

DISCIPLESHIP HANDBOOK

XO
RESOURCES



06

Lesson 6 | What is Worship?

What is Worship?

Worship is our response to God when we are in relationship with Him. It is placing Him on the throne instead of us. He is our King, Lord and Master and we should act accordingly.

In Christianity, worship is the act of giving honour to God. In the Bible, various words are used to refer to the term worship. One is shachah ("to worship") which means to bow down.

Worship is reserved for God alone - Mark 12:30 - And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

Why We Worship?

We worship Him because He is worthy of it:

- **He is our Creator** - He not only created everything, but He made time itself. He was there from the beginning and in Him all things were created - Colossians 1:17 - And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist & Psalm 95:6 - Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
- **He is our King and He is the King of Kings** - 1 Timothy 6:15 - which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords
- **He Alone is Holy** - Revelation 4:8 - The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

- **Everything in Heaven and Earth is His** - 1 Chronicles 29:11 - Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.
- **He is a Father and Defender** - Psalm 68:4-5 - Sing to God, sing in praise of His name, extol Him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before Him — His name is the Lord. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling.
- **Because that's what we are created for!** Remember in Lesson 1 - we were created to have relationship with God and to worship Him. Isaiah 43:7 - Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made.

How Do We Worship?

We worship God by giving ourselves to Him through our actions, attitudes, words and obedience.

After becoming a follower of Jesus, we start to allow God and His ways to take priority in our life. We want to please God by obeying His laws and giving Him authority over our lives. This isn't something we have to do, but instead, we choose to do.

Romans 12:1-2 - So then, my friends, because of God's great mercy to us I appeal to you: **offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God**, dedicated to His service and pleasing to him. **This is the true worship that you should offer.** Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good and is pleasing to Him and is perfect.

God doesn't take our lives from us, but out of appreciation of His great mercy and love towards us, we offer our lives to him as an act of worship. We should offer our Father everything within us: physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual! We dedicate ourselves to pleasing Him. This is true authentic worship.

What Are the Ways We Worship?

- **In All We Do**

We can worship God every day through our life's activities e.g. at work/school, caring for our families, serving at church, etc, because worshipping God is about the heart - your heart honouring God. Bowing to Him and acknowledging Him as Lord.

Colossians 3:17 - And **whatever** you do in word or deed, **do all** in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

1 Corinthians 10:31 - Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or **whatever** you do, **do all** to the glory of God.

- **Through Giving**

This can be an act of worship as well. An example is found in the Gospel of Luke. Jesus saw a woman who was offering an authentic sacrifice to God, which cost her greatly. It was not the amount of the gift that mattered, but the heart of worship behind the gift that Jesus pointed out.

Luke 21:1-4 - And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

Note: a mite is a copper coin - the smallest and least valuable.

1 Samuel 16:7b - For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

- **Through Music**

Whether you are playing an instrument, singing or dancing. You can do all these things as an act of worship to God!

So, How Do We Worship Through Music?

Often, you'll hear the term "Praise and Worship" when you are at church. So, what is the difference?

Praise is a joyful recounting of what God has done for us. It is the truthful acknowledgment of His works. Praise is universal and can also be applied to other relationships eg family, friends, celebrities, etc.

An example of how people "praise" something is at an All Black rugby game. Fans will "praise" the All Blacks by raising their hands, shouting and dancing, etc. If people can openly praise men at a rugby game, how much more should we praise the creator of the universe!

Psalm 98:1-7 - Oh, **sing** to the Lord a new song! For He has done marvellous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. The Lord has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. **Shout** joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; break forth in song, **rejoice**, and sing praises. Sing to the Lord with the **harp**, with the harp and the sound of a psalm, with **trumpets** and the sound of a **horn**; shout joyfully before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell in it.

Psalm 150:1-6 - Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty firmament! Praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the **trumpet**; praise Him with the **lute** and **harp**! Praise Him with the **timbrel** and **dance**; praise Him with **stringed instruments** and **flutes**! Praise Him with **loud cymbals**; praise Him with **clashing cymbals**! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Worship is when we set our hearts on honouring God. As we've stated, worship is reserved for God alone and no one else.

Worshipping God through singing is less about the words coming out of our mouths, and more about the focus of our heart towards Him.

John 4:23-24 - But the hour is coming, and now is, when the **true worshipers** will worship the Father in **spirit and truth**; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

Psalms 19:14 - Let the **words of my mouth** and the **meditation of my heart** be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

This means that however you express worship, whether you are dancing or singing quietly, set your heart on God and be authentic. Worship God in spirit and in truth (with your mind and with your innermost being).

When we sing to God, we should be authentic and not worry about what the people around us are doing. Some raise their hands, some dance, and some are still. The heart is what is important - worshipping God from a genuine place.

So, praise is the outward expression - worship is the inward expression!

What is God's Response to Worship Through Music?

Genuine worship is powerful, and God can change us or our circumstances through it. The Bible is full of examples of when people authentically worshipped, and God moved in extraordinary ways.

- **Released from Chains** - Acts 16:25-26 – About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.
- **Bringing in God's Presence** - 2 Chronicles 5:13 -14 – the trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the Lord and sang 'He is good, His love endures forever'. Then the temple of the Lord was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God & Psalm 22:3 – you (God) are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel
- **To Lift Depression** - Isaiah 61:1-3 – The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me...and provide for those who grieve in Zion...a garment of praise for the spirit of despair (heaviness).

- **Deliverance from the Influence of Satan** - 1 Samuel 16:23 – Whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul, he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.
- **Break Down the Walls of the Enemy** - Joshua 6:20 – (The story of Jericho) - When the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed.
- **Defeat the Enemy** - 2 Chronicles 20:22 – As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.

In times of adversity, worship can remind us that God is in control and that He is working through our circumstances for our good and His glory.

Romans 8:28 - And we know that **all things work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

If you come to a place when you don't know what to do ... why not worship God!

Psalm 42:11 - *Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God for I will yet praise Him, my Saviour and my God.*

Why Do Churches Worship Differently?

A lot of why churches worship differently is more about their culture. Some have slower older songs with a piano, others have loud modern music, some churches read prayers and psalms together.

If you have question about why your church does worship the way it's done in your own church, just ask the worship leader or pastor. It's always great to get to know the culture behind your individual church.

Dig a Little Deeper

Biblical words for Praise:

Barak - To kneel, bless, salute. Reverence and quietness before God expecting by faith a response.

Yadah - Thankful expression of praise with uplifted hands, describing the lifting of the heart.

Towdah - Thanks and praise for what God is going to do. The sacrifice of praise, uplifted hands implied.

Zamar - Instrumental and sung praise. Literally, to touch the strings.

Shadbach - To commend, triumph, glory, shout, address in a loud tone.

Halal - To shine, boast, celebrate, commend, sing, declare, rave. This is the most common word for praise.

Tehillah - High praise, to sing and laud (laud – to glorify, praise, song of praise). Differs from others which involve faith, this word implies that God has responded and literally inhabits and is enthroned in the midst of the praise of His people.

Biblical Words for Worship:

Old Testament – Shachah - To bow down, to prostrate, to fall on the knees with forehead touching the ground, to fall flat, to reverence. (A body movement denoting a heart attitude).

New Testament – Proskuneo - To prostrate, to reverence, to kiss towards, to kiss as a dog would kiss or lick the hand of its master. (A more intimate picture of worship).

Questions & Notes

Lesson 6

- 1. What are three things you learned about worship from this lesson?**
- 2. In what ways can you worship God?**
- 3. What is the difference between Praise and Worship?**

