

## WORSHIP WHEN IT DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE

What do you think of when you hear the word “worship?” What’s the first thing that comes to mind? Do you think of singing and music? That’s what I think a lot of people think about. But worship is much bigger than just music and singing.

I know some of you are thinking that’s really good news because if worship was limited to singing, you’d be in trouble! The only singing group that would let you join is the *Morbid Tuberkulor Choir*. So it’s good news that worship isn’t limited to just singing.

Here’s a definition of worship that comes right from God’s word.

Romans 12:1, I love the way the Message Bible puts it:

*“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and PLACE IT BEFORE GOD AS AN OFFERING. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.”*

Our LIFE can be a spiritual act of WORSHIP.

Our LIFE can be an OFFERING to God.

The Bible says how I live my life is an act of worship.

Worship truly is a LIFESTYLE.

For a lot of people worship means “GOING TO CHURCH”. They think it’s that hour at church each week. A lot of folks limit their worship to that time when we go to church.

Here’s what’ll happen in your life if you do that. You’ll develop a consumer mentality. You go to church and when you leave and somebody asks, “How was church?” You’ll say “good” or “bad.” Your answer is dependent on what happens at church. And it’s dependent on what *you* receive. If the message was *good* and the music was *good*, you’d say church was *good*. We treat it like going to the movies. If you like the movie it’s a good movie. If it bombs you want your money back.

But we don’t do that at church. Or at least we are not supposed to. We don’t rate the music, “*Two thumbs up!*” Or Scott, that message didn’t work for me. I’d like my offering back. That’s not worship. That’s being a consumer.

Here’s a question you should ask yourself when it comes to worship... *HOW WAS I?* You don’t say how was *church*, you say *HOW WAS I*, how was *MY* worship?

Regardless of the message or the music or the quality of the coffee or the people you talk to... *HOW WAS I?* Did something happen in ME to make ME want to know God more? *HOW WAS I?* How was MY heart? Here's the BIG point...It's not what takes place at church... it's what takes place in *your heart*. THAT'S WORSHIP! *HOW WAS I?* Is that making any sense? I sure hope so because that's the "IT" in worship.

The IT is YOU... How was IT?

Where do you get the faith to worship when it's difficult? Or it's inconvenient? Or it's not the right time? Where do you get the faith to worship when things are bad, when the outside influences are making it hard or impossible for IT to worship.

It's not always easy to worship God. If it was easy to worship God churches would be packed. I invite a lot of people to come here. I know people who say they're Christians but don't go to church, I don't get that. I invite them, but there's millions of excuses. Too busy. Too tired... it's the only day I can sleep in. The church is too big. Or too small. Or they want my money or it's boring. Whatever it is. I'd like to say 3 words to them...Wa...Wa...Wa... What babies!

The Bible teaches that we were created to worship God. That God is worthy of our *best* worship. If worship is more than singing and worship and going to church on Sunday morning, how do we live a life of worship? Look at what Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Noah, Ruth, David, and all the giants in the Bible did... they had a God encounter. The entire lineage of Jesus, all 14 generations had a God encounter and the result was Jesus born a human being, Jesus walking with us.

Worship is an ENCOUNTER with God.

An encounter with God is not reserved for just one hour a week, in a building, in downtown Nisswa. An encounter with God is God and IT. The encounter is God and you in your "*everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life.*" Worship is a lifestyle.

Here's a how-to-live-a-life-of-worship lesson...first...

### **BE QUIET AND LISTEN.**

It's hard to listen when you're not quiet. It's amazing how well you can hear when you're quiet. Worship is not just about making noise, singing or preaching. Worship is about listening to God.

There's a well known verse that says: "*Be still.*" "*Be quiet and know that I am God.*"  
Psalm 46:10

When was the last time you were quiet and listened to God? I mean really quiet! No noise. *Quiet!* Think about your life for a second. In a 24-hour day, do you ever take time where you're just *quiet* and *listen*. There is always noise going on. Then when we want to escape the noise we go for a walk but we put on more noise. Then what do we do? To fall asleep we've got recorded nature sounds. We're psycho! We don't have any silence.

Ask a Christian "Do you have any time when you're just quiet? A lot of times the first response is "I listen to Christian music." It's still noise! I don't care if it's Christian music. It's noise. I'm not down on Christian music. I'm just down on noise. You can go out and buy some noise if you want. Twenty bucks for a few songs. I came up with my own greatest hits "All About Silence" – it's only \$9.99. Twenty songs of... Silence!

OK, maybe I'm having fun with that but I just want to get you thinking. When is the last time you had some silence in your life? Completely quiet. Free from distraction. You quiet yourself so you can hear that still small voice of God. This may be too mind-boggling for some of you. But God wants to talk to YOU! God wants to direct YOU. He loves YOU. He wants YOU to live life to its fullest. We don't hear...we're too loud.

The primary way God communicates to people is through His written word. You can *read God's voice*. There have been many times I've read the Bible and I read something and know, that's what God wanted me to hear. That's one of the roles of the Holy Spirit. When you have a relationship with God you get the gift of His Spirit.

In John 16:13 Jesus says "*But when He the Spirit of truth comes He will guide you into all truth.*" You're probably not going to hear the audible voice of God. But God puts impressions on my heart that lead me and guide me. He communicates through His Spirit. You hear a prompting, a leading, that's God talking.

God wants to guide us. He wants to lead us. He wants to speak to us. We just have to listen.

This may be tough for some of you to hear and I don't mean it in a hurtful way. But, if you're a follower of Jesus and you're not sensing God's leading or impressions on your heart... *you're too noisy*. That noise may translate to *busyness*. If you're not sensing God's leading you may be too noisy.

I don't know how God communicated to Abraham in the Old Testament. But I do know Abraham's words, "*Here I am, Lord... I'm listening Lord*" Those are words of worship.

Here I am Lord, to worship You.

Here I am Lord to be used by You.

Here I am to acknowledge Your greatness.

Here I am to have some quiet time and listen to the still small voice of God. That's a life of worship.

Worship is an ENCOUNTER WITH GOD.

Amen.