

# FELLOWSHIP the body in union

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## WORSHIP

### Thanksgiving, Praise and Worship

*John 4:23 "-But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24, God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

#### **A form of worship is part of all religion.**

Certain sects believe in worshipping their ancestors; others worship or hold in reverence creatures or objects; others worship gods, hundreds even thousands of gods with different names. Their worship consists of intricate and specific rituals and rites practiced by its believers. All of these rituals and rites come from serious and sincere beliefs and are fervently practiced by its practitioners.

Religious worship may be in the form of the burning of incense, or the spilling of blood, sacrifices are offered in the most solemn manner. Priests or 'holy men' wear sacred garments. In order to follow the rigor of perfected worship, worshipers follow rites of purification. Supplicants bow and posture, fold their hands and make mystical gestures heavenward. It is easy to follow a ritual and think that you are a true worshiper. Why? Because anyone when learn a ritual and follow that ritual with some degree of solemnity. All such worship is mostly a human endeavor but is it true worship? Is God the Almighty in it? Does such worship please the King of the Universe?

Praise and worship are practiced in all Christian Churches but in very different ways

#### **What Jesus said about True Worshipers**

A foundation of understanding of the subject of worship is found in the gospel account of Jesus' encounter with the woman at a well in Samaria:

*John 4:19 - John 4:24 19 - -The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 20, Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." 21, Jesus said to her; "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22, You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23, But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24, God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

We who believe ourselves to be True Worshipers, claim to know who we worship. We also have our own notions about whether or not we are worshipping 'in Spirit' or 'in Truth.' Certainly not all of the world's religions worship our God who we call "The Father" in Spirit and in truth. I am also confident that not all those who practice certain forms of Christianity in their church meeting houses know the one they claim to worship. Moreover, I seriously doubt whether all who are label Christian have a sense of Spiritual union with the Father.

### What is required to become True Worshipers?

Following is a description of a **form of a worship service** that we would see in a typical Christian church house.

Musical preludes may be performed by an organist or musicians;  
The congregation sing hymns from a hymn book at intervals throughout the 'service';  
An individual, usually the priest or pastor, offers a Bible lesson or homily that engages the congregation in order to enhance the spiritual life and understanding of the congregation;  
The congregation or a choir sings musical responses after particular parts of the service such as scripture readings, prayers and petitions, or collection of offerings.  
A group of specially appointed singers may perform well rehearsed anthems  
Individuals may perform special music (as a featured soloist.)

This sort of programmed worship service is standard fare in most Christian denominations. Such programs are performed with greater or lesser degrees of sophistication or excellence depending upon the size of the congregation and its pool of talent and resources. Churches that have access to greater talent and imagination are more successful in creating performance based presentations and eventually attract larger congregations. Thus the church or ministry is considered more successful and viable.

An important point to note is that the things listed above are designed to be executed by relatively few individuals and the majority are onlookers acting in their role of an audience. How much of this seems to accrue to being true worshipers?  
Or are individuals allowed to be passive and disengaged?

### Praise and worship are the cornerstone - of the Christian life

In the scripture quoted just above, Jesus makes a number of points about worship that reveal a new paradigm, the mystery of relationship of believers to the (spiritual) Father. First, worship is not about a place. While Jesus speaks of the mountains where people go to be in Holy communion with their God (God) any such seeking of a *holy place* in the present time is wrong. God meets with His children in an entirely different way.

I believe the next point that Jesus makes is that a large segment of world in their effort to worship a particular God, may affect a form of worship but have no connection to the object of their worship. There God is unknown to the worshiper. Absent any spiritual bond no worshiper can come into union with their deity.

For Christians who would be worshipers, I think it can also be inferred that *if one is not of a particular spiritual class any effort to be a true worshiper is in vain!* A mere form or mechanism of worship will not bridge the gap to make you a true worshiper. I am talking about worshipping our God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Father of the Messiah Jesus.

### True worshipers must be true believers.

True believers must be called into the Kingdom of God. This is not a wholesale process. Each individual must approach the throne of grace seeking mercy and pardon for sins. Of this seeking is sincere and **heartfelt** each individual is born of the Spirit. Now they become partakers in Jesus Christ's divine nature. They have become sons and daughters of God and come into fellowship with Him. This point will not be understood or agreed upon by some

religious experts because of the fact they do not know what they worship.

Any who would say there is no God. Or if anyone would say we can not know God or claim to have his Divine nature imparted to us are simply reasoning these things and have not been blessed to become **born of God** and become a brand new creation. *2 Corinthians 5:16 - 2 Corinthians 5:18 17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18, Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ- - "*

### The Spiritual side of worship

First understand that **the mind is NOT the spirit** although some may teach this. Understand also that **the soul or personality of a person is not the spirit**. Human are *soulish* beings before coming to Christ and tend to remain so after coming to Christ. But the **soul which equates to -mind, intellect and emotion**, is not the part that is born from above (or reborn) in Christ Jesus. The soul can exalt in itself or react in many ways to someone else's emotional presentation. But such is not Spiritual worship. Soul music is aptly named. Soul music comes from the soulish, personal side of human beings. Uniqueness of presentation that exalts the performer characterizes soulish worship.

Soul music says, look at me. Soulish performance is made for an audience. It says, "Aren't I a snappy performer!" Spiritual worship requires no audience but God. Spiritual worship does not have to have special gifts, ornamentation or sophistication. It is just from ourselves, who were in times past, entirely unworthy.

The Spiritual side of worship is about our interaction with heaven. It is free and unrestrained. It exalts in the joy of salvation and the wonder of being called forth to be called, with Christ, into heavenly places. *Colossians 3:1 - Colossians 3:3 1," -So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2,Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, 3 for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. "*

Spiritual life is about engaging the very presence of God. In the times of the Old Covenant priesthood, the high priest went annually into the presence of God through a heavy veil but only after exhaustive preparation and purification. In such a place the priest hardly dared to make a move in the presence of a Holy God. Any falling short resulted in the death of the officiate. The veil of God's temple was rent in half at the death of Jesus on the cross.

Worship within the Holy Place is now a part of the legacy of the child of God born of the Spirit. We can now boldly go into God's presence through the blood of the Messiah Jesus who has purchased this right for us. *Hebrews 10:19 - Hebrews 10:22 20, - -by the new and living way that he opened for us through the veil (that is, through his flesh), 21, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. - -"*

Lest this topic might become overly heavy, let me try to make it more plain.

**We worship the Heavenly Father with our hearts.**

The heart is the very center of our passion and desires, for what the heart desires becomes its worship. Those born from heaven esteem and value the Spiritual life which is given from heaven and orchestrated from heaven. Heaven interacts with our hearts to make us true worshipers. Zeal is not the emotion of the soul it is the passion of the heart for Him who called us out of darkness into the Holy presence of heavenly things. (Mount Zion and the heavenly company of angelic beings and righteous souls.

Our souls can be inspired and stimulated by stirring music but takes the Holy Spirit to lift our hearts to heaven. The Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) animates and empowers the worshipers with inspiration and revelation in times of worship. When some particular saint is in worship he may be at the very feet of Jesus or receiving a revelation of a truth that has been hidden from us until this very minute.

### Free worship versus program worship

We do not all have a sense of comfort about thanksgiving, praise and worship. As we gather together we should feel free to give praise or thanksgiving with the liberty that God allows. This means it does not have to be scripted to be heartfelt.

Thanksgiving:

**A heart of thanksgiving** is called for by all who claim to be the children of God through Christ Jesus. If we are callous and have no true thanksgiving in our souls it would appear that we have not been impacted by God's loving kindness, mercy and grace:

If we were impoverished and received a legacy valued beyond all the riches of this world, would we not be happy and wish to give thanks?

If we were spared an eternity of judgment and hell by God's gift of righteousness which says we do not have to pay the penalty for being unrighteous or unworthy because Jesus himself bore our sins, would we not be happy and full of thanksgiving?

If we are spared from the horrors of oppression by tyrants or sorrows of natural calamities ought we not offer up thanksgiving to God?

If we eat are comfortable while thousands go without food and shelter, ought we not give thanks? The people who do not know God are called "unthankful, unholy, etc. - - "

*2 Timothy 3:2 - 2 Timothy 3:2 - - -, for men shall be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, evil-speakers, to parents disobedient, unthankful, unkind - - .*

### The Psalms: Examples That Teach Us Thanksgiving, Praise

Psalms are not entirely made up of songs of praise as they include prayers and prophetic utterances.

But they are the best examples of a man possessed of God's Holy Spirit (The Ruach Ha Kadesh) whose life and thoughts are turned continually God-ward. God refers to David as a man '- after His own heart.' While addressing the matters of trouble which surround him, David looks to the Lord as his strength, his hope, and his deliverer. He never forgets God's mercy and faithfulness. Even while praising the Lord actively (with his mouth) God at various times intervenes in the midst of his utterances and begins to speak His words through the psalmist's mouth. (Psalm 91, a good example)

Here are typical utterances of Praise and Thanksgiving.

***Psalms 9:1-2** - Psalms 9:1; I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works. ;2 I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High. \*\**

***Psalms 111:1** - Psalms 111:1 Praise the Lord! I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation. \*\**

***Psalms 34:2** - Psalms 34:3 1) I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2) My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. 3) Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together. \*\**

***Psalms 30:12** 12) To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever. \*\**

***Psalms 106:1** - Psalms 106:1 1) Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. \*\**

***Psalms 5:11 - Psalms 5:12** 11 But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You. 12 For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as with a shield. \*\**

***Psalms 13:5 - Psalms 13:6** 5 But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. 6 I will sing to the Lord, Because He has dealt bountifully with me. \*\**

***Psalms 31:7 - Psalms 31:8** I will be glad and rejoice in Your mercy, For You have considered my trouble; You have known my soul in adversities, 8 And have not shut me up into the hand of the enemy; \*\**

***Psalms 71:23 - Psalms 71:24** 23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing to You, And my soul, which You have redeemed. 24 My tongue also shall talk of Your righteousness all the day long; \*\* 24 This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. \*\**

***Psalms 148:2 - Psalms 148:5** 1 Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts! 3 Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light! 4 Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created. \*\**

***Psalms 148:13 - Psalms 148:14** 13 Let them praise the name of the Lord, For His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven. 14 And He has exalted the horn of His people, The praise of all His saints— Of the children of Israel, A people near to Him. \*\**

***Psalms 149:2 - Psalms 149:6** 1 Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, And His praise in the assembly of saints. 2 Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. 3 Let them praise His name with the dance; Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp. 4 For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation. 5 Let the saints be joyful in glory; Let them sing aloud on their beds. 6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, \*\**

***Psalms 150: - Psalms 150:6** 1 Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty firmament! 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts; Praise Him according to His excellent greatness! 3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp! 4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! 5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals! 6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!*

We see that there is no shortage of Praise and Thanksgiving addressed here in the Psalms. There is much more throughout other Old Testament books as well. "Praise is an ornament of beauty" for the upright. There is strength in praise. Praise is active and not passive. When we praise The Lord we are interacting with the hosts of heaven who continually offer praise unto Him who sits on the throne. There is deliverance in praise, it brings confusion to the ranks of the enemy (demonic spiritual orders.) Praise takes all kinds of forms. It includes music and dance. Praise includes shouting loudly to extol the virtues of God. Praise includes making joyful noises to God. Praise brings us into the very presence of the Holy presence of God. 'Enter his gates with thanksgiving' speaks of making the way into God's place, as one would enter the Tabernacle from the world of care into the gate beyond the fence. Enter into His courts with praise, addressing progressing into a place of greater intimacy. This part of the tabernacle is the Holy Place. Here we may still praise and speak to God and extol his goodness and mercies. But the ultimate place is entered with a higher lever of worship where we can nothing but *worship* in the Holiness of His presence.

For those who say there should no be noise and clamor in the zeal of worship they are not biblically accurate. For those who say there should be no musical instruments, they are not biblically accurate. For those who say there should be dancing, again, this is not in harmony with what we have seen in the Psalms.

Words translated Praise in the psalms and other books and include at least 7 words. Each word addresses somewhat different kind of praise or thanksgiving which may include, singing, playing,

shouting and others.

Liberty in Spiritual worship allows a lot of praise. It should not be curtailed. It should allow each person to engage in his or her own forms of praise. We all are called to Praise. Let everything that has breath, Praise the Lord! Freedom in praising the Lord creates a beautiful tapestry of sound and glory into which God's presence is pleased to dwell.

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