

Real Worship

Setting Aside Preference and Submitting to the Bible

How Can I Prepare for Worship?

Pastor Brad Bigney / Sunday, May 27, 2012 / Grace Fellowship Church

Worship Habits

I. Learn to Look for God

Develop an eye for God as you read His Word! Learn to see more than the obvious.

Isaiah 40:9, 12-15, 21-26

Places like Isaiah 40 make all the difference as to whether your life will be characterized by whining or worship.

Don't let what's wrong with YOU (and there's a lot of that) and the world around you (and there's more of that) keep you from worshipping what's right with God (because there's a whole lot more of that!).

Job 1:20–22 “Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said: ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.’ In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.”

Most people just see things happen while there are others who have some insights into WHO it is behind what's happening... that's what makes all the difference between whining and worship.

Exodus 33:13 “Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight.”

If you want to keep worship alive for a lifetime, you have to see God and stay blown away by His ways that are past finding out.

Romans 11:33 “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!”

Psalms 103:7 “He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.”

To some degree, everybody can see what God's DONE; but as you feed on God's Word, and submit to God's will, and respond back in worship, you can start to understand some of His WAYS... and that's when you really start to know God and learn His character.

Daniel 11:32b “... but the people who know their God will be strong, and do great exploits.”

II. Guard Your Heart

The heart is the control center of your life, so you better guard it. Don't just let it wander and feed on whatever the world's serving.

Proverbs 4:23 “Keep (Guard) your heart with all diligence for out of it spring the issues of life.”

Proverbs 23:7 “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.”

What you treasure will ultimately be what you worship which will in turn determine who you become.

Jeremiah 2:12-13 "My people have exchanged their glory for that which does not profit. Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate," says the Lord; "for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water."

"Too many people have just settled for a home, a family, a few friends, a new car, a job, a television, a microwave oven, an occasional night out, a yearly vacation, and perhaps a new personal computer. We've accustomed ourselves to such meager, short-lived pleasures that our capacity for joy has shriveled. And so our worship has shriveled." – John Piper

III. Learn How to Prepare for Our Corporate Worship Times Together

Jump-Start Your Mind

- Read a Psalm or a passage of Scripture before you come to church
- Pray for everyone that's involved in our worship service
- Pray for God to speak to you personally

Re-Order Your Week

- Start thinking in terms of Sunday being the highpoint of your week, and build everything else around that.

Get Some Sleep!

- Go to bed early on Saturday night!

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Christian! Betake thyself to thy chamber on this Saturday night... [Now I know we don't talk that way... so lemme translate this for you. He's saying, "Get your butt in bed!"] spend some time in consideration of the infinite majesty, holiness, jealousy, and goodness, of that God, with whom thou art to have to do in sacred duties; ponder the weight and importance of His holy ordinances ... and continue musing ... till the fire burneth; thou can't not think the good thou mayest gain by such forethoughts, how pleasant and profitable a Lord's day would be to thee after such preparation. The oven of thine heart thus baked in, as it were, overnight, would be easily heated the next morning; the fire so well raked up when thou wentest to bed, would be the sooner kindled when thou shouldst rise. If thou wouldst thus leave thy heart with God on the Saturday night, thou shouldst find it with Him in the Lord's Day morning." –George Swinnock

The decision you make on Saturday night sets the tone for Sunday.

IV. Take Advantage of All the Great Resources We Have in America

1. Starting with the Bible

- Read the Bible slowly, thoughtfully, looking for something, asking what you see about God.
- Pray back to God portions of Scripture.
- Meditate and put your name in place
(i.e. Psalm 23, John 15)

2. Use Prayer books

- "Valley of Vision"

3. Stay Close to the Gospel

- “Gospel Primer” by Vincent
- “Comforts from the Cross” by Fitzpatrick

4. Listen to Good Music

- Handel’s Messiah
- Sovereign Grace

Faith is either a dull habit or an acute fever. - William James