

Lesson 7:
Made to Worship!



*“Worship is giving to God the best He has given to us.”
Oswald Chambers*

*“Worship is the highest and noblest act that any person can do.
When men worship, God is satisfied!
And when you worship, you are fulfilled!
Think about this: why did Jesus Christ come?
He came to make worshipers out of rebels.
We who were once self-centered have to be completely changed so that we can shift our attention
outside of ourselves and become able to worship him.”
Raymond C. Ortlund*

As a Christian, we are commanded to live lives of worship. Worship, however, is more than an empty lip service to a faraway Creator. It is our way of honoring and revering the one who provides for us and saves our lives. Worship redirects our thoughts off of our problems and onto the answer... the Creator and Sustainer of all things - - God. As we worship, we draw closer to God and renew and strengthen our relationship with Him. For these reasons and more, we were made to worship.

Commanded Lifestyle - - -

In Romans 12:1, Paul implores us, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.” Worship must be more than Sunday morning hymns and evening prayers. Worship is to be a mindset, a part of our daily and continual lifestyle. Our very life can and should be an act of worship.

Please read Ephesians 5:15-21.

Why do you think being careful how we live is an act of worship?

How are we to speak to one another? (verse 19)

Some of the ways we can do this is to literally sing to one another or to share Christian music with one another. I have been immensely blessed by friends of mine sharing a song that was chosen by them to address the struggle I am going through. These songs have been exactly the encouragement I needed. During one especially hard time in my life, I replayed the song a friend of mine posted on my Facebook page at least 3-4 time a day. The encouragement reminded me to stay focused on God and not my problem. Another way to speak to one another in psalms is through quoting scripture. A timely card with an inspiring scripture always brightens my day.

Can you think of any other ways we can “speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs”?

Is there someone in your life right now that is in need of this kind of encouragement? What will you do to bless them?

Giving thanks to God for all that He has done blesses us as much as it honors God. What are some ways that being a thankful person impacts or alters our attitude and outlook on life?

Giving Thanks an Act of Worship -

Because 'worship' means to honor and revere, it can be expressed in many different ways. We already talked about how the way we live our life, sacrificially devoting it to God so that our lives honor Him, is one way we worship. We can also worship God through music, poetry, and art. Another way is through being thankful.

Please read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

What actions are listed as God's will in these verses?

According to these verses, are we commanded to give thanks for only the good things in our lives? If not what circumstances are we commanded to be thankful for?

The thought of being thankful for the painful or negative things in our life may be very confusing. Are we to be thankful for the hurts? Does that mean that God desires to hurt us or cause us pain? If these questions echo the questions in your heart, like me then, you need to learn how to alter your perspective. We know that God does not want to cause us pain. The Bible tells us that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) So we can understand that the command to **BE** thankful in all circumstances does not mean to be thankful **FOR** all circumstances but rather for God's hand in **ALL** circumstances.

Let me give you an easy example: Betty and Josh came from two different worlds. He was a college student from a well off family and she grew up in foster care and worked as waitress. They met at a young adult get together at their church and dated for almost 2 years. They talked about

getting married many times. They even took a pre-marriage class at their church and looked forward to when Josh graduated and they could begin their life together. As the date of Josh's graduation drew nearer, Betty took on extra shifts at the diner to begin to save up money for their honeymoon. Though Josh's parents had money, the two lovebirds wanted to stand on their own and provide for themselves. And so, for almost a year, they scrimped and saved, often missing out on time with friends so they could prepare for what they dreamed would be a beautiful future. Then Betty met Josh's parents. Though she was as charming and polite as she could be, they did not hit it off. In fact, Josh's parents were horrified that he would be considering marrying a woman who did not fit into their idea of the perfect wife for their son. Without warning, or even an explanation, Josh broke up with Betty to honor his parents' wishes.

Imagine you are Betty. You might be wondering how you could possibly be thankful for this situation. Perhaps if we change our perspective from the unjust pain Josh caused Betty to God's ability to "work for the good" in all circumstances, we can learn how to be thankful in all situations. Is Betty hurt? Of course she is, and God cares about our pain. Being thankful doesn't mean that we ignore the real pain in our lives. It means we redirect our focus from our pain to our savior.

Let's finish Betty's story: Through the tears of heartache, Betty begins to pray, "God, I don't know what I am going to do. Everything has fallen apart." Taking a deep breath, she forces herself to think about God's provision instead of the aching pain in the pit of her stomach. "God, thank you for stopping this relationship before it went too far. If this wasn't your will... thank you for ending it now and not after we were already married. Help me learn from this. Help me heal from this. Help me learn to forgive Josh and his parents. Thank you for giving me the strength to not make a fool of myself. Thank you for loving me and helping me through this. May this be part of my story of how you loved me more." The pain of Josh's rejection is still there, but there is also hope. She doesn't know how, but she believes that God is not done with her yet and has even better things planned for her.

Being thankful is an act of worship because it professes the power and sovereignty of God. It doesn't make our problems disappear, but rather redirects our attention from our lack to God's abundance. When we are thankful, we worship God for His provision, even if we are doing so in faith because we can't see the good yet. Betty will soon understand that God had someone better planned for her. The money she had worked so hard to save would become a down payment on her very first home. Years later, enjoying ice tea on the porch swing, she would think back on her life and smile. Things had not been easy, but they were worth it. She is still a waitress at the diner, but now she understands that God uses her in her job to spread His love to everyone who comes through the door. The honeymoon money may not have led to a week vacation in Hawaii, but it did lead to having to hire a plumber when her new house broke a pipe. That plumber now sits on a little plastic chair across from a chubby little princess who is pouring him invisible tea. God always has a plan. Faith is trusting that His plan is better than ours. Thanksgiving is worshipping God for His love, care and involvement in our lives.

Has there ever been a time when God used a devastating or painful experience to bless you?

Worship Leads to Humility - - -

The very act of worshipping God necessitates us understanding that God is greater than us. PJ from CrossWay Bible Church in Blue Springs, MO wrote about the subject of humility and worship. He wrote, “When we humble ourselves before the Lord, it is an act of worship. When we strive for humility, it is not about us; it’s about Him. Because when we humble ourselves to become mindful that we need God even for our next breath, we glorify God with every breath we take and every thought that fills our minds.”

How can pride keep us from honestly worshipping God?

How can worshipping God lead to an attitude of humility?

Take a few moments to worship God for all that He has done and all that He will do. Be sure to enter into His presence with thanksgiving and leave in an attitude of humility.