

Worship

"To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, and to devote the will to the purposes of God"

William Temple²⁰

Description:

- "Human beings are made for worship."²¹ A missional life begins with a posture of worship, linked with prayer and being led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is what cultivates an open heart to God and others and a willingness to live in obedience to God's missional call on our lives.

Forms of Worship:

Worship can take many forms and "happens whenever we intentionally cherish God and value him above all else in life."²² Five forms of worship that cultivate a missional lifestyle are:²³

1. *Celebration* – to take joyful, passionate pleasure in God, his creation, and his will and ways. To identify and pursue these things that bring deep gladness and reveal them before the Lord. This may include spending time with others, sharing meals, serving, laughing, engaging in music, dancing, and so on.
 - Bible: Matthew 6: 25-34, Romans 12: 1-2 (MSG)
 - Question: where are you most prone to celebrate God? Alone? With others? In singing worship? In nature? Discuss.
2. *Singing Worship* – to honor and adore God through song, as the supreme over all things. This may include singing songs of praise and worship by yourself and also in a community of faith, intentionally seeking first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matthew 6: 33).
 - Bible: John 4: 24, Acts 13: 2-3, Acts 16: 16-34
 - Question: what about God moves you to worship? How does worshipping alone and worshipping with others affect you? Discuss.
3. *Gratitude* – to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading and to live with a thankful heart, being appreciative for all his good gifts. This may include

prayers and songs that focus on God's generosity or intentionally noticing God's presence and gifts throughout the day or even keeping a gratitude journal thanking God for his goodness in your life.

- Philippians 4: 6, 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18
- Question: When have you found that in retrospect you could have been thankful for something that you were not grateful for at the time it was happening? How can this perspective inform your life now?

4. *Holy Communion* – the Lord's Supper focuses us on Jesus and his great sacrifice for all and God's restorative plans for all humankind. As we engage with the bread and juice, representing Jesus' body and blood, and examine ourselves, we engage in a form of worship.

- Bible: Mark 14: 22-24, Acts 2: 46-47
- Question: how does participating in communion focus you on God?

5. *Sabbath* – to set aside a day for rest and worship God by spending time with him and the people you love. This may include exercise, a phone call with someone you love, family time playing games, time walking and praying, intentionally letting go of things that stress you for 24 hours, and so on.

- Bible: Matthew 11: 28-30 (MSG), Mark 2: 27
- Question: how does taking a sabbath enhance your enjoyment and worship of God?

Living the Practice:

- Richard Foster states, "worship begins in holy expectancy, it ends in holy obedience. If worship does not propel us into greater obedience, it has not been worship."²⁴
 - Which form of worship do you most gravitate to and why?
 - Which form of worship do you find challenging? Why?
 - How is God asking you to live in obedience to his mission as you worship him this week?

Next steps Further Engagement:

- Who can you develop an accountable relationship with to commit to worshipping God and seeking his will?