

SEVEN REASONS TO WORSHIP

Some years ago Christian author and thinker A.W. Tozer (1897-1963) in his book, Worship: The Missing Jewel, observed that “*God wants worshipers before workers; indeed the only acceptable workers are those who have learned the lost art of worship.*” As you read the following Biblical perspectives on worship, may you discover some of the many beautiful facets of the jewel of worship.

1. Worship is our Response to the Infinite Worth of the Glory of God as Revealed in the Gospel.

- The response to the gospel is worship: “*I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel...saying, Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come, and worship Him who created heaven and earth...*” (Revelation 14:6,7).
- God’s work as Creator makes Him worthy to receive worship: “*You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created*” (Revelation 4:11).
- Christ’s work as Redeemer makes Him worthy of receiving worship: “*Worthy is the Lamb who has slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and glory and blessing*” (Revelation 5:12).

2. In Worship God Exposes our Sin and Provides His Remedy for Sin.

- All sin is rooted in a failure to worship God. “*Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened*” (Romans 1:21,22).
- In worship God exposes our sin. “*I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up...and I said, Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man on unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.*” (Isaiah 6:1-5).
- In genuine worship our sin is taken away. “*Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal...and he touched my mouth with it, and said: ‘Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged’*” (Isaiah 6:7).
- In worship we declare our trust in the sufficiency of Christ’s redemptive work to save us. “*You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood...*” (Revelation 5:8).

3. In Worship God Reveals our Identity and His Calling and Vision for our Lives.

- In worship we enter the realization of our true identity as God’s very own people. “*Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name*” (Psalm 100:3,4).
- In worship we let go of all our misplaced attempts to establish our identity and self-worth through the worthless pursuits of idolatry – the attempt to find love, significance and self-worth in all the wrong places. “*For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns – broken cisterns that can hold no water*” (Jeremiah 2:13).
- Let the keeping of the 7th day Sabbath be a joyful celebration of our identity. “*...call the Sabbath a delight...you shall delight yourself in the Lord*” (Isaiah 58:13,14).
- God has designed the Ten Commandments to affirm and protect our identity in Him: As we worship our One and only Creator-Redeemer God, we receive His image, name, and number (His seal) as found in the first four commandments of the Decalogue. Through such genuine worship we overcome the beast (Revelation 15:1-4).
- In worship God reveals to us His calling and His vision for our lives: When Isaiah in worship saw the Lord high and lifted up, he responded - “*Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me’*” (Isaiah 6:8).

4. Worship is God’s Appointed Path to Wholeness.

- Jesus prescribed worship to the woman at the well as His cure for her dysfunction and brokenness. “*...true worshipers will worship God in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship Him*” (John 4:23). To worship is to serve God with our praises and the needs of people with His sufficiency.
- Genuine worship makes possible the internalization of God’s truths in our hearts. “*Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts*” (Psalm 51:6).
- Worship leads to the de-centralization of ‘self’. “*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength, and honor and glory and blessing*” (Revelation 5:12). For Christ to receive these, we must first give them to Him.
- Through worship we deal a deathly blow to pride and self-sufficiency. “*I am the LORD: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another*” (Isaiah 42:11); “*God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Galatians 6:14).
- Worship is an expression of love: “*And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*” (Deuteronomy 6:5).
- In worship we process all our negative emotions: fear, anger, bitterness, vindictiveness, resentment, unforgiveness, discouragement, impatience etc. “*Do not fret because of evildoers*” (Psalm 37:1-40). Read monthly the entire book of Psalms.
- Worship is God’s antidote to all our fears. “*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*” (Psalm 27:1).
- In worship we let go of vindictiveness toward all who have offended us as we trust that God will make matters right. “*Plead my cause, O Lord, with those who strive with me; fight against those who fight against me*” (Psalm 35:1). “*Arise, O Lord, in Your anger; lift Yourself up because of the rage of my enemies; rise up for me to the judgment You have commanded*” (Psalm 7:7).
- Worship is the path to experience genuine wholeness and joy. “*Delight yourself in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of Your heart*” (Psalm 37:4); “*In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures evermore*” (Psalm 16:11). “*The joy of the Lord is your strength*” (Nehemiah 8:10); “*For You, Lord have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands*” (Psalm 92:4).

- In the worship of God's many glorious names we lay hold of His sufficiency for our every need: "The name of God is a strong tower..." (Psalm 18:10); "My cup runs over..." (Psalm 23:5); "They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, and You give them drink from the rivers of Your pleasures" (Psalm 36:7,8); "And those who know your name will put their trust in You" (Psalm 9:10).
- Genuine joyful worship is the antidote to temptation. The genuine satisfaction of all our deepest inner needs in God will guard us against seeking the satisfaction of such needs through anyone or anything else other than God. "In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11). "O satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (Psalm 90:14). "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

5. Worship is the Crucial Issue in the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan.

- The ultimate goal of the plan of salvation is the restoration of genuine worship: "...to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6,10).
- Worship is the crucial issue in the great controversy between Christ and Satan: "If anyone worships the beast..." (Revelation 14:9) is heaven's warning against placing our trust in anyone or anything which is a substitute or replacement for the redemptive work of the Lamb. Only the Lamb is able to save and thus qualified to receive worship – "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain..." (Revelation 5:12).
- Satan wants the worship that only belongs to God. "I will be like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:14). Satan wanted Jesus to worship him: "If you will bow down and worship me..." (Luke 4:7).
- The best protection against the beast is the genuine worship of the Lamb. "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain" (Revelation 5:12).
- Worship is our participation in the judgment as we in praise and adoration declare our agreement with the depositions of the witnesses from both heaven and earth [the 4 living creatures and the 24 elders] in heaven's open courtroom regarding the sufficiency of Christ's redeeming work: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" (Revelation 5:13).
- In joyful worship we anticipate with heavenly beings the coming judgment as God's way of establishing justice on earth. "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is, and was, and is to come, because You have taken Your great power, and reigned. And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great; and should destroy those who destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:17,18).
- Through worship we make the universe secure against all sin as we declare the righteousness of Him who has saved, redeemed, and justified us. "Great and marvelous are Your works Lord God Almighty; just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints" (Revelation 15:3).

6. Worship is Warfare Against all of Satan's Works, Devices and Deceptions.

- In worship we engage in warfare against Satan and his kingdom; as we magnify God with our praises, we declare that Satan is a defeated foe. "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations and to bind their kings..." (Psalm 149:6-8).
- In worship we enthrone God as the rightful ruler of the universe, and thus His presence transforms our lives and circumstances. "But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel" [God inhabiteth the praises of Israel – KJV]. (Psalm 22:3).
- In worship we enter our work as "kings and priests" deputized by Christ Himself to deliver people from bondage and to extend God's kingdom rule into areas where Christ is not now ruling (Revelation 1:6; 5:10).
- Through praise we give our testimony to defeat the enemy. "And they overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11).
- In worship we participate with Christ in His work of healing the brokenhearted and setting the captives free. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are oppressed" (Luke 4:18).
- The result of Christ's healing ministry is the restoration of worship: "...to give them the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified" (Isaiah 61:3).

7. Worship is Our Witness to Others about the Sufficiency of our God.

- In corporate worship we edify others in the congregation. "I will declare Your name to my brethren. In the midst of the assembly I will praise You" (Psalm 22:22), "Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, and praise Him in the company of the elders" (Psalm 107:32).
- In worship we give a joyful and contagious witness to attract others to our wonderful God who is BIG enough to handle anything. To worship is to make others glad in God. "My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear it and be glad" (Psalm 34:2), "He has put a new song in my mouth – praise to our God; many will see it and fear, and will trust in the Lord" (Psalm 40:3),
- In worship we bear living testimonies to our children and future generations about God's covenant faithfulness. "One generation shall praise Your works to another, and declare Your mighty acts" (Psalm 145:4,5), "We will not hide them [God's works] from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:3,4).

Just imagine the energizing potential of amplifying the witness of our own lives and churches if we devoted ourselves to all the dimensions of this kind of worship: "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:46,47). God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him.