

LESSON 12



WORSHIP GOD

Scripture Texts: John 4:24; Matthew 4:10; 6:6; 1 Peter 2:2; Lamentations 3:40-41; Psalm 91:1

Worship is an essential part of Christian life. It is an offering of praise, love, and adoration from the heart to God. It must be given to no other. It is done by individuals alone, gathered as a family, or in a group of saints. God hungers for our worship, pure worship with no added frills. True worship brings benefits to God and to the worshiper. No worship is acceptable to God until the worshiper has a pure heart. God must be worshiped in Spirit and in truth.

MEMORY VERSE: *Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*
— Psalm 29:2

In Spirit and in Truth

John 4:24. **God is a Spirit.** So are we spirits. The union of His Spirit with our spirit is salvation. Romans 8:16 says the Spirit bears witness with ours that we are His children. When our spirit reaches to His in love and adoration and submission, we are worshipping. Only in the realm of the spirit can we truly worship. Our spirit and His Spirit touch and commune.

Many, like the woman of Samaria, think worship is dependent upon place and form and setting. No. Jesus told her and us that it is an inner matter of the spirit, not of outward things seen, worn, handled, or done. God is also truth. He cannot accept anything but truth. No pretense of attitude or form can cover impurity of motive or lack of love and obedience. God looks past the form to the heart.

Worship God Only

Matthew 4:10. **Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.** Satan asked for worship from Jesus. Jesus refused. It would have been sin. He revealed a changeless truth. "For the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (Exodus 34:14b). This is His right, for He is greater than all. No other one, no other thing, must receive our worship—no saint, angel, person, image, or possession.

Matthew 6:6. **Enter into thy closet.** Worship is a personal, individual, action—just between God and His child. Private worship consists of each saved one reading, praying, worshiping by himself alone. We call a gathering at the church building a worship service. What makes it so? The church worships only as the individuals worship. Is listening to others read or sing or preach worship? What makes it a true worship?

First Peter 2:2. **As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word.** Love for God brings a natural love for His Word. Feed this desire. The Bible is living and life-giving to those who have life in Christ. **That ye may grow thereby**—strengthens the spiritual man to eat spiritual meat. Reading Scripture in the beginning of private worship puts one in the mood for prayer. It deepens obedience.

Lifting of the Heart

Lamentations 3:40-41. **Let us search and try our ways.** Jeremiah gave this call to worship. One cannot worship God from an impure heart. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God" (Isaiah 59:2). When sin hinders,

repentance and obedience must clear it away. When our hearts condemn us not, we will have confidence toward God (see 1 John 3:20-22). Then lift the heart unto God in love, adoration, and praise. Love outpouring that will not be stopped is worship. Enjoying the things of God is worship. Is singing together necessarily worship? Worship is the heart singing. The listening ear and the receiving heart are worshipping God. He hungers for this worship.

In Matthew 15:8-9 Jesus told those people that their worship was "in vain" because it was "with their mouth," and not from the heart, and it was man's words and not God's doctrine. In Acts 17:22-23 we find a superstitious people who were giving ignorant worship. Why? Because one must know God and God know him before He can be given rightful worship.

In the Secret Place

Psalm 91:1. **He that dwelleth . . . shall abide . . .** This speaks of a permanent, continuous place that we can reach and stay in. **In the secret place of the most High . . . under the shadow of the Almighty.** This is the place of greatest blessedness and complete soul satisfaction. It is found only by the few willing to enter the narrow gate of repentance and obedience, willing to lose their lives for Christ's sake, and to be lost in Him. See Matthew 10:39. This secret place is the haven provided for saints of every dispensation. David wrote in the time of the Law. Paul wrote in the Gospel, or Holy Spirit, dispensation. Read Colossians 3:3.

Earth's sorrows and troubles may rage on the outside but cannot dislodge the one who is in the secret place **under the shadow of the Almighty.** It is secret because none can know it but by entering. None who have known it can be satisfied with less. Prepared by repentance, trusting Christ, and with mind stayed on Him (see Isaiah 26:3), draw near and worship.

No Frills

Worship is inward and of the Spirit. It is not outward and of material objects. We do not need frills to aid worship. Worship cannot be programmed. What more than a person and God is necessary to worship? What about candles, drawings and pictures of Christ, worship centers, open Bible displays, images, crosses, etc.? Worship is not God giving to us but our rendering back to Him.

JUST A THOUGHT

**A great need of this world is guns of SMALLER
and men of LARGER caliber.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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