

WORSHIP AND PRAISE

What is worship?

The word "worship" means, literally, "to bow yourself down" or "to extend yourself toward." It carries with it the idea of adoration, admiration and intense love. Everyone worships someone or something; and their lifestyle is an expression and outworking of that worship.

New Testament Worship Form

The Bible seems to indicate that God is very concerned about both the sincerity of our hearts and the actual form in which our worship is expressed.

We are to worship in spirit and truth (John 4:21-24; Isaiah 29:13) according to the pattern of David's Tabernacle (Acts 15:15-17).

This is still true today. Paul quoted from the Psalms, describing the worship (Rom 15:9-11). The Psalms were a vital part of New Testament worship (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16). James professed that the Church is the expression of the rebuilt Tabernacle of David (Acts 15:15-17). Many New Testament passages imply similar worship expressions (Acts 2:47; 3:8; 16:25; 24:14; 1 Thes 5:16-21; 1 Ti 2:8; Heb 13:15-16; 1 Pt 2:9). This is also the form of worship in heaven (Rev 4:9-11; 5:9-11; 19:1-6).

Worship in David's Tabernacle

Spontaneous—*2 Chronicles 29:25-29*

From the heart—*Psalms 86:12*

Out of humility—*Psalms 51:15-17*

Regular and often—*Psalms 34:1*

Corporate—*1 Chronicles 6:31-32*

Emphasis on praise—*Psalms 148-150*

Worship Forms in David's Tabernacle

Since God created us as three-part beings (spirit, soul and body), He has given various ways to worship Him with our entirety (Luke 10:27). At least nine ways are found in the Psalms.

We use our voices to worship in audible praise (*Psalms 40:16*), with singing (*Psalms 47:6*) and with shouting (*Psalms 5:11*).

We worship God with our hands by lifting them (*Psalms 63:4*), by clapping (*Psalms 98:8*), and by playing instruments (*Psalms 33:2-3*).

We worship God with our very posture by standing (*Psalms 135:2*), by dancing (*Psalms 30:11*), and by bowing or kneeling (*Psalms 95:6*).

Why such an emphasis on worship?

Commanded by God—*Psalms 22:23*

God is worthy—*Psalms 18:3*

Worship glorifies God—*Psalms 50:23*

Develops love relationship with God—*Mark 12:30*

Releases God's presence in power—*Psalms 22:3*

We become like what we worship—*2 Cor. 3:18*

Proper way to come before God—*Psalms 100:1-4*

Helps us become God-centered—*Isaiah 26:3*

Part of priestly ministry unto the Lord—*1 Peter 2:5-9*

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It is a definite sign of life—*Psalms 115:17*

What happens when we worship?

When we respond in obedience to the Lord, we put certain spiritual laws into operation on our behalf. Therefore, we can expect certain results in spiritual realms.

Victory over our enemies—*2 Chronicles 20:1-30*

Release from bondages—*Acts 16:16-34*

Inner peace and joy—*1 Samuel 16:14-23*

Breaking up of large problems—*Joshua 16:1-20*

Special protection from enemies—*Isaiah 4:5-6*

God's presence—*2 Chronicles 5:12-14*

There are various ways to worship and praise God. The definitions and terms we use at Church upon the Rock are:

PRAISE is the joyful tribute of gratitude or homage rendered to God; the act of glorifying or extolling the Creator; worship, particularly worship by song, distinction from prayer and other acts of worship; as, a service of praise.

WORSHIP is praising and magnifying God by focusing on His nature and His actions. It is adoring Him for who He is and loving Him as our wonderful God. One of the biblical words translated for worship even suggest that it is like the kiss of a dog, licking his master's hand.

THANKSGIVING is an expression of thankfulness; it is the act of giving thanks to God.

REJOICING happens when we are joyful and glad; we feel joy or great delight.

THE SONG OF THE LORD (or **spiritual songs**) is spontaneous singing given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It takes place corporately as follows:

1. Singing in the Spirit (can be either in tongues or your own language).
2. Many times this happens when we are singing a song already known; a special anointing takes place, and grace is given to continue singing the same song for an unusual amount of time with inspiration and vigor.
3. Someone (worship team member, or someone in the congregation) will be given a prophetic word that is released through song.
4. Sometimes the worship leader or a worship team member will lead out in a spontaneous phrase and the congregation follows by repeating the phrase.

SPIRITUAL SONGS are inspired expressions with the awareness of God's immediate presence.

PSALMS are from the Bible, the Word of God in Scripture portions.

HYMNS, which are based on sound theological tradition, express the ways of God through human composition.

TABERNACLE DAVID (Davidic worship) is best defined by looking at its six characteristics.

- A. It was spontaneous. They did not repeat the same form the over and over; nor was it a prescribed order of worship that became a set form. (2 Chron 29:25-29)
- B. It was from the heart. (Ps 86:12; 111:1)
- C. It was out of personal brokenness and humility. (Ps 51:15-17)
- D. It was regular and often. (Ps 34:1; 72:15; 119:164; 145:2)

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E. It was corporate with opportunity for individual expression. (1 Chron 6:31-32; 15:16)

F. It had a strong emphasis on praise. (Psalms 148-150)

HARP AND BOWL is the combination of praise and worship with prayer.

CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP takes place when we quiet ourselves in worship.

1. We will simply listen to the song and allow it to minister to our spirit.
2. We will observe special music in a service (ex: offertory song).
3. We will have background music playing while we meditate on Scriptures or during times of prayer.
4. Contemplative worship is non-participatory; by design it is to draw us deeper into an awareness of the presence of God with us.

What are the overlaps of praise, worship, prayer and thanksgiving in a service?

1. Praise brings change in us as it places us in proper relationship with God. We humble ourselves and exalt Him.
2. Praise can sometimes be distant, worship usually is intimate. It brings us close to God's heart.
3. Praise is always seen or heard, worship may be quiet and not visible.
4. Praise usually is horizontal in its purpose, worship is primarily a vertical interaction.
5. Praise often is preparatory to worship.
6. Usually praise is experienced in faster songs, worship is usually in slower tempo. This is typical but not always true.
7. We can usually determine the difference between praise and worship by the lyrics. Praise declares who God is and what He has done. Worship usually admires God as we sing to Him.

Guidelines for Worship

Though worship should be spontaneous, we follow some basic guidelines that make worship most beneficial for all.

Total involvement Worship is not meant for only a few, but all of God's people.—*Psalms 113:1*

Unity of expression While there is a proper place for individual expression, public worship is a corporate expression and all should follow the designated worship leader.—*Psalms 133*

Orderliness The guidelines established by the leadership should be carefully observed.—*1 Corinthians 14:40*

Edification All things done in the corporate gathering should be done to build up the people of God.—*1 Corinthians 14:26*

Conclusion

God's people were created to be a people of worship and praise. Worship and praise help us keep our lives in proper perspective and remind us that we are, first and foremost, servants of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords (*Revelation 4:2-11*).