

THE MOODS OF WORSHIP

How do you personally define worship? I am asking you a serious question that I want you to answer. What is your personal definition of worship? Think about your concept of worship. In your personal understanding, what is worship? Use a simple statement to silently define worship. Do you have your definition?

Take your definition and answer this question. "In my definition, is worship defined by what I do, or is worship defined by what happens in my heart?"

Is worship always the same experience? Is "true worship" confined to a single type of expression? Or is worship expressed in many different moods?

I. The basic expression of worship is sincere praise.

A. The soul of sincere praise is appreciation.

1. You have little difficulty distinguishing between people who appreciate you and people who do not.
2. God has no difficulty distinguishing between people who appreciate Him and people who do not.
3. Pretended appreciation is flattery, and the purpose of flattery is to deceive.
4. God is honored by appreciation; God is repulsed by flattery.

B. I worship only if I appreciate.

1. Worship occurs when I appreciate.
2. It is impossible for resentment, or distrust, or contempt, or hate to produce worship.
3. Why? Worship is sincere praise built on the solid foundation of appreciation.

C. Let Revelation illustrate that truth.

1. Revelation contains a number of expressions of worship that praise either God or Christ.
2. God is worshipped by heavenly beings in 4:8,11.
Revelation 4:8,11 "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come." . . . "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." (*The New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update*, La Habra, California: The Lockman Foundation, 1996.)
 - a. God is praised because of His worthiness.
 - b. God is worthy of praise because God is the creator.
3. In Revelation 5:9,10, 12, 13, Christ is worshipped by so many angels they could not be counted and by the heavenly beings.
Revelation 5:9,10, 12, 13, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." . . . "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing. To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." (*The New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update*, La Habra, California: The Lockman Foundation, 1996.)

- a. Christ is praised because of his worthiness.
 - b. Christ is worthy of praise because he used his blood to purchase a people who became God's kingdom and God's priests.
4. This illustrates the truth that worship is praise that comes from appreciation.

II. When we consider human worship of God, I personally doubt that many Christians ever surpass David's praise of God in the Old Testament.

A. Nothing in the entire Bible surpasses the worship found in the psalms.

1. The psalms exist to praise God.
2. That praise arose from genuine appreciation.
3. Christians need to let the psalms teach them how to worship.
4. One of the worship lessons the psalms teach is that worship has many different moods.

B. The young David was astounded that the Philistine army defied the God of Israel.

1. With total dependence on God, David faced and killed Goliath.
2. Quickly he became the most popular person in Israel.
3. Quickly he became the most successful military leader in Israel's army.
4. As a result, Saul became insanely jealous of David and was determined³³ to kill him.
5. It became necessary for David to flee from Saul, and he fled to the Philistines (1 Samuel 21).
 - a. The only way that David could keep the Philistines from killing him was to pretend that he was insane.
 - b. Each day he went to the gates of the city of Gath and scribbled on them.
 - c. He let his saliva run out of his mouth and drool run through his beard.
6. Think about how humiliating, frightening, and lonely this time was for David simply because he delivered Israel from the Philistines and was loyal to Saul.
7. Listen to his praise of God and appreciation for God found in Psalm 34 that was written at this time.

Psalm 34:1-3,19-22 I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul will make its boast in the Lord; The humble will hear it and rejoice. O magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones, Not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous will be held guilty. The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who take refuge in Him will be held guilty. *(The New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update, La Habra, California: The Lockman Foundation, 1996.)*

- a. David was reduced to acting insane.
- b. But David praised the God he appreciated.

C. Years later David became the king of Israel.

1. After years of success as the righteous king of Israel, David sinned horribly (2 Samuel 11,12).
2. He committed adultery with Bathsheba, and the result was pregnancy.
 - a. To cover his sin, he had her husband killed and married her.
 - b. For almost a year, David thought his sin was hidden.
3. Then Nathan the prophet confronted David, and David confessed his failure.

4. David had been a person who had lived by his faith in God from the time that he was a teenager.
 - a. In horrible and unjust circumstances he placed his trust in God time after time.
 - b. Now, at the time of his greatest material blessing, he sinned in ways that he would not have considered in years past.
5. Think about the devastation David felt as he honestly confronted his guilt and accepted responsibility for what he had done.
6. Then listen to his praise of God found in Psalm 51 written at that time.
 Psalm 51:1-4,10-13 *Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge. Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.* (*The New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update*, La Habra, California: The Lockman Foundation, 1996.)
 - a. Even in the guilt of failure, David profoundly appreciated God.
 - b. In his respect and appreciation, he praised God even as he asked for forgiveness.

D. David had a son named Absalom that he deeply loved (2 Samuel 13-16).

1. Absalom was a handsome, charismatic leader, a skillful politician, and a treacherous, cunning man.
2. He literally stole the hearts of the nation of Israel and had himself declared king in the place of his father.
3. Because Absalom had already murdered his half brother, David knew that he, his family, and his friends must flee Jerusalem.
4. To publicly declare his contempt for his father and to declare his firm hold on the throne, Absalom publicly raped ten of his father's wives.
5. Think about the things David felt as he fled Jerusalem knowing that the son he deeply loved was doing this.
6. Listen to the praise and appreciation of Psalm 3 that David wrote after he fled from Absalom.

Psalm 3:1-6 *O Lord, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me. Many are saying of my soul, "There is no deliverance for him in God." But You, O Lord, are a shield about me, My glory, and the One who lifts my head. I was crying to the Lord with my voice, And He answered me from His holy mountain. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustains me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me round about.*

(*The New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update*, La Habra, California: The Lockman Foundation, 1996.)

- a. David fled, and David praised and appreciated God.

III. Worship wears many faces, praises with many voices, and expresses appreciation in many ways.

- A. Think about David's worship for just a moment.
1. What mood do you think David was in when he worshipped God while acting like an insane man in Gath?
 2. What mood do you think David was in when he worshipped God as he accepted his guilt for the sins against Bathsheba and Uriah?
 3. What mood do you think David was in when he worshipped God while he was fleeing from Absalom?
- B. To me the contrast is most obvious when David worshipped God when he celebrated.
1. In 1 Samuel 6 David brought the ark of the covenant into his new royal city, the city of Jerusalem.
 - a. From the time of Mount Sinai, hundreds of years earlier, the ark of the covenant was Israel's most sacred object.
 - b. It literally declared God's presence in the nation of Israel.
 2. David accompanied the ark with gladness as he brought it to Jerusalem (verse 12).
 3. Every six steps of the journey, an ox and a fatling were sacrificed (verse 13).
 4. And David took off his royal clothing and danced before the Lord with all his might as he accompanied the ark (verse 14).
 5. When the ark reached its new home, more sacrifices were offered (verse 17).
 6. David praised God and showed his appreciation for God in what we consider unusual and unacceptable ways.
 - a. But look carefully at what David did.
 - b. He was not the powerful, victorious king who brought the ark to Jerusalem.
 - c. He humbled himself before God and before all Israel; God was the dignitary, not David.
 7. What David did offended his wife Michal because she thought it was disgraceful behavior unworthy of a king.
 8. But it did not offend God; it honored God in joy and humility.


Worship always honors God by praising him because we appreciate him. God always knows when the appreciation comes from the heart and the praise is genuine. Our challenge is to let appreciation for God live in our hearts and express itself in sincere praise.

[Prayer by elder.]

We are more likely to think that God is the source of our problems than to understand that God is the foundation for our solutions. To appreciate God we must know Him. To praise Him, we must appreciate Him. Do you appreciate God?

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