

To Worship . . . and Beyond!

According to one study, more than 75% of American churchgoers surveyed said they consider "worship style" a key reason they choose a church. If we were to define "worship style," in most cases that would simply mean "music style."

But here's our key question: Are worship and music the same thing? If not, what is worship? (Here's an interesting article from John Piper answering this very question: <http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-is-worship>)

Let's first figure out how the dictionary defines worship. According to Merriam-Webster, this is worship:

1 (chiefly British) : a person of importance —used as a title for various officials (as magistrates and some mayors)

2: reverence [love] offered a divine being or supernatural power; *also* : an act of expressing such reverence

3: a form of religious practice with its creed and ritual

4: extravagant respect or admiration for or devotion to an object of esteem (*worship* of the dollar)

Maybe it's also helpful to know what the word we read as "worship" in the Bible meant in its original Hebrew (OT) and Greek (NT):

Hebrew

- shachah (shaw-khaw): prostrate (in homage to royalty or God), bow down, crouch, humbly beseech (request), do reverence, worship
 - This word is the most common word translated as worship in the OT
 - AND this word is often also translated as "bow"
- cegid/cagad (saw-gad): to prostrate oneself (in homage/respect)
 - This word is actually a Chaldean word found only in Daniel

Greek

- proskuneo (pros-koo-neh-o): to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand; to fawn or crouch; prostrate oneself
 - There are several words translated as "worship" but this is the most common one found in Matthew 2, John 4, and all of Revelation

Let's jump in and look at some examples and descriptions of worship and see what we discover. This is by no means a complete list of references to worship in Scripture, but the references are a decent sampling of what Biblical worship looks like.

Jot down your observations of what these verses reveal about worship.

Verse(s):	Observations:
Deut. 11:13-17	
Judges 2:10-19	

2 Chron. 29:27-30	
Daniel 3:4-18	
Matt. 2:1-12	
* Matt. 15:7-11, 18 (Isa. 29:13)	
* John 4:20-24	
Rev. 4:6-11; 7:11-12; 11:16-17	

Guiding questions:

- What is the relationship between worship and singing?
- Does worship require activity (singing, praising, serving, etc.)?
- Is worship a personal thing, in that it might look a little different for each person?
- Is there a designated (or better) place for worship to occur?
- Why is worship even something worth talking about? What impact should it have on the way we live?

We confuse enjoyment and satisfaction. Things that bring pleasure were meant to be enjoyed not bring satisfaction. Jesus came to satisfy.

Perhaps true worship is the experience of being completely satisfied with all God is and the complete absence any selfish desires.

From "The Pursuit of God" by A.W. Tozer

The pursuit of God will embrace the labor of bringing our total personality into conformity to His. And this not judicially, but actually. I do not here refer to the act of justification by faith in Christ. I speak of a voluntary exalting of God to His proper station over us and a willing surrender of our whole being to the place of worshipful submission which the Creator-creature circumstance makes proper.

Was it this [a] greedy desire for honor from man that made men into Pharisees and Pharisees into Deicides? Is this the secret back of religious self-righteousness and empty worship? I believe it may be. The whole course of the life is upset by failure to put God where He belongs. We exalt ourselves instead of God and the curse follows.