

## **Chapter 13**

### ***PRAISE AND WORSHIP 2***

#### *HOW AND WHY WE WORSHIP GOD*

#### *PRACTICAL INSIGHTS INTO PRAISE AND WORSHIP*

#### **I. WHY SHOULD WE PRAISE AND WORSHIP GOD?**

- A. God is seeking true worshipers. Jesus made it clear that God is not looking for people who merely practice religious rituals, but for those whose praise and worship comes from the heart. (John 4:23)
- B. God ordained Praise and Worship as a way to come into His presence. We enter His gates with thanksgiving, then come nearer into His courts with praise, and then come into His Holy presence in Worship. (Psalm 100:4)
- C. God inhabits or is enthroned upon the praises of His people. Our praises create a throne or resting place for the Presence of God. (Psalm 22:3)
- D. Prayer, Praise, and Worship are our altar of incense to God. The lifting up of our hearts, hands, and voices in praise and prayer are as incense to God. (Psalm 141:2)
- E. Unity of Praise and Worship brings the Presence and Power of God. At the dedication of Solomon's temple, the complete unity of the worshipers released a powerful manifestation of God's Presence. (2 Chronicles 5:13; Psalm 133)
- F. Praise and Worship is a way we can glorify or magnify God. When we express praise to God through songs or through testimonies of His greatness, He receives glory and we see Him "High and exalted." (Psalm 50:23; Isaiah 6:1)
- G. Praise and Worship by believers today is a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Isaiah prophesied of a generation of believers who would be characterized by their praise and worship of God. (Isaiah 12:4)
- H. In Worship and Praise we see God's Majesty and Holiness. This leads us to an awareness of our need for repentance and cleansing. Then as He cleanses us, we may be anointed for effective service. We become part of the answer and not just part of the problem. (Isaiah 6:1-8)
- I. We are changed into His image through our Praise and Worship of the Lord. Experience of God's presence in Praise and Worship brings change to the worshipers. We may be humbled, convicted, filled with joy, filled with faith, but always becoming more like Him as we behold Him in Worship. (2 Corinthians 3:18)
- J. We Praise God because it is a good thing to do. Praise for God is a good thing, good for us personally and good for us corporately. Praise for God unifies, gives us perspective,

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releases faith. (Psalm 92:1)

- K. We Praise Him because He is worthy to be praised. Praise helps us realize that God is unchangingly worthy and unchangingly faithful even though our lives and our emotions are full of ups and downs. We learn the importance of doing right things even when we don't feel like doing them. (Psalm 18:3)
- L. We Praise God because a sacrifice of praise is pleasing to Him. God has done so much for us that it is normal and right for us to desire to do that which pleases Him. He is blessed by our sincere praise. (Hebrews 13:15-16)

### II. HOW SHOULD WE PRAISE AND WORSHIP GOD?

- A. **In spirit and in truth.** Our praise and worship should be motivated by spirit and not just a religious exercise. Our praise and worship should be in accordance with scriptural principles (truth). (John 4:23-24)
- B. **With our whole heart.** Our praise and worship should come from our heart, motivated by love for God and a desire to please Him. When our praise becomes routine or comes from a sense of obligation, both we and God miss the blessing. (Psalm 111:1)
- C. **With our mouths:** singing, shouting, and telling of His works and His goodness. Praise and worship must find expression. Until we express it, it is just a thought or feeling. (Psalm 9:1; Psalm 47:1; Psalm 95:1)
- D. **With our hands:** clapping, and raising them to the Lord. The Psalms are full of examples and exhortations to express praise through clapping or raising of our hands. Clapping can signify joy or admiration while raising our hands signifies adoration or surrender. (Psalm 47:1; Psalm 63:4; Psalm 134:2)
- E. **By standing in honor of His Presence.** The greatest expression of admiration for a person is a "standing ovation." Standing in God's presence shows admiration, respect, and reverence for God. (Psalm 134:1)
- F. **By bowing before the Lord.** The act of bowing, either by kneeling, by bowing from the waist, or even by prostrating oneself is an expression of humbling oneself before another. Bowing in prayer or in worship shows reverence for God and expresses our humility before Him. (Psalm 95:6)
- G. **By dancing before the Lord.** Dancing is both a means of enjoyment and an expression of joy. Dancing as an act of praise and worship both expresses joy and releases joy. (Psalm 149:3; Psalm 150:4)
- H. **With all kinds of musical instruments.** David's pattern for worship at the Tabernacle and Solomon's worship at the Temple used choirs, orchestras, and all kinds of musical instruments. We can find much greater freedom of expression for praise and worship when we skillfully use a variety of instruments. (Psalm 150:3)

III. PRACTICAL INSIGHTS ABOUT PRAISE AND WORSHIP

- A. Praise and Worship is a key to entering into and experiencing the Presence of God, both individually and corporately. When we Praise and Worship God with our whole hearts we are entering the gates of His holy temple and coming into the inner courts of His presence. According to Psalm 22:3, our praises create a dwelling place for the Lord in our midst. (Psalm 22:3; Psalm 100:4)
- B. It is important that we distinguish between true Praise and Worship (which focuses on the Lord and is intended for His enjoyment) and inspirational singing (which focuses on us and is intended to bless or entertain us). To understand this, we need to consider the difference between the soul (self-conscious) and spirit (God-conscious). (Luke 1:46-47)
- C. Thanksgiving, Praise, and Worship are all related in our communication and communion with God. There is a flow that generally progresses from thanksgiving through praise into worship. This is not to be taken as an inflexible rule but as a normal guideline. We must be sensitive to scriptural principles in praise and worship and also sensitive to the flow...the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- D. Unity is a vital aspect of Praise and Worship. Psalm 133 speaks of the blessing and anointing that is released through unity. 2 Chronicles 5:13 tells us of the Glory of God that was released in Solomon's temple when there was complete unity of Praise and Worship. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost described in Acts 2 took place in an atmosphere of unity and accord.
- E. It is important when the Glory and Presence of God begins to be manifested in times of worship (when we experience the anointing), that we learn to "hold steady" under the anointing. Each person must discipline himself or herself not to respond to the Presence of God in such a way as to distract attention from the Lord or to disrupt the flow. "Holding steady under the anointing" is a quality that is learned through discipline and maturity. Many times a greater experience of God's presence or a deeper manifestation of the Holy Spirit and His gifts is missed because people haven't learned to "hold steady." Remember that in the account of Jesus' Baptism, the Holy Spirit is pictured as a gentle dove which rested upon the Lamb of God.
- F. The atmosphere created by Praise and Worship often encourages and releases manifestations of the Gifts of the Spirit such as Prophecy, or Tongues, or some other spiritual manifestation. When these manifestations occur, we need to be sure that they are done "*decently and in order*." The leadership of the meeting or group should maintain control of the service while the Gifts are manifested. The Worship Leader may want to turn over the microphone to the pastor or an elder at this point. If there are many visitors present, it can be especially helpful to give some explanation of what is happening, and lead the congregation in an appropriate response to what has been said.
- G. In Praise and Worship, the musicians and the instruments should support and enhance the vocal expression of worship and should not dominate. Beware of musicians who want to "show off" or take over and control the worship musically. Strong, clear leadership of

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Praise and Worship is very important. Musicians must be willing to flow with and respond to that leadership.

- H. There is room for a cultural and even a generational expression of Praise and Worship. There is not necessarily one proper style or form or method of praising and worshipping God. Each culture has its musical distinctives and each generation has its musical expressions. Perhaps the “right” style of worship music and praise song is the style that most accurately expresses the heart of the worshipers. The Bible speaks of worshipping in Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs. We should look for trends and flows in worship music and style, but beware of fads. Remember that Praise and Worship is intended to bless the Lord and bring Glory to His name, not to entertain us.
- I. Concerning styles of music: The music that is used for outreach and evangelism and music that is used to inspire and entertain believers is not necessarily the same as the music that enhances and expresses Praise and Worship to God. We need to develop a sensitivity to what is being expressed and accomplished through a particular musical style and expression.
- J. There is a growing understanding of a role for Praise and Worship in Spiritual Warfare. Some Old Testament examples of this are the conquest of Jericho (Joshua 6:1-16) and Jehoshaphat's victory over the Moabites and Ammonites (2 Chronicles 20:1-30).

### **QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION**

- Chapter 13    Praise and Worship 2 - How and Why We Worship God, Practical Insights into Praise and Worship
- 1. After looking at the list of reasons “Why we Praise and Worship God,” what do you think is the most important reason? Is this something you feel is important for you personally or should it be most important to all Christians?
  - 2. Is it easier for you to worship God on your own or with a group of Christians in a meeting? What are some of the things you find especially helpful in worship? What are some of the things that you find to be a hindrance?