

Back to the Basics

The Facts About Worship

Memory Verse:
John 4:23-24

Beginning Fundamentals

To every Christian, worshipping the Almighty Heavenly Father should be a serious, yet anticipated experience of each and every week. Worshipping God should be an opportunity in which every Christian longs to participate. It is the intent of this lesson to help guide you in developing an acceptable worship attitude and practice. Toward that end, we will begin by addressing some basic fundamentals regarding worshipping the Father in Heaven.

Let us begin by offering some definitions. Refer to the *Greek Words Translated as worship, worshipper, worshipping, to --* chart directly to the left. As you can clearly see, there are several Greek words which are translated using our word worship. In nearly all of the definitions, you will see some sort of reverence, respect, or high esteem reflected. A better knowledge of the original Biblical words should help us to have a greater understanding of the motive and intent behind our worship services. Our motives behind worshipping God should be to show esteem, reverence, and veneration to our Heavenly Father.

Greek Words Translated as worship, worshipper, worshipping, to --

Greek	Definition	Passage(s)
doxa	Glory, esteem	Luke 14:10
cusebeo	To be reverential, pious	Acts 17:23
therapeuo	To serve, cure, heal	Acts 17:25
threskeia	Religious observance	Col. 2:18
latreuo	To worship publicly	Acts 7:42; 24:14; Phil. 3:3; Heb. 10:2
neokoros	Temple sweeper	Acts 19:35
proskun	To kiss (the hand) toward	Matt. 2:2,8,11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 18:26; 20:20, etc.
proskunetes	A worshipper	John 4:23
sebazo	To venerate, reckon venerable	Rom. 1:25
sebomai	To venerate	Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7; Acts 16:14; 18:7,13; 19:27
sebasma	An object of veneration	2 Thess. 2:4

This list of words, definitions, and passages were compiled from *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, pg 1075

Worshiping in Spirit and in Truth

In John 4, we find Jesus in a discussion with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. In their discussion, Jesus said the following, *"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. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* (John 4:23,24, NKJV) Take notice that Jesus clearly stated that true worship would be done in spirit and in truth.

True followers of God will worship God in spirit. God is spirit and not carnal (flesh). As a result, our worship must be done in a way that God finds pleasing. Acceptable worship comes from a heart that is sincere and genuine. In Romans 6:17, Paul observed that obedience that leads to salvation begins within the heart. In Mark 12:30, Jesus said, *"And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." This is the first commandment.* (NKJV) Worshipping God in spirit demands that each and every worshipper examine himself to make sure that he is sincerely showing reverence, respect, and veneration to the Father in Heaven. His motives and thoughts during the worship services must be pure and centered upon offering up acceptable worship.

True followers of God will also worship God in truth. (Let it be clearly understood that since Jesus grouped spirit and truth, so too must we. If a person claims to worship God in spirit, but he is not worshipping God in truth, then his worship is not acceptable to God.) Worshipping in truth is knowing whom you worship, why you worship, and how you worship. If those three aspects of truth are not known, then your worship is not acceptable. (In the case of the Samaritans, they did not know whom they worshipped. (John 4:22) In Matthew 15:7-9, we find that the Pharisees' worship was in vain because they taught for doctrine the commandments of men.)

- Q Whom do we worship? We worship the Almighty Heavenly Father. In Luke 4:8, Jesus said, *"And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"* (NKJV; cf. Acts 17:24,25)
- Q Why do we worship? We worship God to show Him reverence, honor, and respect. Consider Psalms 89:7: *"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him."* (NKJV; cf. Hebrews 12:28)
- Q How do we worship? We are to worship the Lord according to the instructions contained within His word. How we worship will be examined in greater detail in the next section.

Worshipping the Lord in Truth

The first element of our worship services (on the first day of the week) is the partaking of the Lord's Supper. Jesus instituted the Lord's supper during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (Matthew 26:17-30) What was the purpose of the Lord's supper? To answer this question, we must study 1 Corinthians 11:17-30. In verses 23-24, we learn that the bread represents the body of Jesus that was hung on the cross. In verse 25, we learn that the cup, the fruit of the vine, represents the blood

of Jesus which was shed on the cross. In verse 26, Paul makes it clear that when we partake of the Lord's supper, we are to be remembering and showing (proclaiming) the Lord's death until He comes again.

In what manner should we partake of the Lord's Supper? We must partake of the Lord's supper in a worthy manner. This warning was issued by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:27. To heed the warning, one must examine himself. (v. 28) Eating and drinking in an unworthy manner is defined as not discerning the Lord's body. (v. 29) To discern the Lord's body is to: 1) Understand why you are partaking the Lord's supper, and 2) understand the meaning of the memorial and its emblems. When you ignore the why and the reason behind the Lord's supper, then you make the memorial null and void within your life. If you do that, then you will be like those Christians in Corinth who were weak, sick, and spiritually dead. (v. 30)

When are we commanded to partake of the Lord's supper? In Acts 20:7, we see a clear example of saints coming together on the first day of the week to "break bread." We assemble on the first day of the week for the same purpose.

For whom is the Lord's supper intended? Jesus Christ died on the cross so that the lost could be set free from their bondage to sin. (Romans 6:17-18) Jesus paid a great price for the redemption and freedom of man. (1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23; cf. Acts 20:28) Before His death, Jesus instructed His disciples, "*This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.*" (Luke 22:19, NKJV) Paul also told Christians that they proclaim the Lord's death when they partake of the Lord's supper. (1 Corinthians 11:26) The Lord's supper is to serve as a reminder to those who have been set free from sin by the blood of Christ. Once a week, Christians around the world are reminded of the fact that Jesus died on the cross to set them free from their bondage to sin.

The second element of the worship services would be the preaching or teaching. Before Jesus left the apostles, He instructed them, "*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" (Matthew 28:19-20, NKJV) Take notice of the instructions to teach "them to observe all things" that Jesus had commanded.

Teaching the brethren to observe all things commanded by Christ falls upon the shoulders of elders, preachers, and teachers. Paul wrote to Timothy, "*If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.*" (1 Timothy 4:6, NKJV) In this verse, Paul refers directly to the teachings mentioned in the preceding verses. However, it is just as necessary that the brethren be reminded of all that the Word of God teaches.

During the lessons, the members of the congregation must also be doing their part. The members of the congregation bear the responsibility of listening to the lessons and following along in their Bibles. It is crucial that the members behave like those noble people in Berea. (Acts 17:10-12) These fine people searched the scriptures daily to make certain that what Paul was teaching was the Word of God. In order for the sermon to be of any benefit, you must take an active part by listening, following along in your Bible, and then applying the teachings found within the Word of God.

The third element in the worship services is prayer. To put it simply, prayer is communication with God. Jesus taught His disciples to pray to the Father in heaven. (Matthew 6:9) When we pray to our Father in heaven, we can have confidence that He will hear us if we are living righteously. (James 5:16) If we are guilty of sin, then we must pray to God with a repentant heart, asking Him to forgive us. Consider the example of Simon in Acts 8:20-22. Simon was told to repent of his sin and pray to God.

What makes this communication with God possible? The answer is found within Jesus Christ, our intercessor. The apostle Paul wrote, “*Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*” (Romans 8:34, NKJV) The Holy Spirit also plays a role in God hearing our prayers. Earlier in the same

chapter Paul wrote, “*Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*” (Romans 8:26, NKJV) How this process of intercession works, we do not know. However, we have the confidence that it works every time the righteous prays to God.

According to 1 Corinthians 14:15, prayer is to be a part of our worship services. Paul wrote, “*What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding.*” (1 Corinthians 14:15, NKJV) In the context of chapter 14, Paul is addressing several aspects of the worship services offered up by the Christians in Corinth. As is clearly seen in verse 15, prayer was a part of the worship services. While a single man may direct the prayer, the time for prayer is a time for every Christian to pray to the Father.

The men who lead the prayers have a responsibility to make certain that their prayer is scriptural and that it is being heard by God. (1 Timothy 2:8) If a man has sin within his life, his prayers to God will be hindered. (One such example is found when a husband sins against his wife. See 1 Peter 3:7.) Men who lead public prayers must make certain that they believe, that they ask according to God’s will, and that they do not “ask amiss.” (cf. Matthew 21:22; 1 John 5:14-15; James 4:1-3)

Paul goes a little farther in explaining what type of prayers are to be offered up to God. For instance, in 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Paul wrote, “*Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.*” (NKJV)

Elements of Acceptable Worship

Partaking of the Lord's Supper

Preaching of the Gospel

Praying to the Heavenly Father

*Singing songs of praises and
admonition*

*Laying by in store for the work
of the local church*

- Q Prayers of supplications are those prayers offered on one's own behalf. Consider the example of Jesus who prayed to His Father. Hebrews 5:7 reads, "*who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,*" (NKJV)
- Q Prayers of intercession are those prayers offered on the behalf of others. The apostle Paul prayed to God on the behalf of the brethren in Ephesus. (Ephesians 1:15-19)
- Q Prayers of thanksgiving are exactly that, prayers offering thanks to the Father in heaven. (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)

The fourth element of the worship services is singing songs of praises and admonition. As with the authority for praying, 1 Corinthians 14:15 also shows that singing is a part of the worship services. The worship services of the Corinthians involved edification and praise through the avenue of singing. We also find authority for singing in Ephesians 5:19. Paul wrote, "*speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*" (Ephesians 5:19, NKJV) In Colossians 3:16, Paul wrote, "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*" (NKJV) In both passages, we see the authority to sing songs during the worship services. (We must note that the lack of reference to the use of instruments of music clearly shows God's desire for a cappella music (music without instruments) in the worship services.)

The types of songs authorized are also clearly revealed in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. Psalms refers to a pious song or a song of matters pertaining to religion and faith. Hymns refers to songs of praise to God, a sacred song. Spiritual songs refers to any songs, lay, or ode that pertains to spiritual matters as established by God's Word. By using these types of songs, we are to teach one another, in addition to offering up praise and thanksgiving to God.

The fifth element of the worship services (on the first day of the week) is the process of laying by in store for the work of the local church. There are several examples in the New Testament of the members of the local church giving or laying by in store. One such example is found in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.

There are several reasons why the church must take up a collection. First, the collection helps to support the preaching of the gospel. (1 Corinthians 9:3-14) This would include the supporting of distant preachers if the funds allowed. (2 Corinthians 11:8-9) Second, the collection helps support the edification of the local saints. (Romans 14:19) This may include Bible class material, the providing of a place to obey the command to worship, song books to guide the singing, etc. Third, the collection helps to provide for the needs of the needy saints. (Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1)

Consider a few more thoughts on the subject of giving. We are to lay by in store on the first day of the week. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2.) We are to give voluntarily, "not grudgingly, or of necessity." (2 Corinthians 9:7) We are to give cheerfully. (2 Corinthians 9:7) We are to give as the Lord has prospered us and as we have purposed within our hearts. (2 Corinthians 9:6-7; 1 Corinthians 16:2)

Ten Questions

1. What is the definition for the Greek word “doxa”? _____
2. What is the definition for the Greek word “sebomai”? _____
3. What should be our motives behind worshiping God? _____

4. How will “true worshippers” worship the Father? _____
5. According to the lesson text, what three things should the “true worshippers” know? _____

6. Explain the purpose of the Lord’s Supper. _____

7. To whom did Jesus teach His apostles to pray? _____
8. Give an example of what would hinder a man’s public prayer. _____

9. List the three types of songs authorized for the worship services. _____

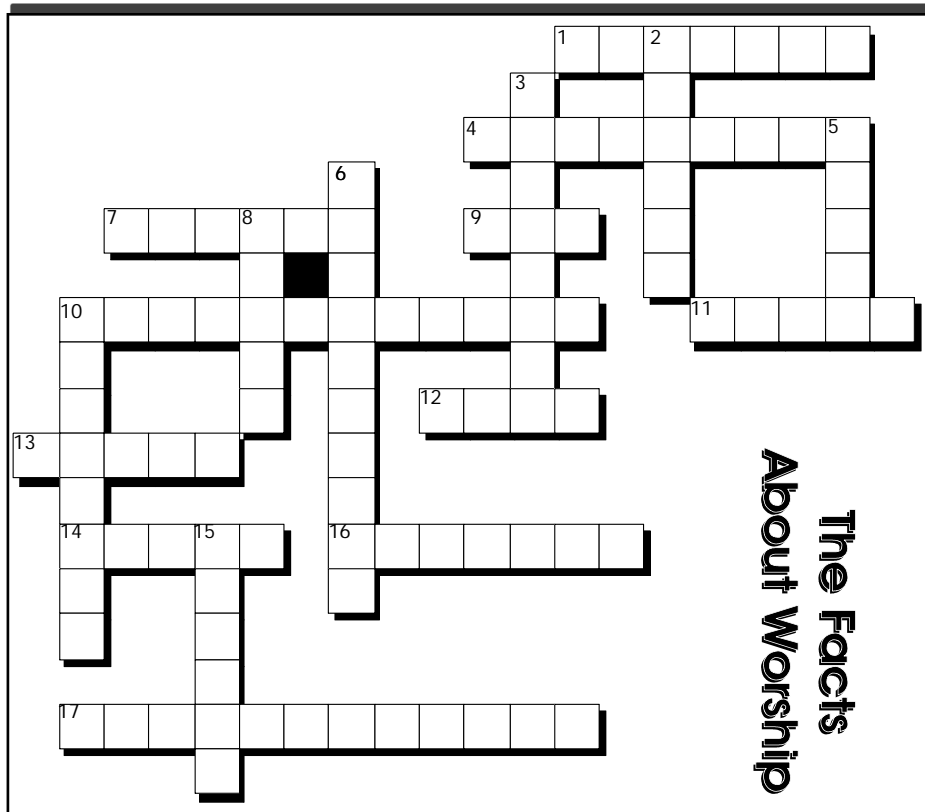
10. Upon what day of the week is a local church authorized to take up a collection? _____

True or False

1. T or F : According to Romans 6:17, the brethren in Rome had obeyed from the “heart that form of doctrine.”
2. T or F : According to John 4:22, the Samaritans knew who they worshipped.
3. T or F : In order to partake of the Lord’s Supper in a worthy manner, one must properly discern the Lords’ body.
4. T or F : A good minister of Jesus Christ is one who “instructs the brethren in these things.”
5. T or F : The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us when we pray.
6. T or F : The New Testament contains examples of a local church using musical instruments.
7. T or F : The Bible authorizes psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
8. T or F : The church can help support a distant preacher.
9. T or F : The church cannot support a local preacher.
10. T or F : It is not necessary that Christians give cheerfully.

A Little Fun

(Use the lesson text to answer these questions.)



Across

1. This Greek word means "to be reverential, pious."
4. "Go therefore and make _____ of all the nations, . . ."
7. "Our _____ which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."
9. This can hinder a man's public prayer.
10. "Teachings as doctrine the _____ of men"
11. "speaking to one another in psalms and _____ and spiritual songs, . . ."
12. "Let the _____ of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, . . ."
13. The noble people of _____ searched the scriptures daily.
14. The Lord's Supper is observed every _____ day of the week.
16. This Greek word means "to worship publicly."
17. Jesus, who died and is also risen, "makes _____ for us."

Down

2. ". . . When the true worshippers will worship the Father in _____ and in truth; . . ."
3. "If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good _____ of Jesus Christ, . . ."
5. According to Luke 4:8, to whom did Jesus say, "Get behind Me.?"
6. We are to give voluntarily, "not _____, or of necessity."
8. "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your _____, . . ."
10. God loves a _____ giver.
15. When we partake of the Lord's _____, we proclaim (shew, KJV) the Lord's death.

Passages in this Lesson

Psalms 89:7	pg 44	Acts 20:35	pg 47
Matthew 2:2,8,11	pg 43	Acts 24:14	pg 43
Matthew 4:9	pg 43	Romans 1:25	pg 43
Matthew 6:9	pg 46	Romans 6:17,18	pg 44,45
Matthew 8:2	pg 43	Romans 8:26	pg 46
Matthew 9:18	pg 43	Romans 8:34	pg 46
Matthew 14:33	pg 43	Romans 14:19	pg 47
Matthew 15:7-9	pg 44	1 Corinthians 6:20	pg 45
Matthew 15:9	pg 43	1 Corinthians 7:23	pg 45
Matthew 15:25	pg 43	1 Corinthians 9:3-14	pg 47
Matthew 18:26	pg 43	1 Corinthians 11:17-30	pg 44
Matthew 20:20	pg 43	1 Corinthians 14:15	pg 46,47
Matthew 21:22	pg 46	1 Corinthians 16:1-2	pg 47
Matthew 26:17-30	pg 44	2 Corinthians 9:6-7	pg 47
Matthew 28:19-20	pg 45	2 Corinthians 11:8-9	pg 47
Mark 7:7	pg 43	Ephesians 1:15-19	pg 47
Mark 12:30	pg 44	Ephesians 5:19	pg 47
Luke 4:8	pg 44	Philippians 3:3	pg 43
Luke 14:10	pg 43	Colossians 2:18	pg 43
Luke 22:19	pg 45	Colossians 3:16	pg 47
John 4:23,24	pg 43,44	1 Thessalonians 5:17-18	pg 47
Acts 7:42	pg 43	2 Thessalonians 2:4	pg 43
Acts 8:20-22	pg 46	1 Timothy 2:1-2	pg 47
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Acts 17:10-12	pg 45	1 Timothy 4:6	pg 45
Acts 17:23	pg 43	Hebrews 5:7	pg 47
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Acts 18:7,13	pg 43	James 4:1-3	pg 46
Acts 19:27	pg 43	James 5:16	pg 46
Acts 19:35	pg 43	1 John 5:14-15	pg 46
Acts 20:7	pg 45	1 Peter 3:7	pg 46
Acts 20:28	pg 45		