

# **Praise & Worship and Giving**

## Class Outline

### I. What is Praise and Worship?

- A. Praise and worship is an expression of our devotion to God
- B. Praise and worship embraces all people everywhere
- C. Praise and worship is initiated by God revealing Himself
- D. What does worship accomplish?
  - 1. Worship brings change and sets people free (1 John 1:5, John 4:23-24)
  - 2. Worship changes the atmosphere (2 Chronicles 5:13-14, Revelation 4:11)
  - 3. Worship softens the heart

### II. Ok, I Get the Importance Of Praise And Worship... Now What?

- A. Worship is not a passive thing
- B. God calls us all to worship (Psalm 100:4)

### III. One More Question... Why Is Everyone Lifting Their Hands?

- A. There are several postures that the Bible talks about when worshipping
- B. God designed worship to be expressive

### IV. What's a Tithe?

- A. "Tithe" means one tenth of 100 percent

B. Tithing is an act of honoring God and His Word (Deuteronomy 14:23)

C. Tithing is an avenue God uses to bless us (Malachi 3:10)

D. The tithe supports the local church, missions, and other ministries

### V. Isn't an Offering the Same As A Tithe?

- A. The tithe belongs to God (Leviticus 27:30)
- B. Offerings are given from the 90 percent that is not part of the tithe
- C. "Offering" means to draw near
- D. Offerings can be designated to go to a specific area

### VI. How Do I Give?

- A. Give your best (Mark 12:41-44)
- B. Give for the right reason
  - 1. Give cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7)
  - 2. Give eagerly (2 Corinthians 8:12)
  - 3. Don't give under pressure or guilt
  - 4. Give out of a heart of love (John 3:16)

### VII. Be a faithful giver (Luke 16:10-12, 2 Corinthians 9:6, 11)

### VIII. Is It All About Money?

- A. Giving can take on multiple forms
- B. You can give of your time, talents, or love!
- C. Each of us plays an important part – and we're each needed for the church to function properly (1 Corinthians 12:4-10)

## What is “Praise and Worship”?

Praise and worship (sometimes just referred to as worship) is an expression of our devotion to God. We all have a desire to love and to be loved. Whether you’ve been a follower of Christ for years or are just beginning, you have the urge to respond to God and everything that He has done for you.

Think about this, God gave a command to Pharaoh to let His people go so they could worship Him; and Pharaoh did! That’s how important God finds the act of praise and worship in the Christian life.

Praise and worship by the Israelites, a people group God had set aside for worship years before us, was an expression of what they knew about God, and their thanksgiving flowed out of it. The more we become aware of who God is, the more we want to worship Him. The music of worship is inclusive, not exclusive, and it embraces all people and all ages. It allows everyone to come as they are!

Praise and worship is initiated by God revealing Himself. As we worship in response to what we know, the door is also opened to know Him more.

There is a song lyric that says: “The more I seek You, the more I know You; the more I know You, the more I love You.” This is so very true! Darlene Zschech, a worship pastor, puts it this way: “As we express our adoration, the reality of His presence is breathtaking.” (*Darlene Zschech, The Kiss of Heaven*)

## What Does Worship Accomplish?

There are some very specific things that our praise and worship accomplish. Let’s take a look at some.

### **Worship brings change and sets people free**

1 John 1:5 says: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.” Where His presence is then any evil presence must flee!!

We would be taken aback if we had a peek into the spiritual world and saw what happens as we lift up our praise. Devils run with their tails tucked away! This is true both when we worship God on our own and when we worship with others.

As we purposely sit in the Lord’s presence, worship causes us to confront the self-centeredness and pride that might reign in our hearts, minds and bodies.

John 4:23-24 says: “But the time is coming - indeed it’s here now - when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship Him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

Jesus told His disciples that the Father was seeking those who would worship in spirit and in truth. In light of His Spirit and of the Truth, the things that aren’t in line with them must bow, otherwise, we aren’t truly worshipping or praising. The good news is that this change is as immediate as the purposeful decision to enter into worship. We may not always feel like worshipping, however when we do, it has an instantaneous effect - entering boldly into direct fellowship with our Creator!

## **Worship changes the atmosphere**

2 Chronicles 5:13-14 says: "The trumpeters and singers performed together in unison to praise and give thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments, they raised their voices and praised the Lord with these words: 'He is good! His faithful love endures forever!' At that moment a thick cloud filled the Temple of the Lord. The priests could not continue their service because of the cloud, for the glorious presence of the Lord filled the Temple of God."

These verses describe how all the Levitical musicians stood before the altar of God and played cymbals, harps, and lyres, while 120 priests sounding trumpets accompanied them. The result was that the whole temple was filled with the glory cloud of God!

The word "Praise" means "to shine, make a show, to boast; and to be clamorously foolish; to rave; and to celebrate." Needless to say, it is an active, not passive activity. Praise fills the house with joy and brings heaven to earth.

Revelation 4:11 says: "You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased."

God is worthy to receive glory, honor, and power... In worship we adore Him simply for who He is. We become caught up in the present reality of God's person, the reality of who He is. In the midst of all that goes on during a worship time, we are specifically called to fellowship with Him. He has set a banqueting table for us, and He invites us to sit and eat!

## **Worship softens the heart**

As we take our eyes off of ourselves, we begin to notice the things that God sees. We begin to see the hurting, the broken, the sick, the widow, the orphan, and the lost. Then compassion, as Jesus demonstrated, is stirred up inside of us. His Spirit within us begins to overtake our hardness and our blindness.

We realize that we don't have to try to protect ourselves from others because He has promised and is faithful to protect us! He has also promised to be the source of our lives, a river that never runs dry; therefore, we don't have to worry about "not having what it takes!"

## **Ok, I Get the Importance Of Praise And Worship... Now What?**

Whether alone or in a corporate setting there are a few things we can do to demonstrate in our flesh what our spirit is always doing... worshipping. Some people don't do anything at all when it's worship time. But, as stated earlier, worship cannot be a passive exercise. This is part of our commissioning or "orders" so to speak. It's not to be disputed, only obeyed. Even if you have no musical or dancing talent, this is for you!

Psalm 100:4 says: "Enter His gates with thanksgiving; go into His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him and praise His name."

Begin to give thanks out loud! He tells us, in both the old and new covenants, to love the Lord with ALL of our heart, ALL of our mind, and ALL of our spirit. This is the first priority we have as Christians. This is what praise and worship helps us to do!

## Why Is Everyone Lifting Their Hands?

One last thing to point out, regarding praise and worship, is that there are several postures that the Bible talks about when worshipping. They include:

- Bowing down (*Psalms 95:6*)
- Standing (*Exodus 33:10*)
- Being still (*Psalms 46:10*)
- Using instruments (*Psalms 150*)
- Speaking (*Psalms 138:3*)
- Shouting (*Psalms 98:4*)
- Singing (*Psalms 100:1*)
- Blowing trumpets (*2 Chronicles 15:14*)
- Clapping our hands (*Psalms 47:1*)
- Lifting up our hands (*1 Timothy 2:8*)
- Lying down (*Ezra 10:1*)
- Dancing (*Psalms 149:3*)
- Kneeling (*Ephesians 3:14*)
- Bowing our heads (*1 Kings 1:47*)

It may seem strange seeing people do these things during worship, but rest assured that it's very normal, and very much the way God designed worship to be!

Praise and worship is a powerful and exciting part of being a Christian. Begin today to worship like you never have before... and watch what God will do!

## God Gave, Now It's My Turn!

Giving is a fundamental principle of God. He's always been a giver. He gave man and woman breath in the Garden of Eden. He gave seed and trees for food. His greatest act of giving was when He gave His one and only Son on the cross so that we could live forever with Him. He loves to give!

Another thing God has done is to make us in His likeness. So we have been created to be givers, too! As we give, the Kingdom of God continues to expand and grow. We can be assured that we are operating according to God's principles, and we will be blessed beyond what we can ask, think, or imagine!

### From the Bible...

"Remember this - a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. 'For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.' And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you."

*2 Corinthians 9:6-8, 10 (New Living Translation)*

## **What's The Deal With The "Tithe"?**

Ever wondered what the word "tithe" means? It literally means "one tenth of 100 percent." So, in terms of money, it means 10 cents of every dollar.

The tithe serves some very specific purposes. First of all, tithing is an act of honoring God and His Word. Deuteronomy 14:23 says: "Bring this tithe to the designated place of worship - the place the Lord your God chooses for His name to be honored - and eat it there in His presence. This applies to your tithes of grain, new wine, olive oil, and the firstborn males of your flocks and herds. Doing this will teach you always to fear the Lord your God."

Second, tithing is an avenue that God uses to bless us. Each of us has been given a free will, and we can choose whether or not to tithe. If we do, we have a promise from God that He will bless us in return! Malachi 3:10 says: "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,' says the Lord of Heaven's Armies, 'I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!" There's an old saying that says, "you can't out-give God." Guess what... it's true!

"So, where does the tithe go?" you may ask. The fact is that it costs money to run a church and support the ministries associated to the church. The tithe can be used for different areas within the ministry including paying the mortgage on the church building, paying utility bills, paying the pastor's salary, supporting people in need, supporting missions and missionaries, and a whole host of other wonderful things that bless people!

## **Isn't an Offering the Same As A Tithe?**

Although a lot of people see tithes and offerings as being the same thing, a tithe is quite different from an offering.

Leviticus 27:30 says: "One tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain from the fields or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord and must be set apart to Him as holy."

As you can see from this scripture, the tithe belongs to God. It's not yours or mine... it's His! So, you can't really "give" a tithe. You can't give something that doesn't belong to you. When you tithe, you are simply returning to God what belongs to Him anyway.

Offerings, on the other hand, are given from the 90 percent that is not part of the tithe. The Hebrew word for Offering means "to draw near." When you give offerings, with the right heart, you are drawing near to God!

Offerings can be given to support missions, pastors, the building fund, youth & children's' ministry, or many other ministries. While tithes are not designated specifically, offerings can be designated to go to a specific area.

Offerings are also a great way to support outside ministries, such as TV or radio ministries that have blessed and encouraged you. The tithe should always go to your "storehouse" (local church). Offerings, on the other hand, can be given anywhere that the Lord leads you to give.

## **How Do I Give?**

Giving should never be done haphazardly. It's actually a form of worship, and therefore should be done in the right way. Here are some basic principles about giving.

### **Give your best**

God gave His best when He gave Jesus to die on the cross for our sins - and look at the blessing and harvest of people that was produced! True giving is taking the best of what we have and giving it away. It's easy to give what doesn't cost much, but to give money we were saving for a new car, or to give away that outfit that we still love to wear - that's true giving - and God promises He will give back to us in proportion to what we give!

Mark 12:41-44 says: "Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, 'I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on.'"

This woman gave her best! It had nothing to do with the amount. That's something we miss many times. We think that to really give our offering needs to have several "zeroes" at the end of it. But God wants us to give out of a heart of love and obedience. When you do this, you better look out... you're about to be overtaken by blessings!

### **Give for the right reason**

Giving really does us no good when we give "because we have to." You can see in many churches on Sunday morning that as soon as giving is mentioned it goes from a worship service to a funeral service! That's not how God wants it to be!

If you listen carefully, God will speak to your heart and tell you just what to give. It may surprise you sometimes, because what our flesh wants to give is different many times from what God is leading us to give.

2 Corinthians 9:7 says: "You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. 'For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.'"

Keep in mind 2 Corinthians 8:12 - "Whatever you give is acceptable if you give it eagerly. And give according to what you have, not what you don't have."

Also, never give because of pressure or guilt. And don't give because you want people to see how much you're giving! This is not God's way! Now there may be times where a minister encourages people to give a certain amount or to a certain area, such as a building project. This can be a good thing! It's times like these that really draw a family of believers together. But, if you decide to give because other people are giving and you feel like they'll all look at you or think differently about you if you don't do it too, that's the wrong reason!

Give out of a heart of love and you can never go wrong! John 3:16 says: "For God loved the world so much that he gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."

## **Be a faithful giver**

God wants us to be faithful about the money He puts into our hands. More than that, He wants to bring increase to us, so that we have more to give and use to advance the kingdom of God.

So start right where you are. If you only have a dollar to give, be faithful to give it. If you're able to go above and beyond what you've done in the past, and God is leading you to do it, be faithful to do that.

Luke 16:10-12 says: "If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?"

The people that God promotes are the people that He can trust with the increase. Be faithful where you are right now. Don't wait until you have more before you give. If you won't tithe on your \$200 paycheck, you won't tithe on your million-dollar income!

2 Corinthians 9 verses 6 and 11 say: "Remember this - a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. This increase that God gives is so that we can bless others. For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you." What an awesome promise!

## **Is It All About Money?**

No! Giving can take on multiple forms, and God wants us to use all of them to bless people so that His kingdom can advance!

You could give of your time by helping out at a church volunteer event or work day. You could give of your talents by joining a ministry such as the worship team or children's ministry. And of course, you could give love to people by calling church visitors, greeting on Sunday morning, or visiting people in the hospital.

1 Corinthians 12:4-10 says: "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said."

All of us have been given precious talents and abilities from God. We have a great opportunity to use these talents to give part of ourselves to others. After all, you're made in the very image of God!

