

The Essence of Worship



Worship is not singing songs. Nor is it bodily posture such as raising our hands or not, standing or not, laying prone or not; these are simply expressions of our worship rather than worship itself. I am a worship musician and therefore love to play my instrument, the drums, as part of the expression of my worship of God.

Many times I have thought of a quote from the movie Chariots of Fire directed by Hugh Hudson. Eric Liddell the Scottish Olympian and missionary makes this statement...

"I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when I run I feel His pleasure."

This is my experience when I sing before God. I have this experience whether I sing before a congregation of believers who join with me corporately, or simply sit on my bed with guitar in hand expressing my love of the Father in song and basking in His presence. Just as when Eric Liddell ran, "when I sing I feel His pleasure".

Worship is found first and foremost in our relationship with God. This relationship is a daily experience as He walks with us on this journey we call our lives. We would not have had the ability to worship Him in a way that gives the Father pleasure if we had not first become the earthen receptacles of His glory. The Holy Spirit coming to indwell us at the very time of our regeneration (new birth) is the inception and inauguration of that relationship; and it is that relationship that must necessarily spring forth in praise and adoration.

The first time the English word *worship* is found in the Bible is in the following passage, which sets the tone for our understanding of the very nature of the worship of God.

Ge 22:3-5

3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. 4 On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance. 5 Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you."

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The English word *worship* in verse five is from the Hebrew word *shachah* (shaw-khaw'). This word simply means to “bow down” (**to bow down** — to get into a prostrate position, as in submission, homage, humility¹).

Worship then, is not even found in the various actions indicated by the Hebrew word *Shachah*, it is found in an attitude of heart that the patriarch Abraham exhibited. A heart laid down, a heart that was willing to give up everything, even a beloved son for the sake of obedience to the Father. Yes a heart that was willing to give up the very promise of God for God Himself. This is the true essence of worship and it is those that find this that find true peace in their relationship with the Father and the Son whom he sent.

True Worship is the love of God regardless of any personal cost - True Worship is a life lived in surrender to the Father's will for the purpose of His Glory

¹ Rick Brannan, ed., [Lexham Research Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible](#), Lexham Research Lexicons (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020).