



Global College of Ministry

EQUIP

The Christian and the Church

Role of Women in the Church Today

Part One

“And your sons and daughters shall prophesy . . . And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy”
(Acts 2:17-18).

The Creator’s View of Women

The creation story depicts Adam and Eve, the first husband and wife, as partners. They were created in the image of God and given dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:27-28).

Man was created first and served in a leadership role in the family. The woman was his helper. This did not mean that she was less important or inferior to him. God is also described as our helper. (See Psalms 33:20; 70:5; 115:9.) The man and woman lived a life of interdependence (depending on each other). The woman brought balance to the man, making him complete.

Matthew Henry comments, “If man is the head, she (woman) is the crown, a crown to her husband . . . The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.”

“There are two kinds of women in the world:
Those who take a man’s strength and those
that give a man strength.”
(Ihre Freundin)

Adam and Eve sinned. One of the penalties of sin placed on Eve was “thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” (Genesis 3:16) Because Eve attempted to liberate herself from God, she was placed under the headship of her husband and given a strong desire for him. This is reflected in the organization of the family, women’s role in society, and in the nations.

The Wise Man’s View of Women

“A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.” (Proverbs 12:4)

Read Proverbs 31:10-12, 25-30 for a clear picture of an honorable woman.

It’s a Man’s World

The ancient world was a man’s world. However, the position of a woman among the Hebrews was better than in the heathen nations. Many names of Hebrew women can be found in the

pages of the Old Testament. These women, used and recognized by God, had great character and lived godly lives.

Male domination in Old Testament times is seen in their roles in the family. Only men served as priests and occupied leadership positions in politics and religion. A woman's religious role during the time of Christ's birth was limited. Only men received advanced training in the Scripture.

In the Old Testament women were listed among a man's properties. She was always under the authority of a man—her father, brother, or husband.

Athaliah, a queen in Judah, is depicted as someone who usurped power. When she was overthrown, everyone was happy (2 Kings 11:1-20). Esther was a good example of a lady who had influence among her people. A problem surfaces, not when a woman uses influence, but when she usurps authority (assumes, seizes, grabs, or takes over the authority given to her husband or leader).

Sometimes women rose to positions of leadership through a prophetic role. Miriam had influence, but only alongside Moses and Aaron. Deborah was a prophetess and judged Israel. In battle (and perhaps even in administration), Barak took the lead. Anna was a well-known figure in the Temple, but she had no official status.

The Tradition of the Elders

In the Mishnah it was noted, "When a man and a woman were in danger of death, the man must first be saved." In the Babylonian Talmud a man was encouraged to "thank God that he had not been created a Gentile, a woman, or an illiterate." It might be noted that men wrote the Mishnah and Talmud.

It was to a woman that God gave the honor of bringing the Messiah into this world.

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Galatians 4:4).

Not only did an angel appear to a young woman, but he called her "highly favoured."

"And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28).

Jesus' View of Women

Jesus lived in this setting. However, He dealt with women differently than what was ordinary in His day. He displayed an open attitude of acceptance toward them and welcomed them as learners (Luke 10:38-42).

Women often traveled with Jesus. They quickly accepted His teachings (Luke 8:1-3).

Interestingly, women were among the last to leave the cross (Matthew 27:55-56), and they were the first to the tomb. (Matthew 28:1) A woman was the first messenger of the Resurrection (Matthew 28:8-10).

Jesus' understanding and consideration of women sets an example for normal Christian living.

There is no record in the Gospels of any woman ever opposing Jesus. They tended to be more sensitive to spiritual things.

The Early Church's View

Luke seemed to hold a high view of women. In his account of the early church in Acts, he indicated the remarkable role that women played in the church. He carefully brings us to an understanding that both men and women were converted.

Women were an important part of the early church. They gathered in the upper room with the others and waited for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. One of the purposes of the Holy Spirit is stated in Acts 1:8. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." After the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the recipient (whether male or female) was expected to be a witness, beginning at Jerusalem and going throughout the world.

In Acts 2 Peter mentioned Joel's prophecy being fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. This prophecy includes, "and your sons and daughters shall prophesy . . . And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17-18).

Several scriptures in Acts show that women energetically participated in the life of the early church.

Paul's View

"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life" (Philippians 4:2-3).

Paul mentioned only three of his co-workers at Philippi by name. Two of these were women. Women played an important role on his leadership team.

"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever

business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also” (Romans 16:1-2).

Apparently Phebe was a servant in the church, working for the Lord. He asked others to “receive her in the Lord.”

Paul listed a total of twenty-seven people in Romans 16. These were his co-workers. Ten of the twenty-seven greeted were women. Paul valued those that worked on his team, both men and women.

Paul was not narrow-minded concerning women filling roles in the church. He concluded, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28.)

Study Questions

1. Who serves in the leadership role of the family? _____

2. According to Matthew Henry, why was the woman taken from Adam’s side? _____

3. Name four characteristics of a virtuous woman mentioned in Proverbs 31.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

4. Adam and Eve (and other couples) should live a life of interdependence. What does this mean? _____

5. Name two types of women in the world.

1) _____

2) _____

6. How was the position of a woman better among the Hebrews than in heathen nations?

7. Comment on the woman's religious role during the time of Christ's birth. _____

8. According to this lesson, what was Athaliah's problem? _____

9. What is the difference between using influence and usurping authority? _____

10. How did Jesus treat women? _____

11. Name some positions that women occupied in the Old Testament. _____

12. How do we know women were important in the early church? _____

13. According to Acts 2:17-18, who can prophesy? _____

14. Paul lists twenty-seven of his coworkers in Romans 16. How many of these were women?

Role of Women in the Church Today

Part Two

“And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly”
(Acts 18:26).

In Acts 18:26 a husband and wife made an excellent ministry team. This couple is mentioned various times in the Epistles. They worked together to bring further truth to a serious seeker. They took him aside and taught (expounded) the truth to him. To “expound” one would have to “teach” or “instruct.” Together they showed Apollos the way of God more perfectly.

One of the seven deacons appointed in Acts was Philip. He had four daughters who prophesied.

“And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy” (Acts 21:8-9).

Women were active in the early church. However, two passages in the New Testament seemingly restrict the role of women in the church. These cause confusion over the woman's role in the church. To gain a better understanding of this, we need to know how to interpret Scriptures.

How to Interpret Scripture

To understand Scriptures we need to look at:

-  The background. What is taking place in this passage? What is the pre-text (comes before)? Post-text? (comes after)? And context (background or setting)?
-  Why was this passage of Scripture written (purpose)? What was happening that caused the need for writing it?

Should a Woman Keep Silent in the Church?

“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church”
(1 Corinthians 14:34-35).

Look at the background of what is being discussed. To simply proclaim that women are to remain silent in the church and not allowed to speak poses a problem, not to mention a misunderstanding.

The same writer wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:5, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven." In this verse Paul permitted women to both pray and prophesy in the church. However, the woman is to respect her head. In God's divine order, the husband is the head of the wife. She is to be submissive to her own husband. (See Colossians 3:18 and Ephesians 5:22.) Scripture does not imply that a woman should be in submission to the entire male population, but to her own head (husband). If the woman is unmarried, she should submit to her father.

Prophecy is one of the most useful and edifying gifts used in a church service. It contains a message originating from God and not from human reasoning or understanding. It is "speaking like God speaks." God speaks to His people through human vessels. Both men and women can prophecy. Words given by the Spirit, through men and women, carry authority. God speaks to us with authority. Women at Corinth operated in this ministry, and Paul approved of it. How can a woman keep silent in the church and still prophecy?

In 1 Corinthians 14:31 Paul wrote, "Ye may all prophecy." He did not say that women could not prophecy.

Verse 34 may also be interpreted by what is written in verse 35. Women should not interrupt the service by asking questions that could be asked at home. Women in this setting were uneducated and had many questions.

Within the marriage relationship, it is not appropriate for a wife to act as the spokesperson for the family when a question arises in the congregation.

God has established a divine order for the family and the church. He compares the relationship of a husband and wife to the church. A woman needs to be in submission to her own husband. This is coming under the protection or umbrella of another. Exactly what does this relationship involve? The answer is found in reading and following Ephesians 5:31-33.

Woman, Learn in Silence

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (1 Timothy 2:11-15).

Women in the ancient world were not encouraged to learn. Paul advised that they should be allowed to learn (in silence). Obviously, before they could ever teach, they had to learn. Until

they learned, they are not in a position to teach. Men could ask questions in public meetings. This liberty was not given to women. They were to learn at home.

Woman, Don't Be Pushy

A woman is not to “usurp authority over the man.” This implies a woman should not be domineering or take authority that has not been designated to her. To “usurp authority over” means, “to be an absolute rule or master.” (*Liddell and Scott Lexicon*) It is “the act of seizing authority illegally or assuming dictatorial rights.” (*Guidepost Family Concordance*) Becoming a dictator in the church is not appropriate for either a woman or man. To “usurp” means to “seize or hold a position or function that rightly belongs to another; to encroach on a right, privilege, or office of another.”

Can a Woman Teach?

If you combine “teach” and “usurp authority,” you have “authoritative teaching.” This type of teaching may not have been compatible with Paul’s understanding of a woman’s role or culturally acceptable. He was not saying the woman could not teach. Later Paul wrote, “The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:3-5).

Paul also identified how Timothy’s mother and grandmother had ministered in his life.

“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also” (2 Timothy 1:5).

Paul showed sensitivity to the culture in which he lived. The authority of a teacher was normally a male role.

A Woman’s Highest Position

A woman’s highest position and true honor comes from the home where she serves as a godly wife and mother. Paul was not trying to demean women who are not married or who could not have children.

A single woman has more time for ministry and doing the Lord’s work. Once married, she looks after her husband and eventually her children. There is a definite shift in priorities as the woman moves from single life, to married life, and finally family life. However, having a husband and being in submission to him can even expand the opportunities for ministry. The woman operates under her husband’s authority and calling. Together they make a team where they complement one another and bring completion to the man’s ministry.

A Church without Women

Where would your church be if there were no women in it? “Today, churches would go to pieces if it were not for the presence, perseverance, and prayers of women. In church attendance women outstrip men.” (*All the Women of the Bible* by Herbert Lockyer)

Study Questions

1. What two passages in the New Testament seem to restrict the role of women in the church?

2. To correctly interpret Scriptures, what needs to be looked at? _____

3. Prove that it is appropriate for a woman to prophesy (under God’s direction) in the church.

4. Should a woman be submissive to her own husband or the entire male population? Explain.

5. What does it mean to “usurp authority”? _____

6. Was Paul saying that a woman could not teach? Explain. _____

7. What would happen if all women were to decide to leave our churches? _____

Celebrating Every Breakthrough

“And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles”
(Acts 14:27).

Bill and Amy Stearns wrote an outstanding book, *Catch the Vision 2000*. In this book they stated, “Something big and challenging is happening in our world. Something so astonishing it should make headlines in every church and Christian home. All around the earth remarkable breakthroughs in reaching every people group with the gospel have occurred.”

God is doing great things. You may ask, “Why haven’t I been hearing about it?”

Bill and Amy Stearns explained, “Little breakthroughs . . . happen so often that Satan and his cronies make heroic attempts to keep believers from knowing about them, because the whole picture would be so encouraging we just might jump in and finish the job. Christians would realize the need to speed up what God is doing—to pull the rug out from under the enemy’s feet. Satan realizes no news is good news—to him.”

“Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered”
(Psalms 40:5).

They explained that the first eleven chapters of the Bible establish the main characters—God, angels, and man. The setting for the drama is the earth and the heavens. There is a conflict between Satan fighting for the kingdom and God redeeming mankind. The entire Bible is a

drama of war between good and evil. The Book of Revelation reveals the final winner. Until that day we need to celebrate every victory and breakthrough.

Studies show ninety-five per cent of problems taking place within organizations are related to communications (or rather the lack thereof). The number one complaint employees have is lack of communication. Poor communication exists despite the modern information technology we presently enjoy. Communication problems also exist in the church. We need to develop a climate of communicating and celebrating every breakthrough experienced.

It is easy to find fault and lament over what is wrong with the church. Anyone can see problems. The church is not perfect, but it is better to look for what is right. Catch people doing the right things and praise them for it. Give them honor and do it publicly. This is a positive motivational tool. Always maintain positive reinforcement for efforts made toward accomplishing the vision.

Once you have determined your vision and your goals, people will start performing according to expectation. Each time something happens in line with the vision and in accordance with the goals—celebrate. Work toward being as positive as possible. We are not part of the “Fellowship of the Miserable” but the “Fellowship of the Redeemed.”

Be specific with the reasons for celebration. “God moved in an awesome way in our service last Sunday night,” is not nearly as inspiring as, “Three people received the baptism of the Holy Ghost last Sunday night, and one lady was healed of cancer.”

Celebrate What You Want to See More Of

Each time someone is baptized in Jesus’ name or filled with the Holy Ghost we need to celebrate. After all, heaven is celebrating, why shouldn’t we? We should never treat souls being added to the kingdom as commonplace.

“Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Luke 15:10 NKJV).

On the national level celebrate every time a new church is planted, a preaching point is established, or the churches grow. Yes you can celebrate when the church enjoys prosperity and financial breakthroughs. (Be careful! Many times we celebrate the financial breakthroughs and forget the spiritual victories.)

If you were to go to a sports game, you would find people celebrating over every goal. Kingdom building is not another game; it is a battle. Jesus Christ is the Captain of our salvation and is the winner. Every time a goal is scored in the kingdom celebrate the victory. Satan will be defeated and left crying. The shout of victory will deafen him.

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Much emphasis is placed on numbers. Thank God for the numbers. Presently, within the United Pentecostal Church we have 3,000,000 constituents overseas; 20,666 pastors minister in 28,416 United Pentecostal churches in more than 142 nations of the world.

Members should always be ready to give “victory reports.” Some churches call these testimonies, faith stories, praise reports, etc. It is when members say, “Hey, look what God has done for me!”

1. These reports should be interesting, grab everyone’s attention, and give the church a reason to celebrate.
2. Limit the number of people giving testimonies.
3. Do not waste time. The church is not interested in a lot of history and details.

4. Take care that people never give glory to Satan, but testify about the wonderful deeds of God.

“Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (Psalms 107:8). These same words are repeated in Psalms 107:15, 21, 31. Do you see the reason for the emphasis? God wants us to celebrate His wonderful works and His goodness to us. Celebrate every little breakthrough. They add up to big wins!

The early church celebrated victories. These celebrations are found on the pages of the Book of Acts. Some would be considered mighty breakthroughs and some little. Combined, they represented the victories of an ever-increasing mighty army of believers that Satan is still reckoning with.

Study Questions

1. God is doing great things. Why do Bill and Amy Stearns think we do not always hear about it? _____

2. Who are the main characters in the Bible (established in the first eleven chapters)? _____

3. What is the number one complaint among employees? _____

4. What type of communication climate do we need to develop? _____

5. What is a positive motivational tool mentioned in this lesson? _____

6. What should we do each time something happens that is in line with our goals and vision? _____

7. What should we celebrate? _____

8. What are victory reports? _____

Praise & Worship

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”
(John 4:24).

“Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD, Praise ye the LORD”
(Psalm 150:6).

Introduction

Many times we talk about praise and worship as the same thing, but this is not correct. I can “praise” many things – my children, my husband, a delicious meal – but I certainly do not “worship” them when I do that. What do these two closely related things mean?

To “Praise” Means to:

- Speak well of
- Express admiration for
- Compliment
- Commend
- Congratulate
- Applaud
- Eulogize (speak highly of)
- Extol (praise enthusiastically)

Praise is a vital part of God’s Word. There are many commandments which encourage our praise of God. The books of Psalms is full of them (Psalm 9:1-2; 18:3; 22:23; 52:9; 108:1, 3; 145). Psalm 107 alone tells us four different times: *“Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men”* (Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31).

“Praise God! . . . even when you don’t understand what He is doing.” – Henry Jacobsen

Praise is used in many ways throughout Scripture. In the article entitled “Praise,” found in the *Full Life Study Bible (KJV)*, we learn more about it:

- *Barak* – is usually translated in the KJV to mean “to bless” God.
- *Halal* – means “praise the Lord,” and this is where we get the universal praise word “Hallelujah.”
- *Yadah* – sometimes translated as “give thanks.”

In the Old Testament, to praise God is a common commandment.

- 📖 Moses commanded the children of Israel to praise God for the Canaan land that He had given them (Deuteronomy 8:10).
- 📖 When Deborah sang a song of victory, there was a commandment included for the people to bless the Lord (Judges 5:9).
- 📖 David praised the Lord in the writings about his life (2 Samuel 22:4, 47, 50; 1 Chronicles 16:4).
- 📖 The prophets urged the children of Israel to praise God (Isaiah 42:10, 12; Jeremiah 20:13; Joel 2:26; Habakkuk 3:3).

In the New Testament, praise gets much special attention:

- 📖 Jesus praised His Father (Matthew 11:25; Luke 10:21).
- 📖 Paul expects all the nations to praise the Lord (Romans 15:9-11; Ephesians 1:3, 6, 12).
- 📖 James tells us we need to praise the Lord (James 3:9; 5:13).
- 📖 John the Revelator writes of wondrous praise around the throne of God (Revelation 4:9-11; 5:8-14; 7:9-12; 11:16-18).

“Worship” Involves More Than “Praise”

“Worship” means to:

- Express reverence
- Have a sense of awe
- Bow low or make obeisance
- Obey

“To worship means to recognize supreme worth.”
– Harold C. Bonell

Worship is the highest form of praise. Praise is only one of many ways we worship God. This brings some questions to mind, namely: How, Where, When, Why, and Who to worship?

How Do We Worship?

John 4:24 says we worship *“in spirit and in truth.”* What is this speaking about? According to *The Full Life Study Bible*, (Donald C. Stamps, General Editor), we learn this:

“In spirit” points to the level at which true worship occurs.

- One must come to God in complete sincerity.
- With a spirit that is directed by the moving of the Holy Ghost.

“Truth” comes from the Greek *“aletheia,”* and is:

- Characteristic of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 15:8).
- Impossible to separate Jesus from “truth” – He was “truth” in the flesh (Ephesians 4:21).
- The spirit that would come and live in them, even the Holy Ghost (John 14:17).
- At the heart of the gospel (Galatians 2:5; Ephesians 1:13).

You cannot really worship unless you are doing so according to the truth and doctrines of the Word of God. What does God say about the way we are to worship? Does it give any guidelines? Of course! As with every other requirement for our salvation and victory, God's Word plainly tells us how true worship should be practiced. This will answer the where, when, and why of worship.

The Practice of Worship

Who do we worship? The English word "worship" comes from an Old English word "worth-ship." Worship is first those actions and attitudes that honor and exalt God for His worthiness as the great Creator of all things, both in heaven and on earth (Exodus 20:3-6). This definition answers the question "why" we worship God also.

We worship God because:

- 📖 He is worthy (Deuteronomy 33:29; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Isaiah 43:10-11; Revelation 4:11).
- 📖 We are called to worship (Exodus 32:11-14; Matthew 4:10).
- 📖 We were created for worship (Colossians 1:16; Ephesians 1:12).
- 📖 We need to worship something worthy (Genesis 32:24-29; John 4:15; Acts 2:4; Mark 10:35-37).

Attitudes of Worship – Worship begins as an attitude. But our attitudes must work in harmony with the Holy Ghost in order to produce true worship. We must be careful to have the following:

- 📖 Brokenness (Psalm 51:17; Jeremiah 23:29; Matthew 21:44)
- 📖 Humility (Luke 7:37-38; James 4:6)
- 📖 Love (Mark 12:30)
- 📖 Reverence (Psalm 89:7)
- 📖 Obedience (1 Samuel 15:22; Genesis 22:5)
- 📖 Boldness (2 Samuel 6:21-22; Mark 8:38)

These attitudes all speak of our relationship with God. It is also important that we have a correct attitude toward:

- 📖 Others – we must make things right before we can truly worship God (Matthew 5:23-24).
- 📖 Ourselves – we must be careful that our worship is not for show (Romans 1:21-25).
- 📖 Our Circumstances – we must be careful to worship God when things are going wrong, because He is still worthy (Revelation 4:11). Job is our example of such a difficult task. He proved that it can be done (Job 1:20-22). We must give thanks no matter what comes our way. Our God is supreme, and He will work all things for our good (1 Thessalonians 5:10; Romans 8:28).

An Overflow – Worship becomes an overflow of those thoughts and emotions. They flow forth spontaneously. They should not have to be pumped up or forced out. Our cup, like David's should *"run over joyfully"* (Psalm 23:5).

The Actions of Worship – Worship finally becomes an outpouring of the soul in deep expressions of reverence, awe, wonder, and adoration.

- 📖 God commanded Abraham to go and worship (Genesis 22:5). This act of worship would cost Abraham his best offering. It was to be a "sacrifice of praise" (Hebrews 13:15).
- 📖 A life of worship demands everything we are and have (Romans 12:1-2). There has to be a complete surrender of self to God in order for us to become true worshippers. Worship touches every area of our lives.

The Truth about Worship – Biblical Principles by Eddie Jones, is a timely tract that gives us some interesting insight into the ways we worship:

Giving – true worship gives glory to God. I do not get anything, because I bless God not to receive a blessing, but to be one (Acts 20:35). What should I give?

- 📖 My substance (Exodus 23:15; Deuteronomy 16:16-17; Malachi 3:8-10; Leviticus 27:30-32; Mark 12:17; 1 Corinthians 9:13-14; Hebrews 7:4-10).
- 📖 My Time (Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 3:15; Isaiah 43:10).
- 📖 My talents (Acts 9:36-39).

Prayer – as worshippers, we need to communicate with God in order to commune with Him (Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18; Acts 4:31).

Praise – When we approach God (Psalm 100:4), and respond to Him (Psalm 103:2), there is always praise (Hebrews 13:15; Psalm 95:1; 149:1-3; Acts 15:14-17; Ephesians 5:18-19; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:19).

Lord's Supper – Communion is a memorial unto the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:26). It is important that we understand the purpose of this memorial service. It is also important that we practice it as we worship the One who made our salvation possible through His shed blood (1 Corinthians 11:28-30).

Foot washing is an act of humility that helps produce a bond of unity in our performance of worship. According to the Bible, this is connected with the Lord's Supper and was instituted by the Lord (John 13:8-15).

When to Worship? The Psalmist David had the right idea when he wrote: *"I will bless the LORD at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth"* (Psalm 34:1). David understood that a heart continually lifted toward God would be careful to avoid sin. All of the different forms of worship can be practiced no matter where we go – they are not just for a church service. However, every one of them should be practiced during a proper "worship" service today. This

is the ideal setting and situation for each one. But do not limit your worship to when you are in church.

Where to Worship?

- 📖 No Scripture commands us to worship God only at church. However, many Scriptures command me to worship (1 Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 29:2; 96:9; Luke 4:8; Matthew 4:10).
- 📖 The only “church” ever commanded to be built by God was the Tabernacle in the wilderness. God gave Moses explicit instructions about its construction, and every aspect of worship there (Exodus chapters 24-27).
- 📖 God’s plan has always been to live in the hearts and lives of His people. When David desired to build a temple for his God, God agreed, and gave him the plans. But the idea did not originate with God (2 Samuel 7).
- 📖 God had another plan. Even with the Tabernacle, God had devised a house that was portable. God planned to make His next home in the hearts of His people. He would live inside of them, talk to them, and change them. They would worship Him everywhere, because He was right there with them (2 Corinthians 6:16).

The Rewards of True Worship

What happens when we are obedient to God’s plan for worship and understand that praise is only a small part of the plan? *The Full Life Study Bible* lists at least twelve of the blessings God has promised when we worship Him:

- 📖 Be in our midst and have close communion with us (Matthew 18:20; Revelation 3:20).
- 📖 Overshadow us with His glory (Exodus 40:35; 2 Chronicles 7:1; 1 Peter 4:14).
- 📖 Bless us with an abundance of blessings, especially peace (Ezra 34:26; Psalm 29:11).
- 📖 Impart to us an abundance of joy (Psalm 122:1; John 15:11).
- 📖 Answer the prayers of those who pray to Him in sincere faith (Mark 11:24; James 5:15).
- 📖 Freshly fill His people with the Holy Ghost and boldness (Acts 4:13).
- 📖 Send manifestations of the Holy Ghost among us (1 Corinthians 12:7-13).
- 📖 Guide us into all truth through the Holy Ghost (John 15:26; 16:13).
- 📖 Sanctify us by His Word and Spirit (John 17:17-19).
- 📖 Comfort, encourage, and edify us (Isaiah 40:1; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- 📖 Convict us of sin, unrighteousness, and judgment by the Holy Ghost (John 16:8).
- 📖 Save sinners who become convicted of sin at a worship service (1 Corinthians 14:22-25).

The Truth about Worship tract gives three more:

Transformation – we will become like Him (Psalm 115:4-8; Romans 1:23-24; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:2; 8:29; Galatians 4:19).

Victory – worship brings victory (Joshua 6:20; 2 Chronicles 20:21; Acts 16:25-26; 1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Heaven – our greatest joy will be to worship Him forever (John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelations 19:6-7; John 4:23). Here I am to worship!

Here I am . . . to worship God!

Study Questions

1. List eight (8) things that “praise” means.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____
8) _____

2. “_____” involves more than “praise.”

3. List four (4) things that “worship” means.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

4. Briefly explain the difference between “praise” and “worship.” _____

5. Define the following terms as referring to worship:
“in spirit” _____

“in truth” _____

6. List four (4) reasons why we worship God. Support each reason with Scripture.
1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

7. Explain the following statement: "All worship begins as an attitude." _____

8. According to the tract "The Truth About Worship" what five ways are we supposed to worship? Briefly explain each.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

9. List the fifteen (15) rewards of true worship given in this lesson. Support each with Scripture reference.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

Claiming the Power through Praise

“...Thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed”
(Acts 16:24-26).

Paul and Silas began to praise God at midnight; the darkest hour of their trial. Praising God when you are in trouble shows more faith than praising God at other times. “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Hebrews 13:15). Sometimes we do not feel like praising God but we should press through to offer Him a sacrifice of praise. It allows God to know that we trust Him to take us through every trial and situation, regardless how impossible the case may seem.

“In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

It is in both the good and bad times that we are reminded, “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7).

I wonder what was going through the minds of Paul and Silas as they sat there chained, in a seemingly hopeless situation. I wonder if they thought of any of the Old Testament Scriptures in order to encourage themselves in the Lord.

- “But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble” (Psalm 37:39).
- “The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him” (Nahum 1:7).
- “Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance” (Psalm 32:7).
- “My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever” (Psalm 73:26).
- “There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways” (Psalm 91:10-11).
- “He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee” (Job 5:19).

- “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me” (Psalm 138:7).
- “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all” (Psalm 34:19).

Job, a perfect and upright man in the Old Testament lost everything he owned including his ten children. However, he knew how to praise the Lord in difficult times. He said, “the LORD gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (Job 1:21). “Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?” (Job 2:10). In the end the Lord rewarded Job with twice as much as he had before (Job 42:10).

We need to be like Job, who said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust him: but I will maintain my own ways before him” (Job 13:15).

We do not worship God because of our trials, but we worship God in spite of them. We do not praise God for our tragedies, but we praise God in them. Like Job, we hear God speak to us out of the storm (Job 38:1).

As we begin to become involved in heart-felt praise and worship, the power and presence of God will come down into any situation. David said the Lord inhabits the praises of His people. As we praise the Lord, He comes down into the midst of His people. He dwells in the midst of praise. Worship also takes us right into the presence of God. It provides a transition from the flesh to the Spirit realm. As we worship, we feel God nearer. The disciples waited for the Holy Ghost outpouring by praising God. Acts 2:11, 47 allows us to know the Church was born in the midst of praise. As we magnify God (“magnify” means to make larger) then we see God becoming greater than our situation.

Praises and worship bring victory. When Joshua and the children of Israel finished marching around the wall of Jericho, the priests blew the trumpets and the people shouted with a great shout. Then, the wall fell down flat (Joshua 6:20). When Paul and Silas were in the prison, they prayed and sang praises to their God at midnight. Suddenly, a great earthquake shook the prison and immediately all the doors were open and everyone was loosed. The key to victory in problems is worship. Praise and worship will shake the foundation of any problem and set you free in liberty.

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17).

Judah (which means “praise”) became the father of a nation that bore his name. From this tribe came King David and Jesus. Jesus is referred to as the “Lion of the Tribe of Judah.” He was born in the midst of praise as the angels praised Him (Luke 2:13). Then the Shepherds praised Him (Luke 2:20). When the Tabernacle was set up in the wilderness, The Tribe of Judah was

placed at the entrance of the Tabernacle. It was placed on the east side facing the rising sun. Although the twelve tribes had access to the outer court--only Praise (Judah) dwelt next door. We must always go through the gate of praise (Psalm 100:4) to get into the presence of God.

Study Questions

1. Provide Scriptures that prove we should continue to praise God even when we don't feel like it. _____

2. Provide Old Testament Scriptures that show God is willing to help us when we are in trouble.

3. Explain Job's attitude toward his trials and problems. _____

4. What happens when we begin to praise and worship our God? _____

5. What is the key to victory? _____

6. Provide Bible examples of things that happened when people praised God. _____

Additional Notes
