The Five Most Important Facts About Worship

by Mark Cole

Years ago, I realized that I often had only one shot at communicating with an audience in some of the countries that I would visit. So, I asked myself, if I could only speak once to an audience, what were the most important things on worship that I could share?



Here are my top five most important facts about worship:

1. God wants you to worship Him

Jesus said, *"The hour is coming and is already here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is looking for those who will worship Him that way."* (John 4:23-25)

God wants us to worship Him, He wants **you** to worship Him. God is happy when we live good lives but He wants more than that, He is looking for worshippers. He is looking for people that are in love with Him. In fact, they are so in love with Him that they long to be in His presence and worship Him.

2. Worship is one of the most important ways of loving God

The greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all you have. Again, quoting Jesus, He said, "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*" (Mark 12:30)

Worship is a natural outflow of my love for God. Let me give you an example from my marriage. I love my wife, so I try to do things that she likes. Once a week I take her out for breakfast or dinner because she loves to be go out. (Even though I prefer her cooking at home).

I buy her flowers because she loves them. (even though they can be expensive and only last 3-5 days). I buy her perfume (OK… this is a win-win. I love it when she smells great). I try to help her around the house without

being asked (I am not always successful at this). I tell her daily that I love her (I am successful at this, although she sometimes forgets that I do it).

When you love someone, you try to do the things that please them. It is a natural outflow of my love for my wife, Anna. I try to do those things with my whole heart. If I grumble and complain when I do them, then they really don't count in my wife's books.

The same principle applies to our worship and love for God, God is looking for worshippers who will willingly worship Him with their whole heart. He is looking for people who are passionate in their love for Him. God is not that interested in lukewarm love. He does not want 50% or 75%. God wants you to love Him with your whole heart, soul, mind and strength.

3. God wants you to worship Him according to His Word

To stay with the marriage analogy, if I did things totally my own way, our lives would look quite different. For fun we would go bike riding and play tennis (my wife does not like bike riding or tennis). We would eat at home 99% of the time. She is a gourmet cook! (my wife likes to go out once or twice a week). I would pass on helping around the house (I'm a guy.. what can I say!?)

When you get to know God and His word, you discover that He likes things done His way. And frankly, His way is always the best way!

Jesus said: "*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth*." (John 4:24)

a) What does it mean to worship God 'in spirit'?

God made us with three separate parts to our being….body, soul & spirit. We can best communicate with God on a spirit level since "God is Spirit".

When my spirit connects with God's spirit, that's worship. It is a bit difficult to describe but let me explain how it works for me. When I am leading worship or I am just in a worship service, I can just sing the worship songs and go through the motions of worship. Or, I can really focus my heart on God. When I sing the words and mean them from the depths of my being. That is when true worship begins. My spirit begins to connect with God's Spirit.

b) What does it mean to worship God 'in truth'?

In John 17:17, Jesus said: "*God's Word is truth.*" I believe that to worship God according to 'truth', is to worship Him according to the patterns in His Word. "God's word is truth." In the Bible it talks about worshipping God by singing, playing instruments, lifting hands, clapping, shouting, dancing, bowing down, standing and giving.

The Bible also talks about the attitudes you should have when you come to worship. It talks about being thankful, honest, reverent, with faith, humble, with joy and with our whole heart.

I recently rode two blogs on what the Bible says about 'the actions of worship' and 'the attitudes of worship'. They will give you a great overview of the basics of worshipping God

4. Singing and worshipping God on Sunday morning is just one facet of worship.

God wants our love for Him to include more than just Sunday mornings. He wants us to live out our love for Him on a daily basis.

-God wants us to live daily with thankful hearts (I Thessalonians 5:18).

-God wants us to do good works and share with the people He brings into our lives (Hebrews 13:16)

-God wants us to pray regularly (Ephesians 6:18).

-God wants us to give a portion of our finances regularly (Malachi 3:10).

-God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves. (Mark 12:31)

Worshipping God should be a daily part of our lives. One way that we worship God is to love the people He has sent into our lives. As we pray for them, help them and share our lives with them, we are pleasing God. When we live a life that is pleasing to God, He sees it as worship.

5. The heart of worship is surrendering your life to God.

The Apostle Paul said, "*Give yourselves to God…surrender your whole being to Him to be used for righteous purposes.*" (Romans 6:13)

And then later on in the book of Romans, Paul wrote: "*So then my friends, in view of God's great mercy to us, offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to His service and pleasing Him. This is the true worship that you should offer.*" (Romans 12:1)

True worship comes from a surrendered life. There have been many times when God has asked me to totally surrender my life to Him.

A number of years back, I was at a major crossroads in my life. I had just left church ministry and started to write music full-time for PraiseCharts.com. But I was feeling uneasy and unsatisfied. God was working in my heart. He was asking me if I was willing to go wherever He wanted. He was asking me if I was willing to do whatever He asked of me.

I have learned that when God starts asking those questions, something unusual is about to happen. I have also learned that God can do a better job with my life then I can. So once again, I surrendered my whole life to God. A life without reservations, no holds barred, to follow whatever He wanted me to go and do whatever He wanted me to do.

To make a long story short, within weeks I was leading worship in Copenhagen and experienced the greatest week of ministry of my life. This lead to almost seven years traveling around the world and seeing thousands of people healed and coming to know Jesus. (for the rest of that story see: Can God Touch A Nation?) I have learned that totally surrendering to God is the most powerful way to live my life.

One of the great Christian leaders of the 20th century was Bill Bright, the founder of Campus Crusade For Christ. Through his staff around the world, the Four Spiritual Laws tract and the Jesus film (seen by over 4 billion), more than 150 million people have come to Christ and will spend eternity in heaven because of Bill's ministry.

Bill was once asked, “Why did God use and bless your life so much?” He said, “When I was a young man, I made a contract with God. I literally wrote it out and signed my name at the bottom. It said, ‘From this day forward, I am a slave of Jesus Christ.”

Have you ever made a contract like that with God? Or are you still arguing and struggling with God over His right to do with your life as He pleases? If God is speaking to you, I urge you to surrender to Him. Trust me, it is the best decision that you will ever make!

Question: What area of your life do you need to still surrender to God? Are you willing to give God complete control of your life?

::

Mark Cole: Jesus follower, Husband, Father, Worship Leader, Writer, Pastor, Church Consultant, Founding Arranger for Praisecharts.com, squash & tennis player, blogger & outdoor enthusiast (biking, hiking, skiing).



The article above and many additional insights may be found on Mark’s blog at http://markcole.ca/

Check out Mark’s new book - “Leading Worship ~ Notes from a Grand Adventure” available in Kindle or Soft Cover Editions. This is a great gift for the musician or worshipper in your life.