

# Reexamining Biblical Worship

Kenneth O. Gangel

*Bibliotheca Sacra* 142:566 (Apr 85)

[Kenneth O. Gangel, Chairman and Professor of Christian Education, Dallas Theological Seminary]

Worship in evangelical churches today is too often a congregational adaptation of good old American pragmatism—people do what they like and they like what they do. Worship experience has become a means to an end as hymns, Scripture reading, and Prayer serve as “preliminary activities” leading up to the focal point of worship, the preaching of God’s Word. Without diminishing the importance of exposition, it is possible that one man’s comments about the Bible may be no more important than the worship pattern, no more truth-serving than singing God’s Word or listening to it read in its purest, uninterrupted form.

Biblical worship is often corrupted by boredom, lack of purpose, and nonparticipational behavior which leads the congregation to go through the motions without genuine heart involvement. The opposite extreme offers little more than secular entertainment with a religious veneer, a packaged plastic program so perfect and professional that even the most sincere worshiper can scarcely break through its shrink-wrapped design to get his hands on true worship.

## What Is Worship?

Webber defines worship as “a meeting between God and His people” and calls for renewal of worship based on the Scriptures and the history of the church.<sup>1</sup> He suggests that evangelicals actually suffer from an illness of which the faflur-e to worship is a [*BSac* 142:566 (Apr 85) p. 165] symptom. He wams that “the remedy consists of repentance, a *metanoia*, a turning away from all shallow and uninformed approaches to worship.”<sup>2</sup>

Many people think the Gospel of John focuses on evangelism, the message that “whosoever will may come.” But in his presentation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, John is concerned that people recognize His deity and bow before Him in worship. A blind beggar came to faith in the Savior after his sightless eyes saw light for the first time. Within hours he fell before the One Who created sight and he worshiped Him” (9:38).

In the Lord’s encounter with the woman of Samaria (John 4) John mentioned “worship,” “worshiped,” or “worshippers” 10 times (out of its 13

occurrences in his Gospel). The 10 usages appear within five verses (4:20–24), dramatically demonstrating the difference between religion and Christianity. The Samaritan woman was deeply religious and knew precisely the appropriate place of worship which in her view was Mount Gerizim. The Lord Jesus shoved aside the discussion of both place and time. Religion may emphasize man's struggle to find God but the message of John's Gospel identifies how God has revealed Himself to man. It is not a matter of worshipers seeking for a hidden God but of a self-revealed God actively seeking the right kind of worshiper.

God is Spirit and His worshipers must worship Him "in spirit and truth" (John 4:23). The word "spirit" refers not to the Holy Spirit but to the spirit of the worshiper. One's posture in worship (kneeling, standing, bowing) is not the important thing. God is concerned with attitude before act; and wrong attitudes produce wrong acts.

To worship "in truth" means to be concerned for honesty before God and man. It also suggests that believers be biblical in their worship.

Small wonder that Paul affirmed, "God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil 2:9–11). To the confused woman by the well the Lord offered the only voluntary declaration of messiahship in the entire New Testament—"I who speak to you am He" (John 4:26).

What then is worship? Worship is *affirmation*. In worship a believer acknowledges that God's revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ demands response. The self-revealed God awaits the [\[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 166\]](#) reaction of His creation and that response is a duty for God's redeemed people, not some kind of emotion that sweeps over them in a certain hour on a certain day. In true worship believers affirm that they are His people and that He is their God. Worship looks above.

Worship is also *conservation*. The corporate worship of the people of God preserves and transmits the faith. They identify themselves with the people of God of all times and places. The Word and the words used to communicate the faith are a foundation to conserving and transmitting God's truth.

Worship is also *edification*. The worshiper gains increasing understanding of God's person and truth because proper worship teaches theology. In this sense biblical worship serves both the vertical and horizontal dimensions, though the latter should not be placed ahead of or even on a level with the former.

Worship is *celebration*. Believers celebrate their union with the Creator of the universe and with the Father of His people. They celebrate His marvelous

works. They celebrate the birth, life, death, resurrection, and coming reign of the victorious Savior. And they invite others to join them in their homage.

All people that on earth do dwell  
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;  
Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell,  
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

For why? The Lord our God is good,  
His mercy is forever sure;  
His truth at all times firmly stood,  
And shall from age to age endure.  
William Kethe, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell"

## **Worship as Celebration**

Celebration and joy are appropriate faith responses to God's work in His world. In ancient times Israel's leaders called the people to a festal mentality at times of worship. "Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, 'This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep.' For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law. Nehemiah said, 'Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength'" (Neh 8:9–10, NIV).

[[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 167](#)]

How much more do New Covenant believers have reason to respond to God's grace as they are "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph 5:19). They rejoice in God's people as well as in God Himself, for their life together in the community of believers is cause for celebration. Not only this, but they also rejoice in their expectation of the Lord's return and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. True worship concentrates all one's physical, emotional, and spiritual faculties on a corporate self-giving to God in response to His love and in praise of His glory.

Often in the history of doctrine, worship has been viewed as the process of trying to give something to Someone who has everything. Thomas Aquinas, for example, concluded that worship is not for God's sake at all but for the sake of believers. Calvin responded that proper adoration of God is the prime purpose of Christianity.<sup>3</sup>

So dominant is the reality of grace, however, that believers find it extremely difficult to separate what God is from what God does. The question becomes, what can one give to Someone who gives everything? God's gifts provide an occasion to celebrate the Giver, and worship stimulates spiritual reaction. As Langdon Gilkey put it, "Worship is a response to the presence of God, our reaction to the appearance of the holy."<sup>4</sup>

When worship takes the form of response to a giving God it honors grace by affirming that the heavenly Father has taken the initiative. The ultimate gift, of course, was the Cross. One's response to Calvary adorns the worship of the New Testament, causing it to stand in contrast to the cultic worship of first-century Mediterranean paganism. Christian worship was "decultified." Rather than secret rights practiced in darkened, scented cathedrals, worship is a normal, natural, and lifelike part of everyday behavior.

At certain times during the week Christians gather for collective praise. As Flynn put it in a book title, "Together we celebrate."<sup>5</sup> This corporate response of celebration does three things for the church:

1. It acknowledges God's supremacy by affirming who He is and what He has done. It agrees with God, honors Him, and says yes to His Word.
2. It rehearses God's goodness by affiliating with His great plan for the world in natural, personal, and special revelation (Ps 100).

[[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 168](#)]

3. It proclaims God's truth by accenting that His message is more than just "gospel"; it is the total scope of truth which always has its source in God (Ps 93).

Clement of Alexandria described worship as celebration: "all our life is a festival: being persuaded that God is everywhere present on all sides, we praise Him as we till the ground, we sing hymns as we sow the seed, we feel His inspiration in all we do."

I sing th'almighty pow'r of God  
That made the mountains rise,  
That spread the flowing seas abroad  
And built the lofty skies.  
I sing the wisdom that ordained  
The sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at His command  
And all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord  
That filled the earth with food;  
He formed the creatures with His word  
And then pronounced them good.  
Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed  
Where e'er I turn my eye,  
If I survey the ground I tread  
Or gaze upon the sky!

There's not a plant or flow'r below  
But makes Thy glories known;  
And clouds arise and tempests blow  
By order from Thy throne;  
While all that borrows life from Thee  
Is ever in Thy care,  
And everywhere that man can be,  
Thou, God, art present there.  
Isaac Watts, "I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

## Practicing God's Presence

"There is no life," wrote T. S. Eliot in his poem "The Rock," "that is not in community, and no community not lived in praise of God." In ancient Israel the act of assembling focused on collectivity, the people of God in congregation. To be sure, there was a focus on place (tabernacle or temple). Sacred shrines and pious personnel are not essential ingredients of biblical worship, but the gathering of God's people, congregated in His presence, began at Mount Sinai where the assembling involved the actual formulation of a nation (Deut 9:10, 14).

[[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 169](#)]

Many New Testament words express the act of gathering and reflect the sense of community so strategic in Paul's teachings. But none is more descriptive than the familiar word ἐκκλησία. Used more than 100 times by New Testament writers, it speaks of people who are gathered out of the world.

Modern-day individualism has diminished and diluted the communal emphasis in Scripture. Piety has become compartmentalized, relegated to a private personal pocket of life. The result is a religious consumerism which describes worship as "attending the church of your choice." Western culture

drowns in humanistic religion with its focus on “getting something out of the service.”

Biblical worship, on the other hand, sees the Shepherd gathering the sheep, the Father gathering the children. The relational unity which God’s people have with Him is, by its very strength, an antidote to individual loneliness (Ps 106:47; Isa 11:12; John 11:52; Eph 1:7–10).

When Christians gather for worship they practice God’s presence by affirming His plan in their lives and in the entire world (Col 1:15–20). People gather in groups for all kinds of reasons—fellowship, hospitality, fun, and even mutual service—but none other than worship exalts the glory of the Triune God.

Many Christians have come to think of “orthodoxy” as correct doctrine when, as a matter of fact, a more specific use of the word would be “right worship.” As the disciples gathered with Jesus in informal ways and places, they certainly were taught correct doctrine. But their communion with the Master stressed a relationship they were to cultivate rather than merely a volume of truth they were to learn. It is probably not incorrect to say that worship is “theantric,” or in other words, man and God coming together in a unique relationship designed and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

Practicing God’s presence emphasizes the spirit of worship, not its forms. The church is an inn, not a fort. The gathered body is itself, even apart from its teaching and preaching, an act of evangelism, a symbol, a demonstration to an unbelieving world that the good news has been communicated and has been received (Acts 2:42–47).

We gather together to ask the Lord’s blessing;  
He chastens and hastens His will to make known;  
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing,  
Sing praises to His name: He forgets not His own.  
Netherlands folk hymn, “We Gather Together”

[\[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 170\]](#)

## **How Important Is the Day?**

Ignatius of Antioch, heir to the apostolic traditions, wrote, “Those who had walked in ancient practices attained unto newness of hope, no longer observing Sabbaths but fashioning their lives after the Lord’s day, on which our life also arose through Him.”

Yet the Sabbath is grounded deeply in Old Testament history. Rooted in creation, its observance hallowed time (Gen 2:2–3). Rooted in the Mosaic Covenant, its honor served as a reminder of God’s creative work (Exod

20:8–11), a reminder of the Exodus (Deut 5:12–15), and as a sign between Israel and God (Exod 31:13, 17). The Sabbath was to be hallowed by Israel (Lev 23:3; Isa 58:13–14).

But the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Jesus often ministered on that great day, much to the horror of the Pharisees (Mark 2:27–28; John 5:17). That the early Christians were Jews makes their transition all the more remarkable. Keeping one day out of seven, they changed the emphasis from the seventh to the first day (John 20:1, 19, 26; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2). By the end of the first century the first day had become known as “the Lord’s day” (Rev 1:10). The Resurrection had brought assembly and rest under its first-day authority.

Justin Martyr who lived and wrote approximately A.D. 100-165, had opportunity to note how several generations of Christians understood the observance of Sunday. He concluded, “We all hold this common gathering on Sunday, since it is the first day, on which God transforming darkness and matter made the universe, and Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead on the same day.”<sup>6</sup>

First-day worship has always been characterized by newness, freedom, joy, and the recognition of the day as one of God’s great gifts. How tragic that through the years Christians have freighted it with the baggage of duty, guilt, and sadness.

Christians hold a sacred vow of the past with its glorious reminders of Creation, Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Believers treasure the precious hours of the present governed by the living Lord and indwelt by His vibrant Spirit. But essentially they are future-oriented since the first day looks at what is ahead as surely as the last day looked at what was behind.

The New Testament teaching regarding the church repeatedly affirms its function as a body and as a family. The images affirm the [\[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 171\]](#) need for assembling together, for neither bodies nor families can work in a disoriented form. The church thrives, therefore, when it is together, always in spirit, often in literal physical form. The day of gathering is a reminder of the believers: interdependence. In the late 20th century the Lord’s followers need to heed again the words of the Apostle Peter: “The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another.... Be hospitable to one another without complaint. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things

God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (1 Pet 4:7-11).

O day of rest and gladness,  
O day of joy and light,  
O balm of care and sadness,  
Most beautiful, most bright;  
On these the high and lowly,  
Through ages joined in tune,  
Sing “Holy, holy, holy,”  
To the great God triune.

Today on weary nations  
The heav’nly manna falls;  
To holy convocations  
The silver trumpet calls,  
Where gospel light is glowing  
With pure and radiant beams,  
And living water flowing  
With soul refreshing streams.

New graces ever gaining  
From this our day of rest,  
We reach the rest remaining  
To spirits of the blest;  
To Holy Ghost be praises,  
To Father and to Son;  
The Church her voice upraises  
To Thee, blest, Three in One.  
Christopher Wordsworth, “O Day of Rest and Gladness”

## **In Remembrance of Me**

In the Passover feast, devout Jews remind themselves of who they are and whose they are. And though the Lord’s Supper is no [\[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 172\]](#) more a Christian Passover than Sunday is a Christian Sabbath, the worship life of the church is bound up with eating and drinking. Indeed, spiritual hunger and thirst rest at the foundation of the life in Christ (Ps 23:5). Meals are shared both in family and church. Animals grab a morsel and slink off to chew it alone. Believers fellowship together at food, both physical and spiritual. The

English word “Lord” comes from the Old English words for “loaf” (*hlāf*) and “keeper” (*weard*);<sup>7</sup> He is the “Keeper of the bread,” the One to whom believers look to be fed. Promises of future gatherings for feasting abound in New Testament teaching (Matt 8:11; Rev 19:9).

New Testament believers ate together with regularity, sharing their homes with one another. But one meal stands out in the New Testament as “the Lord’s Supper”—the communion of modern Christian worship (1 Cor 11:23–25). How much like the early church do Christians today celebrate this ordinance? Why does the New Testament describe so little form leading to such wide divergence of practice among God’s people? When and how did the love feast and the Lord’s Supper become divided? Did the early believers observe a fellowship feast as part of their worship?

Communion is the *Lord’s* Supper. The focus is on Him and therefore celebration and affirmation become proclamation (1 Cor 11:26). Any hint of duty or requirement rather than joy and freedom detracts from the reality of the worship experience.

The New Testament suggests that this meal sanctifies all others. Every communion meal offers an occasion for worship, an acknowledgment that believers are guests in God’s world and that He is the host. All worship gatherings of believers do not observe ordinances, nor are all the gatherings the sharing of a bounteous physical feast. But in reality, all such gatherings recognize hunger and thirst, a desire to come to the table of the Lord and be refreshed from His hand with song, prayer, Scripture, and other elements of the worship “meal.”

As a fellowship feast the Lord’s Supper emphasizes what the Lord’s people have in common (“communion”). The elements may be distributed in varying forms, but the emphasis on one loaf, one cup, and eating in unison focuses the celebration of the whole church without regard to denominational or even congregational boundaries. Deep historical significance underlies the celebration of the communion. It is a traditional thanksgiving to God, a form of prayer. The remembrance brings the reality of the Cross down to one’s daily existence; believers’ partaking of the elements of [[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 173](#)] worship acknowledges a giving of themselves to God in response to what He gave and continues to give.

Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;  
Here would I touch and handle things unseen,  
Here grasp with firmer hand th’eternal grace,  
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

This is the hour of banquet and of song,  
This is the heavenly table spread for me,  
Here, let me feast and feasting still prolong  
The brief bright hour of fellowship with Thee.

Feast after feast thus comes and passes by,  
Yet passing points to the glad feast above,  
Giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy  
The Lamb's great bridal feast of bliss and love.  
Horatius Bonar, "Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face"

## Worship as Service

The Germans say it well with their word *Gottesdienst*, commonly used for worship but literally meaning "service of God." Central to a New Testament understanding of service is the word *διακονέω*, from which comes the English word "deacon." It denotes more an act of service than the state of servitude (Luke 22:27; 1 Pet 1:12; Heb 6:10). Common acts of self-abasement are translated in New Testament theology to acts of service for each other. As Jesus put it to the disciples on the night of His crucifixion, the true guest takes the role of a waiter (Luke 22:24–27).

In a world of pagan religions full of temples and shrines Paul told Christians that they are God's building (1 Cor 3:9). Christian service purposes to build up the building and thereby build up the body and family. Is it fair to say that Paul does not emphasize worship as service to God, service to self, or service to a neighbor, but rather service to the entire body of Christ? Perhaps the unity of ministry cannot be so divided.

Worship as service describes people allowing God to work through them in order to create a spiritual community. Worship as service involves the understanding and application of spiritual gifts and their role in the body of Christ (Rom 12:6–8). The unity, diversity, and mutuality of the church abound when worshipers serve and servants worship. The worship affirmation in Romans 11:33–36 is followed by the appeal in 12:1 for "reasonable service" or "logical liturgy" ("spiritual worship"). The apostle then describes the unity of Christ's body ("each member belongs to all the others," [BSac 142:566 (Apr 85) p. 174] 12:5, NIV), details some of the spiritual gifts which carry out this worship-service, and discusses the whole lifestyle of the church active in worship and service.

The practical application of all this activates the involvement of the entire congregation in worship. Was Paul scolding the Corinthians when he said, "When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a

tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification” (1 Cor 14:26)? Or did he simply suggest that this kind of mutual sharing had taken on a dimension of disorder at Corinth and needed to be brought back into proper perspective and practice? The diversity of participation in New Testament worship can be easily defended. Worship was not one actor being watched by a multitude of spectators. Focus was not fixed; leadership was not single.

Holy God, we praise Thy name;  
Lord of all, we bow before thee;  
All on earth Thy scepter claim,  
All in heav'n above adore Thee.  
Infinite Thy vast domain,  
Everlasting is Thy reign.

Lo! the apostolic train  
Join Thy sacred name to hallow;  
Prophets swell the glad refrain,  
And the white-robed martyrs follow;  
And from morn to set of sun,  
Through the Church the song goes on.

Holy Father, Holy Son,  
Holy Spirit, Three we name Thee;  
While in essence only One,  
Undivided God we claim Thee,  
And adoring bend the knee,  
While we sing our praise to Thee.  
Attributed to Ignace Franz, “Holy God, We Praise Thy Name”

## Marks of True **Worship**

True worship must be offered to God alone in deep appreciation of His majesty and rulership in the world and in believers' lives. The worshiper engages God on a spiritual rather than physical level and the worship experience, private or public, must be *dominated by God's spirit*.

An attitude of settled dependence on the Holy Spirit leads to cleansing, readiness, and a cultivation of the proper mind and [\[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 175\]](#) heart attitude for worship. Worship becomes then a *total response* in which spiritual, emotional, and physical factors tune together to draw attention to the heavenly Father.

The biblical worshiper sees himself as Paul described him in Ephesians 1, the recipient of a vast undeserved bounty of spiritual riches provided entirely by the grace of God. He worships *in the truth* regarding the Triune Godhead and particularly Jesus Christ the atoning Son. The preaching of the Word of God does not conflict with the solitude of quiet meditation for both have their distinctive roles in the total worship experience. As God's people worship they focus their attention on the worthiness (worth-ship) of God. Consequently song and other forms of praise flow almost spontaneously from God's adoring, joyful people.

Certainly one of the marks of true worship is *confession of sin*. In the Old Testament the priests washed their hands before entering the tabernacle; an emphasis on cleansing dominates the Old and New Testaments alike. Too often the freedom of many churches generates a happy fellowship which makes the worship room sound like a busy airport before services are officially begun. Can they not learn to use the prelude time for personal preparation for true worship? Corporate worship particularly is an activity of the gathered body taught in the church during its formal meetings.

May the Lord give believers the wisdom and courage to purge themselves of clock-watching, spectatorism, cheap shoddiness, and self-centered emotionalism as they carry out their attempts at worship in harmony with the New Testament.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;  
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above  
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small,  
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all.  
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,  
And wither and perish—but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,  
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;  
All praise we would render; O help us to see

'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!  
Walter C. Smith, "Immortal, Invisible"

[BSac 142:566 (Apr 85) p. 176]

## Designing Creative Worship Experiences

Perhaps creative worship will take a nudge toward progress if Christians begin to realize that worship does not consist merely of Bible study or any other single activity. Certainly *prayer* will be involved, as will *praise*; but a third word beginning with that letter clamors for more attention—*participation*.

The involvement of the people of God in the worship of God when they come to the house of God is a primary maxim on which all other plans for creative worship must rest. Too much time may be spent in the preparation of the sermon and too little time in preparation of the rest of worship. Some pastors want to rush through all the "preliminaries" to get to the "really important" aspect of the service, the preaching.

Innovations in worship must be carefully planned and the very element of variety itself can be a mark of creativity in worship. At the little church this writer serves, no two Sunday services are exactly alike. The order of service changes, people who are involved in participation and what they do in the service often changes, and the congregation has learned to expect a different approach to worship each time they meet.

Of course change simply for the sake of change is not desirable. The concern expressed here is for an upgrading of the quality of worship experience in the church. Here are a few specific examples of the kinds of things that can be done to bring about creative change in corporate worship. They might not work for all churches.

1. Read the Scriptures in unison or antiphonally, or perhaps from various versions so that people who have brought the King James Version all stand and read a portion of the text of the week, people who have the NASB do likewise, the NIV the same, and so forth.

2. At different points in the service introduce helpful liturgical items such as leader-people response, original liturgies written by creative people in the church, and participational response of various kinds.

3. Introduce creedal recitation, on occasion using the Apostle's Creed or perhaps even the Nicene Creed.

4. The sermon could be delivered in sections divided by its major points and punctuated by hymns, other music, or congregational responses of various kinds.

[BSac 142:566 (Apr 85) p. 177]

5. A sermon reaction panel consisting of elders, young couples, or teenagers can interact with the pastor for 5 or 10 minutes after the sermon.

6. If the church is not too large, a roving microphone can be handled by one of the ushers as people are allowed to ask questions about the sermon.

7. On occasion the familiar prelude and postlude can be replaced with meditative silence.

8. Vary the Scriptures and comments used in the communion service. First Corinthians 11 is fine but it is not necessarily the only passage in the Bible which speaks of communion in the Lord's Supper.

9. Use the bulletin creatively to include sermon outlines, interpretive verses, different names for the activities of worship, and for the printing of congregational response in whatever form it is used.

10. Take time to teach people how to worship. Explain the different things being done and why they are done. Worship must become meaningful.

All this, of course, must begin on an individual basis. People bring to corporate worship the attitudes and readiness (or lack of it) which set the standard not only for what they give and receive in a public service but how they influence family members and friends over a long period of time. May God's people never forget that the focus of worship is not themselves but their heavenly Father and His glorious Son, the Savior.

Thine is the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son;  
Endless is the vict'ry Thou o'er death hast won.  
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,  
Kept the folded graveclothes where Thy body lay.

Lo! Jesus meets us, risen, from the tomb;  
Lovingly He greets us, scatters fear and gloom;  
Let His church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,  
For her Lord now liveth; death hath lost its sting.

No more we doubt Thee, glorious Prince of Life!  
Life is naught without Thee; aid us in our strife;  
Make us more than conqu'rors, through Thy deathless love;  
Bring us safe through Jordan to Thy home above.  
Edmund L. Budry, "Thine Is the Glory, Risen, Conquering Son"

1 Robert Webber, *Worship—Old and New* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), p. 11.

2 Ibid., p. 20.

3 Cited by James F. White, “Where the Reformation Was Wrong on Worship,” *The Christian Century*, October 27, 1982, p. 1077.

4 Langdon Gilkey, *How the Church Can Minister to the World without Losing Itself* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964), p. 108.

5 Leslie B. Flynn, *Worship: Together We Celebrate* (Wheaton, IL: SP Publications, Victor Books, 1983).

6 Justin Martyr, “The First Apology of Justin the Martyr,” *Early Christian Fathers*, ed. Cyril Richardson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), p. 287.

7 Wilfred Funk, *Word Origins and Their Romantic Stories* (New York: Bell Publishing Co., 1960), p. 257.

[\[BSac 142:566 \(Apr 85\) p. 179\]](#)

Lecture 20: Biblical Worship. Course: Spiritual Life of the Leader. Lecture 20: Biblical Worship. The Church needs you to present what Scripture says, not your own ideas. Worship means to kneel before someone out of respect or honor. We owe it to God as an act of service to sit at his feet and worship him. Spiritual worship is to place our physical bodies at God's disposal. Are we leading people to worship God, or just providing religious goods and services to them? Solid biblical teaching is important. Biblical Worship Response with action Every action should be a response of worship to the Lord Response with affection the internal response of our spirit to what we know Worship? Latreuo OT replace Proskuneo as "æserve" Rom. 1:9 Rom. 12:1 Phil. 3:3 NT Shachah 2 Chron. 20:18 Neh. Worship means different things to different people. From Catholicism to Protestantism, all denominations define worship in terms of their traditional thinking and cultural conditioning. For some it is nothing more than a pitiful excuse for a pathetic display of painstaking spirituality. For others it is a means of attaining eccentric esoteric experiences " a spiritual state supposedly superior to others. Some Definitions. Biblical worship engages us in many dimensions. It is our heart, our soul, our mind, and our body"united in the process of offering up worship to God. Yes, worship is the singing of a song to the Lord with our mouth. To worship biblically our worship must be directed toward and focused on God, focused on the Gospel, done in spirit and in truth, and offered in response to God's great worth and with our entire being.