
expressed and be committed to only worshiping in those ways (Colossians 3:17)!

God is the only one who is worthy of our worship and He expects to be the only one we worship! To worship Him is to bow ourselves (whether literally or figuratively) before Him to express our reverence, praise, and devotion to Him. Then, as we bring our worship to Him, we must always make sure that it is worship that He desires, rather than worship that we desire.

What Does It Mean To Worship?



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People of faith use the word “worship” regularly. However, we must consider whether we truly understand what it means to worship. Can you really tell someone what it means to worship? You see, worship is not an obscure concept that can be defined in just whatever way you choose to define it. Rather, we must come to see worship how God defines it.

1) Definition. The idea behind the most common Hebrew and Greek words that are translated as “worship” in the Bible is to bow oneself before and kiss toward (like a dog that licks its master’s hand) in a demonstration of reverence, praise, and devotion. Genesis 24:48 records Abraham’s servant kneeling low, worshipping and blessing the Lord who had guided him on his mission. Matthew 2:11 records the wise men who visited Jesus entering the house, seeing the child, and falling to their knees to worship Him and presenting Him with gifts. Matthew 28:9 records that when the two women saw Jesus after His resurrection, they took hold of Jesus’s feet and worshiped Him. Revelation 4 also gives some excellent pictures of worship before the throne of God

in Heaven by glorifying Him and falling before Him (vv. 9-11). Since God is Spirit, our worship will involve bowing our hearts and wills to God so that we might show Him the reverence, praise, and devotion He deserves!

2) Worship is about the one being worshiped. We can clearly see that worship is a wonderful demonstration of one’s reverence, praise, and devotion that is offered to another. Sadly, people often mistake their worship as being about themselves (i.e. their own desires and fulfillment) and put the focus of their worship on what they want above what the one being worshiped wants. However, worship is actually about the worth of the one who is being worshiped – not the one doing the worshipping! In worship, we are showing respect for the worth of the one we are bowing ourselves before. For this reason, God commanded the Israelites not to bow in worship to any idol or false god (Exodus 20:3-6). For, He alone was worthy of their praise and devotion (Exodus 20:2). Certainly, no other god can compare to the true and living God who lives in Heaven so as to be worthy of worship (1 Samuel 2:2; 2 Kings 17:32-41; Psalm 115:3-8; Acts 17:24-31)! For example, we see the 24 elders pictured

before God’s throne in Heaven worshipping God, saying that our Lord and God is the one who is worthy to receive glory, honor, and power because He is the one who has created all things and by whose will they all exist (Revelation 4:11).

3) Worship must be acceptable to God. Because God (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is the only one who is worthy of being worshiped, the one who desires to worship must do so in the way He desires to be worshiped. So, again, it is not up to the worshiper to define worship however he/she desires and to bring whatever kind of worship he/she wants to bring. In fact, the Bible gives examples of people doing things to worship God – and God not being pleased with those expressions of worship (Genesis 4:3-5; Leviticus 10:1-2). So, when Jesus taught worship in John 4, He specifically mentions that true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth (vv. 23-24). This kind of worship that pleases God involves the spiritual part of each person being sincerely engaged in the worship and the physical part of the person living according to the truth God has revealed. Therefore, true worshipers will always look to the pages of God’s revealed word to learn how God desires their worship to be