

"PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO THE ROMANS"



"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1-2). When we present ourselves to God

in worship, this act of repentance leads to the development of Christ's character in us. The essence of each worship response is a desire to be transformed by a superior power. Thus, the metamorphosis of the Spirit begins conforming us into the image of the Son as we behold Him. Looking at Jesus changes us into His likeness. "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

"WORSHIPPING GOD WITH OUR ACTIONS"

Many people think that praise and worship is only singing songs at church, but it is so much more! It is also a condition of your heart -- a willingness to exalt God and yield to His will. Worship is an expression of love and awe to the God who gives us more than we deserve. **Whether you express your worship by singing, playing music, dancing or in some other way, remember that you are called to worship God with your every action, every day of your life.** God is holy, loving, and worthy of all our worship and devotion.

"LOVE FROM THE HEART"



"Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5). **Worship is about God, not us.** It's not about what we "get" from the hour, but what we give to God. Did you know that you can love God in the same way you love anyone else who matters to you? You

can spend the day with Him—talking with Him, thinking about Him. Tell Him how you feel, what you're thinking. Thank Him for the good things you experience, for "every good and perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). Ask Him for what you need, and praise Him for what He gives. Spend the day with Jesus. Love Him. Worship Him. This is His first commandment, His first expectation, for every day. He is waiting for you!

"WHAT IS THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP?"



The meaning of the New Testament Greek word most often translated "Worship" (proskuneo) is "To Fall Down Before" or "Bow Down Before." Worship is a state (an attitude) of spirit. Since it's an internal, individual action, it could/should be done most of the time (or all the time) in our lives, regardless of place or situation (John 4:21)

"Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem." Therefore, Christians worship all the time, seven days a week. When Christians formally gather together in worship, still the emphasis should be on individually worshipping the Lord. Even in a congregation, participants need to be aware that they are worshipping God fully on an individual basis.

FIRST: "THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IS FROM THE INSIDE OUT"



The nature of Christian worship is from the inside out and has two equally important parts. We must worship "In Spirit And In Truth" (John 4:23-24) "But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,

for the Father seeks such as these to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Worshiping in the spirit has nothing to do with our physical posture. It has to do with our innermost being and requires several things. **First, we must be born again.** Without the Holy Spirit residing within us, we cannot respond to God in worship because we do not know Him. "No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11). The Holy Spirit within us is the One Who energizes worship because He is in essence glorifying Himself, and all true worship glorifies God.

SECOND: "WORSHIPPING IN SPIRIT REQUIRES A MIND CENTERED ON GOD AND RENEWED BY TRUTH."

Paul exhorts us to "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Romans 12:1,2). Only when our minds are changed from being centered on worldly things to being centered on God can we worship in spirit. Distractions of many kinds can flood our minds as we try to praise and glorify God, hindering our true worship.

THIRD: "WE CAN ONLY WORSHIP IN SPIRIT BY HAVING A PURE HEART, OPEN AND REPENTANT."



When King David's heart was filled with guilt over his sin with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11), he found it impossible to worship. He felt that God was far from him, and he "groaned all day long" feeling God's hand heavy upon him; "While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer." (Psalm 32:3,4). But when he confessed, fellowship with God was restored

and worship and praise poured forth from him. He understood that, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart" (Psalm 51:17). Praise and worship toward God cannot come from hearts filled with unconfessed sin.

"ALL WORSHIP IS A RESPONSE TO TRUTH"



The second part of true worship is worship "In Truth." All worship is a response to truth, and that which is truth is contained in the Word of God. Jesus said to His Father, "Sanctify them in the Truth; Your Word is Truth." (John 17:17). Psalm 119 says, "Thy Law is truth" (v. 142) and "Thy Word is true" (v. 160). To truly worship God, we must understand Who He is and what He has

done, and the only place He has fully revealed Himself is in the Bible. Worship is an expression of praise from the depths of our hearts toward a God Who is understood through His Word. If we do not have the truth of the Bible, we do not know God and we cannot be truly worshipping.

"External Actions Are Unimportant In Christian Worship"



There is no rule regarding whether we should sit, stand, fall down, be quiet, or sing praises loudly while in corporate worship. These things should be decided based on the nature of the congregation. The most important thing is that we worship God in spirit (in our hearts) and in truth (in our minds.)

"EXPERIENCE THE AUTHENTIC PRESENCE OF GOD "

God wants each believer to connect with Him so that He can heal us. Why heal us? Just to make us feel better so we love Him more? No! It is so we can be more equipped to follow Him and to fulfill His plan for our lives on the earth. It's really not about us--it's about Him. God never meant corporate worship to become a drudgery. Worship times are intended to connect us with God, to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and to realize the purpose for our presence in the earth as His hands and feet.

The writer to the Hebrews said, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6) God requires faith when we come to Him. We must first believe that He is there and that He desires to meet with us. Regardless of what we may have faced throughout the week, God wants to meet with us as a whole body of believers. He wants to communicate with us His acceptance, His will and His desires so we can be encouraged in our walk of faith and our fight against darkness.



"REPENTANCE AND TRANSFORMATION"

When Isaiah saw the Lord seated on the throne, he was so overwhelmed by the glory and the majesty of the living God that he fell on his face, recognizing his uncleanness (see Isaiah 6:1-5). When we see the Lord for Who He is, His penetrating light shines into the

darkened areas of our souls and brings conviction. To see His holiness is to see our worthlessness without Him. The purity of Christ in all His glory reveals every blemish that humanity can name. Nothing is hidden from Him. If we're crying out for His presence and glory, it is imperative to realize what we're asking for. There is a legitimate work of repentance that must take place in our hearts before He can show us His fullness. Remember, it is His kindness that leads us to repentance. The message of John the Baptist, and Jesus Himself, was simply, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." If we do not repent, we cannot experience God's kingdom. Jesus told Nicodemus that until he was born again, he couldn't even see the kingdom, let alone enter or experience it. He was trying to communicate that until a change of heart and mind transpires, one cannot even begin to comprehend the message of God's rule in his or her personal life or over the earth. God wants to unveil our eyes in worship so we can see His kingdom--righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. We need a fresh view of His Greatness and Majesty before we can truly be changed into His likeness.