

Bite Size Bible Study

Worship is Centering on God and Listening to Him #175

By Pastor Lee

Some of the things that are often considered worship are: singing at church services, communion, baptism, and the like. People can participate in any of these and still not be truly worshipping.

True worship is when we make God the center of every part of our lives. When we go to our work place, or when we are at home, worship is the recognition and action that glorifies God. It could be thought of as making God proud that we are following His teachings.

WORSHIP IS ALWAYS CENTERED ON GOD and is an individual action, even when we are in a group. It is the individual that is worshipping God.

Worship involves three things – We can have a type of worship that involves our heart, or one that involves our mind, or one that requires our action. But in total worship all three are involved.

Some people focus primarily on speaking or singing praise to God. Praise is good, but if all we do is praise God, without ever *listening* to what he says, we have to ask whether we believe the words we are saying or singing. If we believe that He is really all-wise and all loving then we need to be attentive to what He is telling us, because He is worth listening to. ⁽¹⁾

We want God to listen to our petitions, but how often do we listen to His answer or to His instructions?

Similarly, “all talk and no action” does not show God the respect he deserves. Actions speak louder than words, and if our behavior isn’t changed by God, then our actions (or lack of action) are saying that God isn’t worth our time or trouble to act — He’s a nice idea, but not relevant to our day-to-day lives. When we really believe that God is worthy of every praise, then we will be willing to listen and to change the way we live in response to such a worthy God. We will trust Him and seek Him and want to *please* Him as much as we can. Worship should affect our behavior. ⁽¹⁾

Prayer is the communication link from us to God. How does the link back to us work?

Above we mentioned that we need to listen to God – this is the link back to us. Listening. God speaks to us in many different ways. Sometimes it is through a thought or a dream. Other times it is through studying the Bible, or a song, or something someone says. There is no limit to the ways God speaks to us, so we need to be alert and listen for His response.

One of the primary ways God communicates back to us is through His Holy Spirit. When Jesus left the earth after His physical life here, He said that He would send us the Holy Spirit to be our Comforter, Counselor, and Teacher. It is through His Holy Spirit communicating with our spirit that the communication returns to us in these various ways. Oftentimes it is through these thoughts or feelings that we recognize that these thoughts and feelings are not typical of our own. We learn to recognize these communications and respond to them with action.

A word of caution: *These thoughts and feelings will not tell us to do something that is against God’s teachings and moral principals. If we do have these thoughts, they are either our own or they come from a different source. They are most certainly not from God. This is why we need to begin to learn how God thinks and the moral principles He lives by. We find this information in our Bibles.*

If you are new to praying or just have learned a prewritten prayer, try to use this simple technique of praying and thanking God for everything you recognize comes from Him. See if your relationship begins to grow. See if you begin to feel closer to Him and if your thoughts begin to be like His thoughts.

The next time you are singing in church, ask yourself these questions:

“Am I just singing the words and the notes, or am I singing from my heart?”

Am I listening to what God has caused to be written in this song or am I thinking of something else?

Is the meaning of the song going to change how I live or is the meaning lost in pleasing notes and a catchy rhythm?

Total worship involves our whole selves – our thoughts, our desires, and our deeds.

⁽¹⁾ Excerpt from **What Is Worship? A Survey of Scripture:**
<http://www.gci.org/God/worship>

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