

Committed Christian Life

Prayer: Worship and Praise



*But grow in the grace and knowledge
of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

2 Peter 3:18

4



CBLT

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Prayer: Worship and Praise



This lesson is on the topic of prayer, but often our perception of prayer is based only on asking. Because prayer is our “communication” with God, a quick examination of our prayer life will give the answer as to what our relationship with God is. In another lesson we will be discussing petitions and intercession, but many of us find intercession difficult, frustrating, and discouraging. The reason for this problem is the focus of our prayers. So let us examine our focus, make some changes in our approach to prayer, and after that go on to the joy of intercession.

This lesson is taken from the course *Committed Christian Life*. Other lessons in this course are:

- 1) “The Goal and Process of the Christian Life”
Do you know what the goal is? Are you struggling to be a “good” Christian? Learn what God wants to do in and through you in this supernatural life we are called to.
- 2) “The Power for the Spiritual Life”
Learn about the ministry of the Holy Spirit to unbelievers and believers and the three commands God’s Word gives us about the Holy Spirit.
- 3) “The War “
We are in a spiritual battle with a determined enemy. Learn about the evil one’s tactics and how to be victorious.
- 5) “Prayer: Petition and Intercession”
Now with Almighty God in focus learn the joys of intercession. Included are the basic principles of prayer, hindrances to prayer and the importance of corporate prayer.
- 6) “Alive and Powerful — The Word Of God”
The Bible is our main source of communication from our Heavenly Father and the food of our spiritual lives. Learn how to make the most of this living, powerful resource.
- 7) “Walking By Faith”
The foundational principle of Kingdom living is faith. Learn how to deal with the challenges to faith as well as steps to knowing God’s will for your life.
- 8) “Spiritual Transformation”
What God has promised is that He will transform us by the power of His Holy Spirit so that we become like Him. This lesson will begin to answer the question: As a result of my walk with Christ, what changes in my character should take place?

- 9) “Understanding Suffering”
Learn the five purposes of suffering and how our response to suffering will make or break us. We alone decide whether suffering will drive us to bitterness, or to spiritual maturity.
- 10) “Fellowship in the Family”
Learn how to help build unity in the church, our “family”, how to deal with conflict and how to practice fellowship that honors Christ and brings joy to our hearts.
- 11) “Ministering To Your Fellowman”
This lesson which will challenge you as to examine how you can serve others. It will open your eyes to why God has given you gifts from His Holy Spirit, and how important it is for you to minister to those around you.
- 12) “Redeeming The Time”
What does the Bible say about work and how we should use our time? Do you know what your priorities are and do you set goals that reflect that? This lesson will help you redeem the time.
- 13) “Preparing for Revival”
There is much talk about revival, but little evidence of it. Take a look at the history of revivals and the principles we can use to bring revival now, here—in our own lives, in our church, in Ukraine.

Introduction

Does prayer seem like an unpleasant chore to you? A duty that gives you little joy? Maybe you feel like God doesn't even hear because so many of your prayers are unanswered. We hope this lesson will change your attitude to prayer and give you fresh hope and a delight in prayer. The command to praise and worship God is often ignored in our prayer life. But this should be the heart of our prayer life.

As you do this lesson, for the greatest benefit to your spiritual journey right now, we recommend three things:

- 1) Keep a spiritual journal, at least while you work your way through this lesson. This should include people and needs you are praying for, answers God gives and where you are reading in your Bible and what God is teaching you.
- 2) Make a goal to have a daily quiet time with the Lord. If you are in a leadership position we would challenge you to set aside an hour a day for one month. However if you do not already have a regular quiet time, start with a daily goal that you are willing to practice for one month.
- 3) Memorize 4 Bible verses. We suggest you choose 4 verses from Hebrews 11—the famous chapter on faith.

Throughout this lesson there are various questions, exercises and assignments that will help you interact with the material and apply it to your own life situation. Note that at the end of this lesson there is an answer key so that you may check your understanding of the material covered.

Use a notebook to write out your answers to the exercises. This is your “thinking” notebook so that you can put down your own answers and thoughts on what you are learning. Our learning is reinforced by writing it down so this is an excellent tool as you pursue growth in your personal life.

LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Intimacy with God
 - A. Love Him
 - B. Know Him
- II. Defining Worship
 - A. Worship and Its Synonyms
 - B. Commands to Worship
- III. Key Elements of Worship
 - A. Be Still and Know
 - B. Adoration and Praise
 - C. Confession
 - D. Thanksgiving
- IV. Expression in Worship
 - A. Heart
 - B. Voice
 - C. Body
- V. Results of Worship

Conclusion

LESSON OBJECTIVES

When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Define worship and related terms.
2. Explain the “who”, “when”, “where” and “how” of worship with appropriate Scriptures.
3. List and describe the key elements of worship using appropriate Scriptures.
4. Freely express yourself in praise and worship using heart, mouth and body.
5. Understand and list the benefits of praise and worship.
6. Incorporate worship into your daily quiet time as a priority.

LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

1. Review the Lesson Outline and study the objectives.
2. Read the definitions of key terms.
3. Read this lesson and do the questions and exercises, referring to the Bible and the assigned readings as requested.
4. Reading assignments in this lesson:
Appendix “Names and Attributes of God”
5. Have a quiet time of one hour each day. As you complete this lesson you will include or increase times of worship and praise applying what you learn from this lesson.
6. Because this lesson is part of a course we want to encourage you to make Scripture memorization and meditation a part of your spiritual life. The benefits are like finding gold every day of your life. If you have been doing other lessons then we suggest you continue to memorize in Hebrews 11, doing four verses as you study this lesson.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS (AS USED IN THIS COURSE)

Adoration — To delight in God; to express deep love and praise for His character.

Bless — To wish well; to praise with personal affection.

Celebrate — To make merry; to rejoice.

Exalt — To lift up.

Praise — To give honor and acclaim to God. To celebrate His goodness and grace.

Thanksgiving — to express gratitude for what God has done.

Worship — The act of personal adoration, meditation and respect directed toward God, authenticated by a godly lifestyle.

I. Intimacy with God

J. Oswald Sanders, a 20th century New Zealand Christian leader who wrote *Enjoying Intimacy with God* said, “Both Scripture and experience teach that it is we, not God, who determine the degree of intimacy with Him that we enjoy. We are at this moment as close to God as we really choose to be.”¹ This thought should shake us from our complacency about our Christian life. We are going to take some time to examine what kind of intimacy God is seeking from us.

¹ J. Oswald Sanders, *Intimacy with God* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980) 14.

A. Love Him



Question 1 What is the greatest commandment in the Bible?

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Let's think about the present day implications of this passage.



Question 2 How can loving God with all your heart be demonstrated in your life and before your family and friends?

We often look at this command and interpret it as what we do for God. We all understand the concept that love must be proved by its actions. But is there a time when actions take on a life of their own and no longer reflect a deep love? We can be very busy with Christian activities: going to church services, singing in the choir, teaching a Sunday School class, preaching, serving as a deacon, holding evangelistic events. All good activities certainly, but are they an expression of love to the One who is looking for a relationship with us?

Read the story in Luke 10:38-42 and answer the following questions:



Question 3 How did Martha show her love and respect for Jesus?



Question 4 How did Mary show her love and respect for Jesus?



Question 5 Who was rebuked by Jesus and who was commended? Why?

This is not to say that good works are wrong, but rather the spirit in which they are done can be out of focus.



Exercise 1

Make a list in your notebook of the things which you are doing for the Lord and others. After each one write down what your attitude is towards each task. Here are some suggestions:

Proud, nervous, happy, worried, peaceful, burdened, joyful, depressed

You can use many other "attitude" descriptions. How do you think Jesus looks at each one of these tasks that you are doing?

The Bible says, “You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”(Psalm 16:11) This is what Mary was experiencing at the feet of Jesus, the fullness of joy, while Martha was left to her fretting and anger because no one would help her. Martha was a doer; Mary was a seeker.



Question 6 Read the following verses and personalize what each one says about seeking the LORD:

1 Chronicles 16:10 _____

1 Chronicles 16:11 _____

2 Chronicles 7:14 _____

Psalm 24:3-6 _____

Psalm 27:8 _____

Psalm 105:3,4 _____

Hosea 5:15 _____

Hebrews 11:6 _____

These verses are talking about seeking fellowship with God. They do not refer to getting “things” from God, but actually seeking to come closer to God, to love Him more, to know Him better.

Our Christian life is to be an ongoing search for closer fellowship with God with a longing to love Him more and experience more of His love. But it does take time, of which we often think we have too little. The beauty of that time so well spent is that we will come to know Him in ways we have never comprehended before.

B. Know Him

It seems almost ludicrous to think that we could come to know the Almighty Creator and Ruler of the universe. But God wants us to know Him in all of His fullness. We are after all created in His own image. And it is through our fellowship with Him, our seeking of Him, our loving Him, that we come to know Him. The benefits are all on our side. Nor can we ever truly worship Him if we do not know who it is that we worship. We can never truly love Him if we do not know who it is that we are to love. And it will take a lifetime to discover, but each step of understanding will increase our wonder and awe. And the Christian who pursues a holy God will pursue a holy life-style as a natural result. As you come to know God in new and deeper ways your life will be impacted and transformed.



An appendix has been included which lists a few of the names of God and some of His attributes. There are extensive lists and studies of both, but we have included a sample to help you along your way to loving, knowing and worshiping. Take time to read Appendix now and use it as a reference for the following exercise.



Exercise 2

In your spiritual diary every day for one week list a name or attribute of God with corresponding Scriptures to support what it means. Write a description and express how this impacts your own life. You may want to use some of those from the appendix, but find at least one additional supporting scripture.

A.W. Tozer in his book *Knowledge of the Holy* wrote:

The low view of God entertained almost universally among Christians is the cause of a hundred lesser evils everywhere among us. A whole new philosophy of the Christian life has resulted from this one basic error in our religious thinking.

With our loss of the sense of majesty has come the further loss of religious awe and consciousness of the divine Presence. We have lost our spirit of worship and our ability to withdraw inwardly to meet God in adoring silence.²

We must seek to know God if we are to properly worship Him. Christianity is unique in the fact that we believe in a God who loves us and desires fellowship with us. This is not to bring God down to our level, but rather to bring us up to His level! This brings a different meaning to worship not evident in other religions. Let us look more closely at the Biblical concept of worship.

II. Defining Worship

Worship is central to our faith in Christ. In Lesson 1 worship was listed as the first point in how we can bring glory to God. The more diligent we are in this discipline of worship, the more successful we will be in bringing glory to God in other areas of our life. But it is much more than a discipline. Let us examine more thoroughly what the Biblical concept of worship encompasses.

A. Worship and Its Synonyms

We will define and discuss several words which are related to the act of worship.

Worship. *Shachah* is the most common Hebrew word used in the Old Testament translated as worship. It means to *bow down* or to *fall down flat*, indicating an act of submission or reverence.

Proskuneóō is the main Greek word used for worship in the New Testament. Its root meaning is to *kiss (the hand or the ground) toward*.

These words do not give us the complete picture of Biblical worship that is woven throughout the Scriptures. But it does indicate the attitude of worship.



Question 7 What picture do these words create in your mind?

A vital Scripture on worship is John 4:23-24 where Christ speaks of “true worshipers”.

² A. W. Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961) 6.

“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

There are two issues here. We are to worship “in truth”. That means according to the truth of God’s Word and what He has revealed. We need to see God and Jesus Christ as revealed in truth. We do not need man’s ideas about God (which actually is a false god), but God’s truth about Himself.

Then we are to worship “in spirit”. Our hearts need to be tuned in to God’s heart. Otherwise we are left empty and God has received no glory. This is a specific statement by Christ as to what God desires in worship. He came to fulfill the Old Testament and already early in His ministry indicated the change from sacrifices and rituals in the Temple to a time when the Holy Spirit would indwell every believer. Every ritual, every ceremony, every sacrifice, anything we consider to be worship is to be measured by this standard of spirit and truth.



Exercise 3

Read Philippians 3:3. What does it mean to worship God “in the Spirit” in this verse? How can you become more sensitive to the Spirit in your life as a worshiper? In what ways do you find you have to resist your “flesh” in your efforts to worship God “in the Spirit”? Answer these questions in your notebook.

Worship is far deeper than human emotion; it is the response of God’s Spirit in us to that same Spirit in Him.

Its [Worship’s] object is not ingratiating, which is unnecessary, nor propitiation, which has been made “once for all,” nor in any way “serving” the God who ‘needeth not to be worshipped with men’s hands’ (Act 17:25), but it is the loving attempt to pay our unpayable debt of love, the expression of devoted hearts, “render(ing) as bullocks the offering of our lips” (Hosea 14:2).³

Our operating definition of worship in this course is:

The act of personal adoration, meditation and respect directed toward God.

We have many Biblical words which are expressions of worship. The Psalms are especially rich in this terminology and an invaluable resource in our own worship. We will explore some of these terms now.

Exalt. *To lift up.* In Psalm 99:5, 9, *worship* and *exalt* are used complementarily. Exalt the Lord, meaning lift Him up high, and worship, meaning to bow down before Him, at His feet—a true picture of our position before God in worship.



Exercise 4

Look up the following verses which use the term “exalt”: Psalm 18:46; 21:13; 34:3; 46:10; 57:5,11; 108:5; 118:28; 145:1 and Isaiah 25:1. How can you “lift up” God or His name? How can that help you in your worship of Him?

Praise. *To give honor and acclaim to God. To celebrate His goodness and grace.* Different words are used in the Old and New Testament which are translated as praise. The Hebrew title of the Book of Psalms is *Tehillim* which literally means the Book of Praises. We will be using many references for praise to point out specific aspects of praise and worship as we go further in this lesson, so will not go into more detail at this point.

³ “Worship” *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, <http://www.internationalstandardbible.com/W/worship.html>, (02/2009).

Bless. *To wish well; to praise with personal affection.* Seldom do we think of ourselves as blessing God, usually we think of Him as the Blessor. However, this is another synonym of praise or worship—a very personal one. If it seems a strange concept to you, think of all the people who curse God. This is the antonym!



Read Psalm 145 and then the following commentary on the first two verses which was written by Spurgeon, a well known British preacher of the 19th century:

“And I will bless thy name for ever and ever.” David determined that his praise should rise to blessing, should intelligently spend itself upon the name or character of God, and should be continued world without end. He uses the word “bless” not merely for variation of sound, but also for the deepening and sweetening of the sense. To bless God is to praise him with a personal affection for him, and a wishing well to him; this is a growingly easy exercise as we advance in experience and grow in grace. David declares that he will offer every form of praise, through every form of existence. His notion of duration is a full one — “for ever” has no end, but when he adds another “ever” to it he forbids all idea of a close. Our praise of God shall be as eternal as the God we praise.

“Every day will I bless thee.” Whatever the character of the day, or of my circumstances and conditions during that day, I will continue to glorify God. Were we well to consider the matter we should see abundant cause in each day for rendering special blessing unto the Lord. All before the day, all in the day, all following the day should constrain us to magnify our God every day, all the year round. Our love to God is not a matter of holy days: every day is alike holy to holy men. David here comes closer to God than when he said, “I will bless thy name”: it is now, “I will bless thee.” This is the centre and kernel of true devotion: we do not only admire the Lord’s words and works, but himself. Without realizing the personality of God, praise is well-nigh impossible; you cannot extol an abstraction. “And I will praise thy name for ever and ever.” He said he would bless that name, and now he vows to praise it; he will extol the Lord in every sense and way. Eternal worship shall not be without its variations; it will never become monotonous. Heavenly music is not harping upon one string, but all strings shall be tuned to one praise. Observe the personal pronouns here: four times he says “I will”: praise is not to be discharged by proxy: there must be your very self in it, or there is nothing in it.⁴



Question 8 What does Spurgeon say is the specific characteristic that sets “blessing” aside from other aspects of worship?



Question 9 What according to Spurgeon is the center of true devotion?



Exercise 5

Now read Psalm 103:1, 2. What way of blessing the Lord, as shown in these verses, may become an ongoing conversation piece for us? List at least four benefits of the Lord for which you can bless the Lord and use them as seed thoughts for future conversations with others.

⁴ Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*.

Thanksgiving. *To express gratitude for what God has done.* The focus in giving thanks is specifically on God's actions in our lives and the world around us. It includes God's daily blessings, many of which we take for granted, as well as His answers to prayer. This is an important part of worship. The act of recounting our blessings and giving thanks to God brings Him honor and glory and lifts our hearts and that of others at the same time.

Celebrate. *To make merry; to rejoice.* This word is used a number of times in the Bible most frequently in conjunction with the feasts which God had established for the Jewish nation.

We will turn to one instance that is recorded of celebration "before God". Read 1 Chronicles 13:6-8.



Question 10 How do you know David and the Israelites worshiped God with enthusiasm? (see v. 8 and 15:28, 29)

God did establish times of celebration. They were both times of joy and worship.



Question 11 How would you describe the degree to which you "enjoy" worshiping God? Do you ever experience worship as a celebration?

B. Commands to Worship

Our objective is to become worshipers. We will now investigate scriptural commands on this theme, taking as our key verse Psalm 113:3, "From the rising of the sun to its going down, the Lord's name *is* to be praised."

*Praise is everywhere represented in the Bible as a duty no less than a natural impulse and a delight. To fail in this duty is to withhold from God the glory that belongs to Him (Psalm 50:23; Romans 1:20 f); it is to shut one's eyes to the signs of His presence (Isaiah 40:26 ff), to be forgetful of His mercies (Deuteronomy 6:12), and unthankful for His kindness (Luke 6:35). If we are not to fall into these sins, but are to give to God the honor and glory and gratitude we owe Him, we must earnestly cultivate the spirit and habit of praise.*⁵



Question 12 Look up the references from the above quote and summarize each one:

- a) Psalm 50:23 _____
- b) Romans 1:20-22 _____
- c) Isaiah 40:26 _____
- d) Deuteronomy 6:12 _____
- e) Luke 6:35 _____

⁵ ISBE, <http://www.internationalstandardbible.com/P/praise.html>, accessed Feb. 9, 2009.

We are commanded in Scripture to worship and, as we have seen, are without excuse. There is no optional clause available in which the command to worship can be modified. Psalm 99 fills us with awe at how great our Lord is and states twice, “Exalt the Lord our God and worship” (vss. 5, 9). Why? Simply because He is holy.



Exercise 6

Read Psalm 29:1, 2. Express the meaning of these commands in your own words. Elaborate. What are ways you can give “glory” to the Lord as a worshiper? As a witness? As a servant? What do you think the Bible means by “the beauty of holiness”?

As we continue to look at the commands to worship and praise God we will answer the questions of *who*, *where*, *when*, and *how*.

First let’s look at *who*. Read Psalm 150.



Question 13 Who is commanded to praise? How are *all* participants enjoined to praise? Does this command include pastors and deacons? Church members? Young people? Children?

So there is no exclusion in the command to worship God. Let’s look now at *when*.



Question 14 Read Psalm 34:1-3.

a) How often should we praise and bless the Lord? _____

b) Expand on these verses, describing how David worshiped. _____

c) What does all this mean to you? How can that understanding affect your worship? _____

It is not just David who did this: we are commanded to praise the Lord continually in the New Testament. The author of Hebrews 13:15 states: “Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.” Notice this is spoken of as the “sacrifice” of praise. That would indicate that it is not based on emotion; praise is to be offered up “continually” because God is worthy of praise, not just because we feel like it or because He has blessed us in some way. It is easy to praise God when we are happy, but when we are depressed or preoccupied with problems, the command is to offer up this special “sacrifice”. This is to be a habit.

If we understand *when* we are to worship and praise God, it becomes relatively simple to answer the question of *where*. Often we associate worship with a building, “a place of worship”. We are even happy to accept that we need to worship and praise God in the privacy of our homes, probably when we are alone. But if we are to praise God continually, the whole world becomes a sanctuary to God, and we are not limited by location.



Exercise 7

Evaluate your praise habits. How often do you praise God? How often do you “sacrifice” praise to Him? Is praise a habit for you? How can you begin to practice continual praise? Write your thoughts in your notebook and be prepared to discuss your ideas at your next group meeting.

Now we will turn to the *how* of praise.

Read Psalm 95:1-8.



Question 15 What are we told to do? (v. 6)



Question 16 Outline the three phrases of Psalm 95:7 and express the thought behind each as a call to worship.



Question 17 What can be avoided with this order of worship? (v. 8)

We are going to carry this topic of the *how* of worship into the next section. There are basic elements that should be involved in our worship experience.

III. Key Elements of Worship

As we look at these elements of worship it is important to realize that they do not always or necessarily occur in the order presented here.

A. Be Still and Know

One hurdle to worship is preoccupation. This hurdle centers on one’s lack of discipline, thinking about the events of the week instead of entering into worship with abandon. The mental discipline of “focusing on Jesus” is a rare jewel we can offer the Lord. In the twenty-first century our culture is inundated with noise, with a flurry of information, which, in effect, tends to lower our ability to concentrate. There are limitless demands on our time and energy. We must override that trend and require ourselves to be quiet. Practicing being still before the Lord will become easier in time.

It may seem strange to you to consider “being still” as part of worship. But this is the mental and emotional exercise of turning our focus to God. It is to enjoy just being in the presence of God.



Question 18 Read Psalm 131:2. What analogy is used here for quieting yourself?

This is a time to let all the cares of this world fall away and to enter quietly into the presence of the Lord. To look upon Him with delight, to savor who He is, letting His presence be absorbed into your very being. It is a time to delight in Him (Psalm 37:4). It is a time to deepen your intimacy with Christ and share your love with Him. It is a time for contemplating Him, “knowing” Him.

Read Psalm 16.



Question 19 In verse 11 what are the assumptions inherent in the idea that “in [God’s] presence is fullness of joy”?

Read Psalms 37:7; 46:10; 62:1; 130:5, 6. Has waiting before God, savoring His presence, been a part of your quiet time? David says, “My soul waits in silence for God only” (Psalm 62:1).

No eloquence in the world is half so full of meaning as the patient silence of a child of God. It is an eminent work of grace to bring down the will and subdue the affections to such a degree, that the whole mind lies before the Lord like the sea beneath the wind, ready to be moved by every breath of his mouth, but free from all inward and self-caused emotion, as also from all power to be moved by anything other than the divine will.⁶



Exercise 8

Practice waiting in silence. Spend 10 minutes right now just being quiet before the Lord. You may want to read the “Helps” that follow before you do this. Write down how you benefited from this exercise. Was it difficult to discipline your mind? What were the distractions? Were you able to overcome them? How? Be prepared to share when you meet with your group.

Helps

A few ideas to help you “be still”.

- Find a quiet spot where you will not be interrupted or distracted. If you need to, inform your family that you do not want to be interrupted during this time.
- Start by focusing on one of the names or attributes of God. Let it fill your mind to the exclusion of all else.
- If your thoughts are interrupted by remembering things you need to do, keep a paper beside you and jot them down and then turn your thoughts back to God.
- Do not actively pray or praise. Listen to what God has to say to you about Himself. Give Him your full attention.

⁶ Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David* re Psalm 62:1.

- Picture yourself as a child snuggling up to a doting parent.
- Do not worry about “doing it right”. Just enjoy being quiet with God.

B. Adoration and Praise

Now we will move on to a more active part of worship: that of adoring and praising God. Adoration is not a term we have used yet for worship, but it is the height of worship. It means to delight in God, to express deep love and praise for His character.

There are many examples in Scripture of prayers that start with praise. Often these prayers were raised in times of extreme need. In one instance Peter and John had been brought before the Jewish leaders and forbidden to speak in the name of Jesus. They reported back to their fellow believers and then had a time of prayer.

Read Acts 4:24-30 and answer the following questions.



Question 20 What is the focus of the first 5 verses of this prayer?



Question 21 What was the request of their prayer at the end?

Probably many of us would have had a different focus and a different request. So often when we encounter trouble our first and only prayer is to be delivered out of the problem. These men of God lifted up the name of God, acknowledged His might and power, and then asked for the boldness and confidence to forge ahead with the assignment given them in His Kingdom.

Let us look at another example of prayer in a time of tribulation. Jeremiah 32 tells the story of the prophet Jeremiah in a time of extreme distress. He was being held captive for giving unpopular prophecies and the enemy was about to overrun Jerusalem and take everyone captive. Then God tells Jeremiah to buy some land as a symbol that He would restore the people to their land. After doing that Jeremiah prays to God. He starts with praise, and then goes on to list all of God’s deeds. He never ASKS God for anything. He tuned his heart to God by talking to Him. By doing that he was able to come to a clearer understanding of Him, and then to accept what God was doing—even though it was devastating.

Adoration and praise develop a deeper sense of intimacy within us. We are drawn into His presence. Our praise sets the tone for intimate contact with Almighty God. Psalm 22:3 says that He inhabits the praises of His people. We invoke His presence in a special way when we praise Him.

Helps

- If you find it difficult to “adore” God use the Psalms and echo them back to God. Other passages to use are Romans 11:33-36; Philippians 2:5-11; Revelation 4 and 5; passages from Isaiah like chapter 53. Let God’s Word give you the words of praise to declare back to Him.
- Develop and use a list of scriptural names and phrases used to describe God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit as you spend time praising God.
- Take a hymn or praise song and sing it to God.

C. Confession

You might be surprised to find confession in a lesson on worship. However it is only through humility that you can truly worship a Holy God. And as you spend time in His presence you will see your shortcomings in a new light. We know that all of us “come short of the glory of God” and we need to always hold our lives up to the Light.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:20-21. The Corinthian church definitely had its struggles. Paul lists some of the things that he feared might be exhibited among these believers. This passage delineates eight things displeasing to God.



Question 22 List them.

In addition he was concerned that they might still be holding on to impurity, immorality and sensuality from their unsaved past. This is only one list that we can use to examine our hearts and confess before God.



Question 23 Can we sincerely worship God and be committed to practicing or tolerating sin in our lives at the same time? Why?

What are examples of potential problems we need to monitor vigilantly in pursuit of a Biblical, worship-based life-style? Consider, for example, unforgiveness, complaining, omitting one's tithe, prayerlessness, and an unwholesome thought life. If we are going to worship God "in truth" (John 4:24) then we have to let truth penetrate to the sin that so easily creeps into our hearts.

God wants us to be transformed. Romans 12:1, 2 is basically a call to worship.



Question 24 After reading these verses answer the following questions.

- a) What are we told to present? _____
- b) Why does this make personal purity desirable? (1 Cor. 6:19, 20) _____
- c) What does it mean to be "conformed to this world?" _____
- d) How can worship bring about our transformation? (2 Cor. 3:17, 18) _____

Finally in this discussion read James 4:8-10 and answer the following questions:



Question 25 According to these verses who begins the process of worship?



Question 26 What preparation is needed before we are lifted up by the Lord?

We have an excellent example of this in Psalm 51 when David was confronted with his sin of adultery. David knew exactly what was most pleasing to God as his “worship”.



Question 27 What kind of sacrifice pleases God according to verses 16 and 17 of Psalm 51?

Notice also that as David was seeking forgiveness he was looking for the return of joy and to being able to again praise God. He wanted to move back into a worship relationship.

Helps

In addition to what we have just covered this is a short spiritual inventory you may want to use to examine yourself periodically.

Spiritual Inventory	
Your Words	Have you spoken evil of anyone, criticized, used sharp words?
Your Attitudes	Do you have a spirit of complaining, grouchy, know-it-all?
Your Thoughts	Are you entertaining greed, doubts, fears, bitterness, anger, lust?
Your Actions	Have you broken God’s laws, trespassed on forbidden ground?

D. Thanksgiving

We are going to draw a line of distinction between prayers of praise and prayers of thanksgiving. Praise focuses on who God is; thanksgiving focuses on what He has done for us. There is an overlap in how the terminology of *praise* and *thanks* is used in the Bible. But to help us focus in prayer we will differentiate.

Adoration comes from a deeper level of intimacy than thankfulness. As a spouse, what gives you more pleasure? “My dear, I truly love you.” Or “Thanks for taking out the trash.” However, thankfulness is very important because without it we can quickly lose our focus and “adoration”. The freshness of appreciation and gratefulness for the actions cannot really be separated from loving our Beloved and will only enhance that love.

The command to give thanks is repeated frequently. And there are frequent examples. Again the Psalms are a key resource and encouragement in this area.



Exercise 9

Look in the Psalms and make a quick list of at least four verses where we are commanded to give thanks; and four verses where thanks is being given.

One of the unique commands of Scripture is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:18. After telling us to pray without ceasing it says, “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” This fits closely with the command to praise God continually. This is probably one of the most difficult, but also one of the most blessed prayers that you can offer. Being able to thank God even in the most difficult of circumstances proclaims our faith in a God who is far beyond our comprehension but loves us and is still in control.

There are many benefits to thanking God. Here are two key benefits:

1. Being thankful removes pride and replaces it with humility. We are acknowledging that it is not what WE have done but giving credit to the One to whom credit belongs.

2. As we thank God for what He has done, it becomes easier and we gain courage and faith to pray for more.

Helps

- Keep a record of answers to prayer and review and add to them regularly.
- Tell others when God answers prayer. The recounting encourages others and reinforces it for you.
- Here is a brief checklist of what to thank God for:

Daily provision—health, food, ability to work, family, friendships

The wonders of your body—sight, hearing, touch, smell

Creation—flowers, trees, grass, sky, etc.

Blessings and benefits—all that you have

Bad and sad things—things that have gone wrong

IV. Expression in Worship

Now we are going to move into the actual expression of worship. This may be both in public and in private. We are seeking specifically for Biblical principles in this area, but our expression is often heavily influenced by our culture so we need to examine this in the light of Scripture as opposed to what others may think about us.

A. Heart

True worship will always come from the heart. Hannah, who saw the Lord answer a long-expressed desire, prayed, “My heart exults in the LORD” (1 Samuel 2:1). The only way we can truly worship is if we worship from the fullness of the heart. If our heart is not engaged, we are not worshipping; we are going through a formality. We need to examine our attitudes and the status of our heart’s condition regularly. We have already talked about confession. Our ability to stand before God with a pure heart will enable us to worship Him both in truth and in spirit. Purity of heart includes both the act of being cleansed from sin and of moving forward in obedience. There are some who give loud and enthusiastic praise to God in public, but give little evidence in their daily lives that they are worshipers of a God who desires their love to show itself in obedience.

We have also seen that we are admonished both to praise and to give thanks continually. Obviously we cannot do that constantly in a verbal way, so again we are reminded of the importance of the heart’s involvement and attitude. Colossians 4:2 tells us to devote ourselves to prayer, “keeping alert in it with *an attitude of thanksgiving*” (emphasis added). We started this lesson with the verse “Love the Lord with all your heart...” We must continually be turning our hearts towards Him. Thankfulness is one of the key attitudes we can search for in our hearts to see if we have “heart” worship.



Question 28 How often did the psalmist praise God in Psalm 119:164

He even says in verse 62 of the same psalm that he rises at midnight to thank God. To do that the attitude must be there; and that attitude must be encouraged and developed purposefully by practice. This kind of worship can only come from a heart that is overflowing with God. Psalm 33:21 says “Our heart rejoices in Him”. Why is that so? “Because we trust His holy name.”



Exercise 10

Take time to think about what attitudes of the heart encourage worship. Make a list of different attitudes that keep people from worshipping. Then list attitudes that would encourage worship. Where possible support your answers with Scripture. Write several paragraphs in your notebook on this topic and be prepared to discuss it with your group.

We will go on now to ways we physically express praise and worship. It is an interesting fact that even when our heart attitudes are not correct, if we do something in obedience to God, the heart is encouraged to follow the action. So, as we put these things into practice, they will transform us.

B. Voice

It may be obvious that we are to use our voices to worship and praise God, but often we do not do it. And when we do use our voices we may be guilty of the accusation God made against the Israelites in Isaiah 29:13.



Question 29 What were the Israelites guilty of?

This is most likely to happen in our public worship, not in private where others do not see anyway. So, with that caution let us engage our hearts and our mouths together for the praise of God.

1. Speaking

Psalm 145 covers nearly every aspect of verbal praise.



Question 30 How many words connected with verbal praise can you find and list from verses 1-21?

Often when we praise God we do it silently, and we may not feel any need at all to use our voices to give verbal praise. But there are benefits to actually speaking out praise and worship to God in private. First, when we speak out loud to God it helps us to concentrate and not let our minds wander. We are reinforcing to ourselves what we are doing. Secondly, if we speak our praises and thanksgiving to God out loud they become concrete and give us the pattern and practice to speak to other people. We are admonished over and over to speak God's praises to others. How important that we start by doing that when alone, then with our family and friends, then within the loving confines of the church body, and then, where we have opportunity, in the world.



Question 31 Read Psalm 63:3. What motivates praise? From this verse, how do we know praise is a verbal activity?

We must praise God with our voice. We can even use our daily conversations to honor the Lord for His deeds in our life. Testifying of the Lord and His blessing throughout the week through praise provides a deepening of understanding as our experience reinforces our faith.

2. Shouting

Shouting is not done very often in our present day age, nor was it frequent in Bible times. However, there are situations when a shout is the perfect “praise” release of emotion, expressing the joyous affirmation of God’s faithfulness as observed by His children.



Question 32 Read Psalm 47:1, 2. Usually shouting is a voluntary response to an action, event, or awareness one perceives. Which is the case here? (v. 1)



Question 33 Read Psalm 81:1. What reasons does the passage following this verse give for this command?



Exercise 11

Read Psalm 66:1-4. List the commands given. Have you ever literally shouted out praises to God? If so, what were the circumstances? How did you feel?

Shouting may not be the usual way you express excitement but it comes from a natural upwelling of exuberance and we often see it demonstrated at sports events or contests. We can think of a “shout” even as taking the form of a “cheer”. When God has shown Himself mighty a shout of “Hallelujah!” is definitely appropriate. Most of us could stand to express a little joyful excitement when God has done something great! God is our strength. He compensates for our frailties and empowers us to succeed. Realizing His efforts on our behalf should evoke strong emotions. A “joyful shout” may well be in order! However if you never “shout” joyfully, do not fear emotions of exuberance and joy that well up in you as you worship your Creator God. And do find a way to express your joy for it is pleasing to God.

3. Singing

Psalm 100 opens in a praise song of timeless importance:

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.

Serve the LORD with gladness;

Come before Him with joyful singing.

Taken phrase by phrase, these potent, relevant words are foundational in our understanding of the expression of worship.

The *first* phrase is entirely inclusive. “Make a joyful shout,” or noise. We have just covered this but the main feature of this phrase is that everyone is included. This is not a performance of stunning perfection but one of gusto, robustness, enthusiasm — the height of joy. God desires that everyone get “into the act”, the whole earth—including you.

The *second* phrase, “Serve the Lord with gladness,” builds on the importance of enjoyment. Joy is contagious. It spreads like wildfire. Its resultant characteristics are transforming.

The *third* phrase is to “come before Him (or into His presence) with singing.” Here is a climax of rejoicing before the Lord. This is only one of many places in the Psalms that we are commanded to sing which is either stated within a context of joy or with the direct command to do it joyfully.



Exercise 12

Compare Psalm 100 with other commandments to sing found in Psalms 30:4; 33:1-3; 95:1; 98:1; 147:7 and note distinctive commands that accompany each call “to sing.” Write these commands and a one to two sentence comparison in your notebook, then answer the following questions.

In the light of these calls, what attitudes should we cultivate as we come before Him in song, and what might we expect as we do? Why do you suppose the psalmist entreats us to sing a new song?

Music, anointed of the Lord, can lift the spirit, distract incoming evil thoughts, break evil bonds, and focus our attention on the Lord. Usually our spirits are lifted when we sing in praise, or listen to a tape of praise songs, or participate in a song service. When we are sick in body or mentally challenged, we can let music soothe the soul. We need to transform our residence into an altar by incorporating Christian music into our spiritual or physical battle.

Examine the story of Paul and Silas in Acts 16:16-34 as an example. Then answer the following questions.



Question 34 Why were Paul and Silas imprisoned?



Question 35 In jail Paul and Silas rejoiced. How could they do that?



Question 36 What was the effect of their praying and singing hymns at midnight?



Question 37 What is the correlation for us in terms of singing praise when we are down and “in jail” (figuratively or literally)?

Paul and Silas were not at a church service. There were just the two of them in dire circumstances but singing with praise changed everything. Those who are musically inclined are more apt to sing either out loud or in their hearts. But even without any special musical talent singing praises to God is important and does not depend on special ability. Singing can easily be a part of your quiet time. Songs as a means of communing with God are found throughout the pages of the Scripture. We have used only a few instances of the command to sing to the Lord, but you will find it an oft repeated theme, especially in the Psalms.

As well as the commands to sing we are often exhorted to play instruments in praise of God. Many of us are more limited in this area. We might have been able to participate with cymbals and tambourines as people did in Bible times, but the benefit we do have today is that we can enjoy the talents of skilled musicians in church services or even in our homes with recordings. We will not expand in this area except to acknowledge that those who have musical talent should enjoy using them in praise to the Lord both for their own benefit and for the benefit of others.

Joy is strength and we are often admonished to use our voices joyfully, whether we are singing, shouting, or speaking the praises of God. Stress is vanquished in a room of praise-oriented music and song. Anxiety has no place in an atmosphere of worshipful melody. Music and specifically singing should play a major role in the process of praise.

C. Body

Worship is also expressed physically. There are appropriate times to bow, kneel, stand, clap, or simply celebrate. The body language of Scripture is an important element in the practice of worship. Some of these expressions take the form of a command, but there are others that we can observe by example in the Scriptures.

1. Lifting Holy Hands

Any form of body language reaffirms the mind. Moving about heightens our senses. This is basic anatomy. In school we raise a hand in order to get the teacher's attention. In talking we often use gestures. In thanking a friend for a gift, we may extend our hands in gratitude. Similarly in the practice of worship when our heart and mind are engaged it can be very natural to raise or extend our hands in order to inquire of the Lord or to receive from His bounty or to bless Him and that is scriptural.



Exercise 13

Read Psalm 63:3-5. The combination of verbal praise with hands raised seems to bless the Lord. Why? The process satisfies the participant as well. Reflect on this. Explain.

Read Psalm 141:2. The lifting of hands is correlated with the evening sacrifice. It refers to an ancient priestly practice, but the idea of an evening sacrifice can be a valuable ritual in the life of the present-day believer. It can simply be a prayer where we return to God what He has invested in us to accomplish His will that day. Human beings were not created to receive adulation. Holding praise for ourselves will inflate our self-perception. It is God who has given all that we have: gifts, talents, time, wisdom. As servants of His Kingdom therefore a proper response to any success, compliment, or award received must involve expressing gratitude to the Lord in prayer at the end of the day. It is natural then that along with prayer, as an "evening sacrifice", one would lift holy hands stating, "Here Lord, this is really for you."

In addition we are admonished in 1 Timothy 2:8 to lift up holy hands in prayer. If this is not a tradition in your church, you will not feel comfortable doing this in public. However in the privacy of your home try using body language to express what is in your heart.

2. Standing in Awe

The orchestra has just tuned. The lights have dimmed. A hush falls over the audience. Suddenly, a side stage door swings open and the conductor enters the concert stage. Immediately, the orchestra rises. The body language of that musical ensemble signals worth, respect, and honor. So too in worship when the Ancient of Days enters, the people of God should rise in awe and respect.



Exercise 14

Read Psalm 135:1-3. Analyze your own patterns of practice. When do you stand in church? Is standing meaningful at those times? Why? (or why not) Are there times you might find it appropriate to stand before God at home?



Question 38 Read Matthew 6:5. Why did Jesus rebuke the hypocrites for standing while they prayed? Is there a time when standing may be inappropriate for that or any other reason?

There are times when standing is appropriate, and by doing so the believer's sense of worship is heightened. Standing immediately sends a signal to the brain, "Show respect. You are in the presence of Someone of notoriety."

3. Kneeling in deference

As significant as standing is in the acknowledgement of worth, so kneeling is in the acknowledgement of respect. Kneeling usually is a self-effacing act of deference and devotion.



Question 39 Read Psalm 95:6. What happens when a believer kneels before the Lord?



Question 40 What act does the kneeling in Philippians 2:9-11 indicate?

All humans, angels, and demon spirits will ultimately bow the knee to Jesus, rendering complete and final homage. The confession of every tongue will one day be heard by every ear as He takes ultimate and complete rule. But until that day our kneeling and confession of Jesus as Lord invites and receives His presence and power over all evil which we face now.

4. Fasting in Humility

Fasting is seldom thought of in relation to worship. It is usually viewed as an act of pleading with God in the face of some tragedy. That is both Biblical and justified. But fasting can also be a form of worship that we offer to God. Fasting should always bring us more in tune with God as we force our body to stop its natural intake and seek a stronger spiritual connection. Our times of fasting should be primarily times of worship as we acknowledge God who has power over all things. And then we should pray as God directs us about the needs before us. Because of the place of fasting in intercession we will cover it in the next lesson.

D. Conclusion

All the elements of worship through body language suggested in the Scripture are relevant for our walk with Christ. He enjoys our praise. He is exalted when we offer praise and worship in childlike abandonment. Body language heightens our expressions of worth to the Savior. As you ponder this section, may you be encouraged to apply these truths of Scripture to your pursuit of Christ-likeness.



Exercise 15

Explore and develop. You will find other physical actions used in worship in the Scripture. As you do so, list them with Scripture references. Then determine each week to find a way to do something different in your private worship time and give physical expression to praising God.

V. Benefits of Praise and Worship

In conclusion we will examine some of the benefits of worshiping and praising God. It is amazing what can happen from the fullness of a heart poured out in worship.

God is glorified. This is the first and most important result, the highest purpose which we have for our lives as believers. We have looked at many verses already that emphasize this. The whole act of praising and worshiping brings the most direct glory to God of which we are capable.

Our perspective is changed. The regular practice of praising God puts us in tune with heaven. As we focus and consciously seek God, know Him and worship Him, our problems become more and more insignificant. Our circumstances no longer control our actions as we develop a habit of consistent, daily worship of a Sovereign God.

Worship changes our perspective from the natural to the supernatural, from our limited strength to His limitless power. Perspective impacts attitude. Worship encourages and develops the optimism of the eternal perspective as opposed to a temporal viewpoint which is vulnerable to, and tossed about by, all the ups and downs of life.

A godly lifestyle develops. It should not seem strange that a life spent in the presence of God honoring Him, worshiping and speaking out His praise, will become a godly life. As our perspective in life is changed our actions must also change. Whom we spend time with is what we become. We will begin to reflect where we have been just as Moses' face shone after he spent time with God.

Our faith is strengthened. Fears are diminished as our own hearts are encouraged in recounting who God actually is. Our faith grows as we come to know God better and spend time delighting in who He is. That is why we need to spend time looking in Scripture for all the clues He gives us about Himself, His character, His actions, His emotions, His purposes. But we also need to spend time praising Him for these things that we learn about Him so that it becomes active knowledge in our life, not something out of a book. The Christian life is always about relationship with God who is invisible and therefore worshiped by faith.

The spirit is refreshed. Time spent in the presence of our Father God will always bring refreshing. Where did Jesus go so often? He went to spend time with His Father to refresh His spirit and be at one with Him. His strength poured out from these times of seclusion. Was it duty that sent Christ to His Father? Or was it delight? David said, "My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips" (Psalm 63:5).

Spiritual warfare takes place. Adoration and praise are powerful weapons of warfare. Satan hates it when we praise God simply because he wants to be worshiped instead. Psalm 8:2 proclaims, "From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger." When we praise God, the enemy is silenced. The story in 2 Chronicles 20 gives an example of the power of praise.

Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-30. The imminent threat of an advancing horde of enemy soldiers sets the backdrop for Jehoshaphat's classic example of proactive worship before the battle.



Question 41 Summarize King Jehoshaphat's prayer.



Question 42 What was God's response to this prayer?



Question 43 How did they go "into battle"?



Question 44 What was the result?

Read Psalm 57. David was being pursued by Saul and fearing for his life. He had done nothing wrong. But note verse seven: "My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises!" and he finishes this psalm in praise to God before he sees the answer to his prayers. David realized God's potential to alter circumstances on earth.



Exercise 16

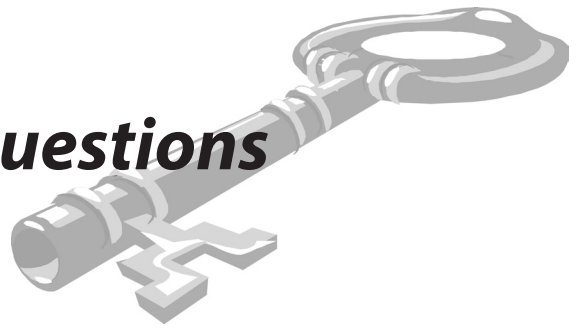
Apply this scenario to your own experience. Can you see a possibility for applying this praise principle personally? In your church? In your city? In your nation? Has worship ever served to preserve you in the face of an enemy or great adversity? Elaborate. Apply to your present circumstances.

Conclusion

As you seek to spend more time in worship, more time seeking for God, more time getting to know who He is you will experience all of these benefits and probably will find even more. Begin to put into practice what you have learned during your daily quiet time with the Lord.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. ~1 Timothy 1:17

Answers to Questions



Question 1

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind,” as Jesus said in Matthew 22:37 while quoting Deuteronomy 6:5.

Question 2

Your answer.

Through a display of Christ-like character and an application of Biblical principles in daily routine and decisions.

Question 3

By serving Him, preparing food for Him.

Question 4

By sitting at His feet and listening to Him. We could say she was soaking up His presence, enjoying it.

Question 5

Jesus rebuked Martha, not because she was doing good, but because of the spirit in which she was doing it. She was worried and upset. Mary was commended because she had the right priority—spending time with Jesus.

Question 6

1 Chronicles 16:10 I will find gladness when I seek God.

1 Chronicles 16:11 I need to seek His face continually.

2 Chronicles 7:14 God will hear and forgive and bless when I seek Him in humility and repentance.

Psalms 24:3-6 If I am seeking the Lord I will be pure and honest in my dealings with Him and others.

Psalms 27:8 God wants me to seek Him, and I do.

Psalms 105:3, 4 It makes me glad to fellowship with God and I must seek Him continually.

Hosea 5:15 I need to get rid of any guilt so that I can find God’s face again. If I have troubles it helps me be more sincere in seeking Him.

Hebrews 11:6 God will reward me if I seek Him, which means I will always find Him!

Question 7

Your answer. Probably the key picture that would occur to us is one of humility. A picture of giving honor and reverence to God through bowing before Him in heart, but this was the actual physical response of people in the Bible.

Question 8

It is “personal” affection. Not a God who is far away, but One who is here and beloved.

Question 9

It is not just admiring the Lord's words and works, but admiring God Himself -- His very character.

Question 10

It says they worshiped with all their might, with songs and even with dancing. The picture is one of joy and elation—before God.

Question 11

Your answer.

Question 12

- a) **Psalm 50:23.** A sacrifice of thanksgiving honors God (note vs. 22 also!)
- b) **Romans 1:20-22.** God has always been visible since creation so everyone is without excuse who does not honor Him.
- c) **Isaiah 40:26.** His presence is seen in the wonder of His creation.
- d) **Deuteronomy 6:12.** Do not forget the Lord and what He has done for you.
- e) **Luke 6:35.** God is kind to everyone, even evil men.

Question 13

Everything that has breath is commanded to praise the Lord! That leaves no one out, not even unbelievers, let alone the people who carry His name.

Question 14

- a) All the time. Continually.
- b) David blessed the Lord, praised Him, boasted in the Lord, magnified the Lord and encouraged others to exalt the Lord's name with him.
- c) Your answer. There should be an ongoing worship of God, and I should carry others along in it.

Question 15

We are told to worship, to bow down, to kneel before the Lord.

Question 16

- 1) He is our God — We start with the focus on God the mighty Creator.
- 2) We are the people of His pasture — We, the believers, His children are grazing in the goodness of His provision.
- 3) We are the sheep of His hand — We are cared for by God Himself what else do we need? What can we possibly lack?

Question 17

If we keep that perspective and order we will not harden our hearts against God (and thereby lose His promise of rest, v. 11)

Question 18

The analogy is of a small child who is resting against his mother. He is just secure in her presence and enjoying being with her.

Question 19

In God there is no fault, no shortcoming, only love, beauty and perfection. Therefore to be in His presence is to partake of God's character and glory which can do no other but reflect itself in us as joy. (Note how Moses' face shone with glorious splendor because he had been in God's presence.)

Question 20

They focused on God and His power and acknowledged His sovereignty.

Question 21

They asked God to give them boldness in speaking His word.

Question 22

1. strife
2. jealousy
3. angry tempers
4. disputes
5. slanders
6. gossip
7. arrogance
8. disturbances

Question 23

Sin is a spiritual barrier between us and God, and worship is spiritual. If we are grieving the Holy Spirit our communication system will be broken down. We cannot claim to honor and love and revere God when we are disobedient.

Question 24

- a) We are to present our bodies as a living and holy sacrifice.
- b) Our body is the temple of God, set apart and holy.
- c) To have the same values as our neighbors, acquaintances and colleagues.
- d) In worship we focus on Jesus and that focus sets us free from physical and materialistic priorities and thereby transforms us into His image.

Question 25

A person who humbly submits and draws near to God begins the process of worship and the Lord responds.

Question 26

A person needs to cleanse his hands of wrong deeds (repent and ask forgiveness) and purify his heart (repent of worldly/wrong attitudes.) Humble himself before God.

Question 27

God is seeking a broken and contrite heart as the sacrifice He delights in.

Question 28

Seven times a day.

Question 29

Honoring God only with their lips while their hearts were not engaged. Just following tradition.

Question 30

vs. 4 commend, tell

vs. 5 speak

vs. 6 tell, proclaim

vs. 7 celebrate, sing

vs. 10 extol

vs. 11 tell, speak

vs. 18 call, cry

vs. 21 speak.

Question 31

In this verse it shows the motivation of God's loving-kindness. It is verbal because it is my lips.

Question 32

In this case it is awareness; it is an act of celebrating God's kingly power over all nations.

Question 33

Shouting joyfully is commanded as a celebration for God's deliverance from bondage and setting us free.

Question 34

They were imprisoned for a good deed of healing which ruined the profits of some business men.

Question 35

They were in prison for a deed of blessing, something good they had done. They followed Christ's advice to be jubilant (Matthew 5:12). Their trust was in God, despite their circumstances.

Question 36

The prison doors were opened and even the chains fell off all prisoners but no one wanted to escape. Through this event a whole family was saved.

Question 37

Your answer, but think about it carefully. Although unrealized many believers are shackled by Satan in one form or another. Praise releases them from the evil hold Satan has upon them. Through praise they are set free to pursue greater things for the Lord.

Question 38

The purpose of standing was changed from respect to God into the idol worship of gaining respect for oneself. Instead of standing to give respect it became standing to gain personal respect from others. We must always beware of "performing" for others.

Question 39

It indicates deference to someone who is higher. The believer realizes his position before his Lord and Savior.

Question 40

It is a definite act of acknowledging Christ as supreme and therefore is an act of worship

Question 41

Your answer. He first acknowledges how great God is, then what He has already done for them and then presents their need.

Question 42

The assurance that He was with them and even though they had to face the enemy, they did not need to fight them.

Question 43

They went out singing and praising the Lord.

Question 44

The Lord delivered them by having the enemy kill themselves and the people spent three days collecting all the spoils!

Answers to exercises



Exercise 1

Your answer. The key to this exercise is to be honest in your heart about how you feel about these things. Are they duty—or are they delight? When you are able to answer that question, you will be able to see them from God's perspective.

Exercise 2

You answer. Be prepared both to show your course coach that you have done this as well as to share with your fellow students.

Exercise 3

Your answer. Do you think about the Holy Spirit being within you, and you being the Temple of God? Is your "worship" spiritual, or a matter of ritual?

Exercise 4

Your answer. Exalt is only one of a number of terms. You need to think about this in terms of your personal worship, but it also has important ramifications as you move out into the church and the world. We cannot exalt Him there if we do not start at home in our beings.

Exercise 5

Your answer. Developing an ongoing attitude of heartfelt praise and focus on who God is will highlight the Lord's benefits in your life resulting in inner joy that overflows into all of life including those around you. Be prepared to bless the Lord to others as you list His benefits in your life.

Exercise 6

Your answer. Leaders, people with authority, should give credit to the Lord for the good results in their ministry and not lift themselves up. The beauty (glory) of an event should be described as the Lord's marvelous doings. And the results should be pictured as miracles of God's strength in overwhelming the opposition. Seeing the Lord's victory in the face of an impossibility should result in humble, worshipful gratitude. The splendor of it all should move us to share the splendor of His holiness with many. Such an awesome revelation of the Lord's holy splendor should move us to serve Him more ardently.

If the outcome is such that we marvel at it, it should stimulate us to see the beauty of God's holy being and ways of doing things; but it should also overwhelm us in how a human lifestyle of holiness evokes divine participation and deliverance.

Exercise 7

Your answer.

Exercise 8

Your answer. Be honest in your evaluation.

Exercise 9

Your answer. A hint: If you feel pressured for time start scanning the Psalms at about Psalm 100 and just look at the first verse or two of each Psalm. You should quickly reach your quota!

Exercise 10

Your answer. If you have a concordance you might want to look at Scriptures that talk about the heart. If you have a hard time thinking about attitudes, then think what our hearts should be full of. Our heart is inextricably connected to our attitudes.

Exercise 11

Your answer.

Exercise 12

30:4 — sing praise to the Lord and give thanks

33:1-3 — sing for joy, sing praises, sing a new song

95:1 — sing for joy

98:1,4,5 — sing a new song, sing for joy and sing praises

147:7 — sing to the Lord with thanksgiving, sing praises to God

Your answer. The whole tone is repeated with joy and praise for God. There do not seem to be any sad songs! The expectation with this kind of singing is that we would be filled with joy. A new song is a challenge to us not to just be in a habit of certain songs or music but to let God fill us with creative expressions of joy for Him and what He has done.

Exercise 13

Your answer. A combination of physical and vocal adoration absorbs my being to the extent that all other emotions, interruptive thoughts and feelings dissipate and pure worship in spirit and in truth takes place. It is as if my being flows into His presence, is engulfed by Him. It is the ultimate of “being in Him.” The picture is of God encompassing us as He engulfed the temple of Solomon at its dedication. This is the fullness of the expression “being the temple of the Holy Spirit.” It is “God in us.”

Exercise 14

Your answer.

Exercise 15

Your answer.

Exercise 16

Your answer. If you have never considered worshiping and praising God when you feel attacked or overwhelmed this may be the time to determine that you will, and be steadfast like David in praising God wholeheartedly.

Names and Attributes of God

The names of God are beautiful to consider and encompass many of His attributes. It is beneficial to meditate on both as you seek to know Him more deeply. Sometimes there seem to be contradictions, but there are many different facets of His character, all of which contribute to a jewel beyond comparison.

Overview of the Names of God in Scripture

The material in this section is quoted from “The Names of God” by J. Hampton Keathley, III.⁷

- (1) **Elohim:** The plural form of *EL*, meaning “strong one.” It is used of false gods, but when used of the true God, it is a plural of majesty and intimates the trinity. It is especially used of God’s sovereignty, creative work, mighty work for Israel and in relation to His sovereignty (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 32:27; Gen. 1:1; Isa. 45:18; Deut. 5:23; 8:15; Ps. 68:7).

Compounds of *El*:

- **El Shaddai:** “God Almighty.” The derivation is uncertain. Some think it stresses God’s loving supply and comfort; others His power as the Almighty one standing on a mountain and who corrects and chastens (Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; Ex. 6:3; Ps. 91:1, 2).
- **El Elyon:** “The Most High God.” Stresses God’s strength, sovereignty, and supremacy (Gen. 14:19; Ps. 9:2; Dan. 7:18, 22, 25).
- **El Olam:** “The Everlasting God.” Emphasizes God’s unchangeableness and is connected with His inexhaustibleness (Gen. 16:13). In UA 21:33

- (2) **Yahweh (YHWH):** Comes from a verb which means “to exist, be.” This, plus its usage, shows that this name stresses God as the independent and self-existent God of revelation and redemption (Gen. 4:3; Ex. 6:3 (cf. 3:14); 3:12).

Compounds of *Yahweh*: Strictly speaking, these compounds are designations or titles which reveal additional facts about God’s character.

- **Yahweh Jireh (Yireh):** “The Lord will provide.” Stresses God’s provision for His people (Gen. 22:14).

⁷ J. Hampton Keathley, III, “The Names of God”, http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=220, accessed Jan 28, 2009.

- ***Yahweh Nissi:*** “The Lord is my Banner.” Stresses that God is our rallying point and our means of victory; the one who fights for His people (Ex. 17:15).
 - ***Yahweh Shalom:*** “The Lord is Peace.” Points to the Lord as the means of our peace and rest (Jud. 6:24).
 - ***Yahweh Sabbaoth:*** “The Lord of Hosts.” A military figure portraying the Lord as the commander of the armies of heaven (1 Sam. 1:3; 17:45).
 - ***Yahweh Maccaddeshcem:*** “The Lord your Sanctifier.” Portrays the Lord as our means of sanctification or as the one who sets believers apart for His purposes (Ex. 31:13).
 - ***Yahweh Ro’i:*** “The Lord my Shepherd.” Portrays the Lord as the Shepherd who cares for His people as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his pasture (Ps. 23:1).
 - ***Yahweh Tsidkenu:*** “The Lord our Righteousness.” Portrays the Lord as the means of our righteousness (Jer. 23:6).
 - ***Yahweh Shammah:*** “The Lord is there.” Portrays the Lord’s personal presence in the millennial kingdom (Ezek. 48:35).
 - ***Yahweh Elohim Israel:*** “The Lord, the God of Israel.” Identifies Yahweh as the God of Israel in contrast to the false gods of the nations (Jud. 5:3; Isa. 17:6).
- (3) ***Adonai:*** Like *Elohim*, this too is a plural of majesty. The singular form means “master, owner.” Stresses man’s relationship to God as his master, authority, and provider (Gen. 18:2; 40:1; 1 Sam. 1:15; Ex. 21:1-6; Josh. 5:14).
- (4) ***Theos:*** Greek word translated “God.” Primary name for God used in the New Testament. Its use teaches: (1) *He is the only true God* (Matt. 23:9; Rom. 3:30); (2) *He is unique* (1 Tim. 1:17; John 17:3; Rev. 15:4; 16:7); (3) *He is transcendent* (Acts 17:24; Heb. 3:4; Rev. 10:6); (4) *He is the Savior* (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10). This name is used of Christ as God in John 1:1, 18; 20:28; 1 John 5:20; Tit. 2:13; Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:1.
- (5) ***Kurios:*** Greek word translated “Lord.” Stresses authority and supremacy. While it can mean sir (John 4:11), owner (Luke 19:33), master (Col. 3:22), or even refer to idols (1 Cor. 8:5) or husbands (1 Pet. 3:6), it is used mostly as the equivalent of Yahweh of the Old Testament. It too is used of Jesus Christ meaning (1) Rabbi or Sir (Matt. 8:6); (2) God or Deity (John 20:28; Acts 2:36; Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:11).
- (6) ***Despotes:*** Greek word translated “Master.” Carries the idea of ownership while *kurios* stressed supreme authority (Luke 2:29; Acts 4:24; Rev. 6:10; 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 4).
- (7) ***Father:*** A distinctive New Testament revelation is that through faith in Christ, God becomes our personal Father. Father is used of God in the Old Testament only 15 times while it is used of God 245 times in the New Testament. As a name of God, it stresses God’s loving care, provision, discipline, and the way we are to address God in prayer (Matt. 7:11; Jam. 1:17; Heb. 12:5-11; John 15:16; 16:23; Eph. 2:18; 3:15; 1 Thess. 3:11).

Attributes of God

This section will cover a few of the attributes of God. The purpose is to give you a start and an example in how to pursue your knowledge of God. After each attribute there is a brief definition and then several Scripture verses which point out that particular attribute of God. For further encouragement some quotes have been gleaned from the book *The Knowledge of the Holy* by A.W.Tozer. As you meditate on who God is you will find it invaluable to write down your own thoughts, questions, and verses relating to each attribute.

"God's attributes are not isolated traits of His character but facets of His unitary being. They are not things-in-themselves; they are, rather, thoughts by which we think of God aspects of a perfect whole, names given to whatever we know to be true of the Godhead."⁸

Incomprehensible — beyond understanding.

Ezekiel 1:26-28; Rev 1:14-16; Isaiah 55:8-9

It may seem strange to list this as an attribute of God, but this is the place of humility from which we may begin to know God; He will be beyond what we can humanly grasp in understanding, and thereby all the more glorious.

When the Spirit would acquaint us with something that lies beyond the field of our knowledge, He tells us that this thing is like something we already know, but He is always careful to phrase His description so as to save us from slavish literalism. For example, when the prophet Ezekiel saw heaven opened and beheld visions of God, he found himself looking at that which he had no language to describe. What he was seeing was wholly different from anything he had ever known before, so he fell back upon the language of resemblance. "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire."

The nearer he approaches to the burning throne the less sure his words become: "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it.... This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord."⁹

Majestic — Indicating grandeur and dignity.

Psalms 8:1; Psalm 96:6; Isaiah 24:14; Hebrews 1:3,8

Infinite — Beyond measurement; without beginning or end.

Romans 11:33

Omnipotent — God's limitless power to accomplish His will.

Jeremiah 32:17,18,27; Psalm 21:13

Unchangeable — always the same in perfection, in purpose, in decision.

Psalm 102:25-27; Hebrews 13:8.

For a moral being to change it would be necessary that the change be in one of three directions. He must go from better to worse or from worse to better; or, granted that the moral quality remain stable, he must change within himself, as from miniature to mature or from one order of being to another. It should be clear that God can move in none of these directions. His perfections forever rule out any such possibility.

God cannot change for the better. Since He is perfectly holy, He has never been less holy than He is now and can never be holier than He is and has always been. Neither can God change for the worse. Any deterioration within the unspeakably holy nature of God is impossible. Indeed I believe it impossible even to think of such a thing, for the moment we attempt to do so, the object about which we are thinking is no longer God but something else and someone less than He.¹⁰

Good — kind and benevolent toward all of creation.

Psalm 119:68; 136:1; Jeremiah 33:11

⁸ Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy* (HarperCollins Publishers: 1961), 121.

⁹ Tozer, 11.

¹⁰ Tozer, 76.

*The goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and His unfailing attitude toward all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people.*¹¹

Just — without partiality; to be fair.

Proverbs 29:26; Psalm 75:2,7

Holy — perfectly pure, immaculate and complete in moral character.

Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8

Omniscient — knowing all that is known or ever will be known.

Psalm 139:1-6; Isaiah 40:13-14; Romans 11:34

To say that God is omniscient is to say that He possesses perfect knowledge and therefore has no need to learn. But it is more: it is to say that God has never learned and cannot learn.

*The Scriptures teach that God has never learned from anyone. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to Him the way of understanding?" "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" These rhetorical questions put by the prophet and the apostle Paul declare that God has never learned.*¹²

Merciful — to treat an offender better than he deserves (usually associated with an offence); to show compassion.

2 Chronicles 20:21; Psalm 118:1-4; Luke 6:36

Eternal — Without beginning or end.

Deuteronomy 33:27; Isaiah 9:6; 1 Timothy 1:17

Omnipresent — everywhere; close to everything; next to everyone.

Psalm 139:7-8; Jeremiah 23:24

*In His infinitude He surrounds the finite creation and contains it. There is no place beyond Him for anything to be. God is our environment as the sea is to the fish and the air to the bird. "God is over all things," wrote Hildebert of Lavardin, "under all things; outside all; within but not enclosed; without but not excluded; above but not raised up; below but not depressed; wholly above, presiding; wholly beneath, sustaining; wholly within, filling."*¹³

Faithful — true to His word; keeping His promises.

Psalm 89:1-8,33; Isaiah 25:1; Lamentations 3:23

Wise — showing deep understanding, keen discernment and sound judgment.

Daniel 2:20-23; Proverbs 3:19,20

Sovereign — possessing supreme dominion.

1 Chronicles 29:11-13; 1 Timothy 6:15

God's sovereignty is the attribute by which He rules His entire creation, and to be sovereign God must be all-knowing, all-powerful, and absolutely free. The reasons are these.

¹¹ Tozer, 128.

¹² Tozer, 85.

¹³ Tozer, 116.

Were there even one datum of knowledge, however small, un-known to God, His rule would break down at that point. To be Lord over all the creation, He must possess all knowledge. And were God lacking one infinitesimal modicum of power, that lack would end His reign and undo His kingdom; that one stray atom of power would belong to someone else and God would be a limited ruler and hence not sovereign.

Furthermore, His sovereignty requires that He be absolutely free, which means simply that He must be free to do whatever He wills to do anywhere at any time to carry out His eternal purpose in every single detail without interference. Were He less than free He must be less than sovereign.¹⁴

Use this appendix as a basis to continue your search for a deeper knowledge of our Mighty God.

¹⁴ Tozer, 170.

