

FRIDAY

"THE MEANING OF WORSHIP"

Scripture: Psalm 111

Does your family know the meaning of worship? Or has the activity and organization, the physical structure - the bustling personnel come between them and the majesty of God?

Perhaps in simplifying our modern services of worship, we have taken away the awesome realization that we are standing in the presence of the Almighty God. We are not coming merely to hear a sermon, to sing a hymn, to color posters. We come to the house of God to worship him,

This means that we approach church with reverence, as one approaches the throne-room of a king. It means we move with care, we speak in love, we behave as if we were in the presence of royalty.

God is our Father - but he is also our Lord and King. Jesus Christ is an Elder Brother, but he is also Prince of Heaven and Lord of our life.

Let us remember that God is still to be revered. Too often we hear his name used profanely, too often we are bogged down in denominational friction and scheduled hustle; when we stand in a church sometimes it seems no different from the school or club.

The attitude of our heart can make a difference in the atmosphere of our church. Let us remember God as we come to his House ... let us remember that we come to worship him.

Prayer: God, we thank you that you have provided a spiritual church, the fellowship of believers. May the main structure of it be our love for thee. AMEN

SATURDAY

"WORSHIP IS MADE OF MANY THINGS"

Scripture: Psalm 46:1-7

Worship is praise and thankfulness, quietness and love - the humbleness of failure, the awe of forgiveness.

It is kneeling before Almighty God while looking into the eyes of the Father ... it is humility which love has lifted up ... sin which is covered by grace ... assurance that has been bought with a Life.

It is standing in the presence of God the Father and knowing that somehow you are one of the blessed who has been touched by his Son, the Savior ... ushered into the courts of Heaven, to dwell there forever.

It is majesty and awe, comfort and security, God's hand upon us, love in the midst of hatred, certainty in the midst of chaos ... dignity where no man knows us, sonship in solitude, oneness in the brotherhood of our Christ and the reality of life which knows no end.

Worship is God's gift to the human spirit whereby we are lifted to a level beyond our own attainment ... where we walk with divinity and hear the voice of God as he bends to our loneliness and need, our hunger and yearning ... it is the lifting of the physical barrier while the soul walks into the presence of God.

Prayer: Our Father, Who art in Heaven, we thank you that you also enter our hearts while we live here. God teach me to open my heart to you. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

The thought begins in the Bible verse;
please take the time to read it first.

MONDAY, APRIL 29, 2024

"IN PLACE OF FEAR"

Scripture: John 1:12, 13;
Hebrews 4:16; I John 4:10

At one time, men prostrated themselves facedown before God. Worship was filled with awe and fear, with a profound sense of unworthiness and almost despair.

Today the Christian walks into the courts of Almighty God and kneels before him with dignity, still with reverence and awe, but no longer with fear. Why?

Because we come now as his adopted children ... no longer as beggars and thieves. This relationship we take so much for granted was bought at a high cost, though: God's Son gave his life so that you and I could come into his presence without fear. Our Lord placed his own cloak upon us.

Are you aware of this each time you pray with such assurance? Does such a gift bring you more quickly to your knees in gratitude - does such divine love fill you with awe?

It should. It should make us live each day of our lives, keenly aware of our responsibility as sons of God, as representatives of the Kingdom of our Lord ... as heirs with Christ.

Unless worship has made you aware of all this, perhaps you have never yet truly, fully worshiped. Next time you pray, remember what the Father and his Son have done for you ... and your part in this relationship.

Prayer: God, I thank you for the freedom and assurance I have in your presence. Make me worthy as your child. AMEN

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TUESDAY

"WORSHIP IS A LIGHTED MIRROR"

Scripture: Isaiah 6:5-8

The worship of God brings with it the gift of knowing yourself as you really are - as God sees you.

When we compare ourselves with other people, we feel quite secure; we measure up well enough. Yet when we compare our lives with God, the contrast is humbling. Isaiah, after his vision in the temple, said, "Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips for I have seen the Lord!" Paul thought of himself as the chief sinner. Elijah and Moses, two great prophets, felt insignificant when they stood in the presence of God.

Only as we compare ourselves to perfection can we see the true distortion of our lives. Only then can we hope to correct and realign ourselves.

Secondly, when we worship God, we come in touch with his majesty, with his power, and somehow that majestic power transmits itself to us, filling us with strength, purity, clarity of vision. We see the insidious distortions of a pagan world for what they are and corruption is no longer hidden behind mere sophistication. Immorality lies exposed and the shabbiness of our inadequate lives is shown in the full light of God's presence.

How long since you have stood in that light and seen yourself as God sees you?

Prayer: Dear Lord, there are so many times when I use the world as my pattern and I fall so far short of your divine will. Forgive me, God; bring me into a newness of life with you, I pray. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

"FROM PRAYER TO PRAISE."

Scripture: Psalm 42:1-5

Have there been times in your life when you wanted, somehow, to tell God how grateful you are for life, to try to thank him for something he has done or just to be with him?

So many times we sense a restlessness, a thirst which nothing seems to help. Often this is a spiritual need to be with God. Yet so few of us know how "just to be with him."

We go to our rooms, close the door and wait, feeling self-conscious and awkward. True worship is as natural as breathing - yet how do we start?

Begin with thanks. Praise is the highest form of thanks; it is bubbling and overflowing, and as you begin to thank God for the things you have, even the insignificant things, it will amaze you how quickly "praise" comes. Soon you will be thanking him for being God, for being your personal Lord ... for his love, his forgiveness, his availability, his steadfastness.

Then perhaps there will be silence while your spirit is steeped in this amazing atmosphere of quiet joy. Don't be afraid of the silence. This is part of the communion. Wait as long as you need to - until your soul is completely satisfied. Then go - with the peace that passes understanding with power and strength.

Prayer: Hear my prayer, Father, as I come unto you. Accept my love for all you mean to me. AMEN

(For further-reading, Psalm 103)

THURSDAY

"WHEN WORSHIP WILL NOT COME"

Scripture: Psalm 51:10-17

The hours when worship comes freely and without effort are rare, deeply beautiful moments filled with a power which nothing else can match.

God fashioned man to worship him continuously, but worldly clamor has made it now a rare and seldom thing.

Too often the heart is cluttered with anxiety and guilt with sin and doubt. We drop to our knees to give praise, and instead our words are filled with anguish and remorse and heartache.

What then? Then we pray for guidance for forgiveness, for judgment and light. We take the forgiveness . . . we cling to the light, we bow before the judgment and we follow his guidance.

Then as we lift up our faces, we're freed to worship him, in thanksgiving and love, in gratitude and newness of heart, in strength and poise and assurance and peace.

How long since you have cleansed your heart of the clutter so that you can worship in full power?

Worship is the atmosphere in which man was created to live - in the ever-present, deeply filling joy of the presence of God in our hearts.

Prayer: Lord, create in me a new heart and fill me with newness for which I long . . . Lord, as you stooped to those men so long ago, stoop to me too, that I may feel your presence in my life and your power in my heart, I pray. AMEN