will do. It engages our total person - spirit, soul and body toward God. Praise is exuberant in nature.

Giving God praise is based on who God is and what He has done, not our feelings : often we must will and determine to praise God, even when we do not feel like it. (Habakkuk 3:17-18)

[Dear Pastors, we won't be able to look up all the Scripture references, so please only mention key points, and turn to a few selected Scripture references]

1.2. Why Should We Praise?

1. God is worthy of our praise : Psalm 48:1; Revelation 4:11
2. We were created to praise Him : Jeremiah 13:11; 1 Peter 2:9; Isaiah 43:21
3. We are commanded in His Word to do so : Psalm 81:1-4; Psalm 149, 150
4. God is enthroned in our praises : Psalm 22:3
5. There is power in praise : 2 Chronicles 20:21,22, Acts 16:25-34
6. It is a good thing to praise : Psalm 92:1; Psalm 135:3

1.3. When Should We Praise?

1. At all times : **Psalm 34:1**; Psalm 70:4; Hebrews 13:15 (all day: Psalm 113:1-3)
2. Forever : Psalm 52:9

Praising God should be a way of life, just as normal as breathing, blinking or any reflexive action!! We praise Him anywhere and everywhere, by ourselves or along with others.

1.4. How Do We Express Praise To God?

A few ways mentioned in Scripture:

1. **Singing** : Psalm 47:6; Psalm 100:4; Ephesians 5:19; Revelation 5:9
2. **Shouting, Make a joyful noise** : Psalm 47:1; Psalm 66:1;
3. **Clapping of hands** : Psalm 47:1 (Applauding God)
4. **Lifting of our hands** : Psalm 134:2; 1 Timothy 2:8
 - A sign of surrender
 - 'Reaching out to our Father God'
 - Symbolically receiving everything God is doing in our lives.
5. **Playing of musical instruments** : 2 Chronicles 5:13-14; Genesis 4:21; Ezekiel 28:13; 1 Samuel 16:16, 23; 2 Kings 3:15-16; Revelations 14:2; Psalm 33:2-3
 - We need to be careful not to become too dependent on music / instruments. Should be able to praise God even without music.
6. **Standing** : 2 Chronicles 5:12; 7:6; 29:26; Psalm 135:2; Revelation 4:9-11
7. **Singing in the Spirit (in tongues)** : Acts 2:11, Acts 10:46
8. **Dancing** : Zephaniah 3:17; Psalm 149:2, 3; 2 Samuel 6:14;
 - Dancing is a celebration of God.
 - If we will remove our physical restraints and be simple enough to dance before the Lord with all that is within us, we will find that our spiritual restraints will crumble as well and God will have a greater freedom to move among us.
 - Caution: we are not judge others who do not feel comfortable with dancing; they should not feel threatened or excluded.
 - Some churches have dance ministry/troupes which minister during worship.

1.5. What Happens When We Praise?

1. God inhabits our praise : Psalm 22:3
2. Praise causes divine deliverance : 2 Chronicles 20:22
3. Praise stops the enemy : Psalm 8:2
4. Praise executes God's written judgment on the enemy : Psalm 149:5-9

2. Worship

Psalm 95:6,7 Revelation 4:10,11

Worship (dictionary definition): intense love or admiration, a service showing reverence; to express reverence, to have a sense of awe, to bow low to.

Worship is the expression of reverential awe, of fearful adoration, of God's overwhelming greatness, etc. In worship we are usually full of reverence, we may kneel, bow, etc.

Real worship defies definition. It is the communion with God experienced by His loved ones. True worship is bowing our hearts and lives before the Lord and acknowledging His supreme Lordship, even in negative circumstances or complete emotional turmoil.

John 4:23,24

In spirit - from our heart, our inner-most being

In truth - in sincerity

2.1. What Happens When We Worship

- Worship births intimacy - it is in this place of intimacy that I am renewed, refreshed and fruitfulness is birthed.
- Worship bring transformation - we become "like unto" what we worship.

3. Congregational Worship

3.1. The Vertical Aspect

1) *We are to minister to God* : to bless and glorify God, which is our primary purpose in worship, not to get something for ourselves. The question is not whether the worship service blessed me but whether it blessed God. We must minister to the Lord not with the ulterior motive of receiving a blessing but rather with the motive of blessing him whether he blesses us or not.

2) *We worship to experience the presence of God* : the main difference between a church service and a meeting of a social organization is the presence of God. Psalm 22:3

3) *To provide the atmosphere for the expression of the gifts of the Holy Spirit* : God waits till we are ready to receive His Word (the prophetic word).

3.2. The Horizontal Aspect

1) *To enhance the sense of unity within a body.* Psalm 133; Psalm 86:11

- all believers have this one thing in common: they love the Lord Jesus Christ and can express their mutual faith together in song.
- Can cause the increase brotherly love between believers

2) *To minister to one another.*

3) *To teach and reinforce spiritual truth.* Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16

- hymns and songs are mostly scripture put in music

4) *To provide believers the opportunity to profess their faith before others and to declare the glories of God before unbelievers.* Psalm 108:3; Hosea 6:11

5) *To provide the atmosphere for the preaching of the Word.* Hosea 10:11; Psalm 65:9,10

3.3. The Inward Aspect

1) *To release God's people in an uninhibited expression of their inner selves.*

2) *To provide a verbal expression of the feelings of our hearts*

3) *To inspire a greater commitment to a life of worship.*

3.4. Hindering Attitudes In Praise & Worship

1. **Pride** : the greatest hindrance in worship. The essence of worship is our humility. Sometimes we are more concerned about the opinions of others than we are about the Lord's opinion. Never do anything because others are looking at you, and never refrain from anything because others are looking at you.
2. **Irreverence** : we do not revere God's nature. We expect His blessings to be showered on us, without any sacrifice, investment of prayer or humble repentance on our part.
3. **'Spectatorism'** : Sometimes congregations tend to 'watch' the worship team than to be 'participators' in worship themselves. We are all commanded to worship.
Romans 12:1 1 Corinthians 3:16 1 Peter 2:5-6
Revelation 1:6
4. **'Sentimentalism'** : when the music and emotion means more to the worshipper than the message of the song.

5. **Paying 'mere lip service'** : merely singing the song but not worshipping from the heart. God would prefer that we keep our mouth shut rather than singing without meaning what we sing. (Amos 5:21-23)
6. **"We've never done it this way before"- fear of change** : Our God is a creative God and can work in so many different ways.

Let's give God all the praise and worship He is worthy of.

Let's do it with all our heart - in private and when we come together as a congregation.

Make praise and worship a lifestyle - a way of life.