

Engaging God in Worship

Message 5 of 6 in the series: "Engage: Participate, Join, Get Involved, Take Part"

A. Worship is a recognition of and a response to God's greatness and glory.

"Worship" = worthiness, respect, reverence paid to a divine being... from the Old English word "worth-ship".

"Great is the LORD! **He is most worthy of praise!** No one can measure his greatness." Psalm 145:3 (NLT)

"You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased." Revelation 4:11 (NLT)

"Come, let us worship and bow down. **Let us kneel before the Lord our maker, for he is our God.** We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care." Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)

IMPORTANT! We were created to worship God and bring Him glory. "Bring all who claim me as their God, **for I have made them for my glory. It was I who created them.**" Isaiah 43:7 (NLT)

WARNING! If we don't worship God, we will worship someone or something else. "You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. **You must not bow down to them or worship them,** for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods." Exodus 20:4-5a (NLT)

"Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. **For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions.** These are not from the Father, but are from this world." 1 John 2:15-16 (NLT)

B. It's important for us to engage in worshipping God together with other believers.

"**I was glad** when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" Psalm 122:1 (NLT)

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And **let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another,** especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)

1. It is important for us to engage in worshipping God by singing His praises together. "Come, **let us sing to the Lord!** Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come to him with thanksgiving. **Let us sing psalms of praise to him.** For the Lord is a great God, a great King above all gods."
Psalm 95:1-3 (NLT)

"Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, **be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves,** and making music to the Lord in your hearts." Ephesians 5:18-19 (NLT)

"Sing a new song to the Lord! Let the whole earth sing to the Lord! **Sing to the Lord; praise his name.** Each day proclaim the good news that he saves." Psalm 96:1-2 (NLT)

2. It is important for us to engage in worshipping God by studying His Word together. "Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. **Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives.**" Colossians 3:16a (NLT)

"Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently **correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.** For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths." 2 Timothy 4:2-4 (NLT)

3. It is important for us to engage in worshipping God by praying together. "**In every place of worship, I want men to pray with holy hands lifted up to God,** free from anger and controversy."
1 Timothy 2:8 (NLT)

"Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. **Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name.** For the Lord is good. His unending love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation." Psalm 100:3-5 (NLT)

“Among the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch of Syria were Barnabas, Simeon (called ‘the black man’), Lucius (from Cyrene), Manaen (the childhood companion of King Herod Antipas), and Saul. One day **as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting**, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.’ So **after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way.**” Acts 13:1-3 (NLT)

C. It’s important for us to engage in worshiping God privately as part of our daily devotional time.

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and **went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.**” Mark 1:35 (NIV)

“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. **But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private.** Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.” Matthew 6:5-6 (NLT)

D. It’s important for us to engage in worshiping God as our lifestyle.

“**I will praise the Lord at all times.** I will constantly speak his praises.” Psalm 34:1 (NLT)

1. We can worship God anytime, anywhere. “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when **it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem.** You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when **true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way.** For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.” John 4:21-24 (NLT)

2. We can worship God in all we say and do. “And so, dear brothers and sisters, **I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.** Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” Romans 12:1-2 (NLT)

“**And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus,** giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:17 (NIV)

3. We can worship God in good times and in bad. “A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn’t escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. **Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God,** and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off!” Acts 16:22-26 (NLT)

IMPORTANT! Worship is a powerful antidote to anger, fear, stress, and worry. “...The **garment of praise** for the spirit of heaviness...” Isaiah 61:3b (NKJV)

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Connect Group Questions:

1. Read Psalm 95:6-7 & 145:3, Revelation 4:11, & Isaiah 43:7. What do these passages tell us about what worship is and why we worship God? How does the worship they describe differ from the common perception that worship is a boring meeting attended by Christians on Sunday mornings?
2. Now read Exodus 20:4-5a & 1 John 2:15-16. Name some people/things that are worshiped in our culture? Why does the Bible warn us NOT to do this?
3. Discuss the following three ways we engage in worshiping God together:
 - by singing His praises together. (Psalm 95:1-3 & 96:1-2, Ephesians 5:18-19)
 - by studying His Word together. (Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 4:2-4)
 - by praying together. (Psalm 100:3-5, 1 Timothy 2:8, Acts 13:1-3)

Which of these comes most naturally to you?

4. Discuss the following ways worship can become our lifestyle:
 - We can worship God anytime, anywhere. (John 4:21-24)
 - We can worship God in all we say and do. (Romans 12:1-2, Colossians 3:17)
 - We can worship God in good times and in bad. (Acts 16:16-26)
5. What do you think of John Wesley's directions for singing in worship which were printed on the first page of every Methodist hymnal beginning in 1737?

“Learn these Tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please. Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can. Sing All. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up and you will find a blessing. Sing lustily and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sung the songs of Satan... Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature.”