

8 Now and Forever

Stolen! The two horses the missionary ladies had counted on for transportation were gone. The ladies had been in a house praying with a woman for salvation. When they came out to where they had left the horses, the animals were not there.

Just then they saw several men approaching. One man fumbled under his belt for a weapon, and others picked up stones as they shouting angrily. The missionaries would have to escape on foot!

However, instead of trembling with fright, the missionaries began to rejoice. “Praise the Lord, we are counted worthy to suffer for the Lord!” They walked courageously up the hill as the bullets whizzed harmlessly by. The men did not follow, so the women escaped unharmed.

One of these missionaries was my mother who often testified of how worship acted as an invisible barrier between them and the attackers.

The Plan

- A. Effects of Worship
- B. The Extent of Worship

The Goals

1. Indicate some of the blessings in worshipping God.
2. State the importance of worship in eternity.

A. EFFECTS OF WORSHIP

Goal 1. Indicate some of the blessings in worshipping God.

The Bible gives examples of situations similar to the story at the beginning of this lesson. There were times when praise and worship were closely tied to protection and deliverance for the believer.

Worship can also bring strength. Isaiah 40:31 promises, “Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” The early martyrs of the Christian church found strength to face torture and death because they praised and worshipped God. Historians have told how the Christian believers were sent out in the great coliseum of Rome to be eaten by lions. What the crowds watching them did not understand was how these Christians could sing and worship God while facing death! They found strength by taking their eyes off themselves and the terrifying circumstances around them. They simply concentrated on God, on His faithfulness and love, and knew that soon they would be seeing Him face to face!

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O Lord. They rejoice in your name all day long; they exult in your righteousness. For you are their glory and strength, and by your favor you exalt our horn. (Psalm 89:15–17)

As we studied earlier, our first reason for worshipping the Lord is because He is worthy. That one reason is all we need. But God gives generously and has promised added benefits that come as a result of worship—blessings we realize and appreciate in this present life. We have already touched on the spiritual blessings we receive, and these cannot be minimized.

Isaiah 12:3 tells us that God’s people rejoice when He saves them. Sometimes the enemy tries to bring in doubts and rob us of our joy. If we listen to him and make room for discouraging thoughts, we will become weak and not pray as we ought to. We might even wonder if we really are saved. But our joy and strength are restored as we worship God and dwell on His goodness.

We become strong enough to face problems that otherwise would discourage us. When Job learned that he had lost his children, he said, “The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised” (Job 1:21). The next verse says, “In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.” His heart and mouth were filled with praise because he knew that God was in control. His worship was an expression of that trust.

Jesus, who is our perfect example, stood at a grave and prayed, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me” (John 11:41). After that He restored life to the one who was gone. The Gospels give several instances, too, of the sick who received healing when they worshipped (Matthew 8:2, Mark 7:25).

The greatest and most lasting joy of worship is that we get to know our heavenly Father better. We feel God’s presence in a special way when we keep His commandment to worship. First John 3:24 tells us that when we keep God’s commandments we live in union with Him. As we get to know the Lord better we

trust Him more. His faithfulness will never fail. How wonderful to have the assurance that our future is in His hands here on earth and throughout all eternity. (See Psalm 139:7–18.)

Giving is another act of worship, which we have already discussed. When the apostle Paul received gifts from a group of believers, he wrote to acknowledge their generosity: I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:18–19)

These words indicate that the apostle Paul also recognized giving as an act of worship. He believed that God would reward those who gave. His words confirmed an Old Testament promise: “‘Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it’” (Malachi 3:10).

Acts 8 recounts a story of a government official from Ethiopia who had made the long journey to Jerusalem to worship. He spent time and money just to be in the house of the Lord. As he was riding along in his chariot on the way home, he read Isaiah 53. God saw his open heart and sent Philip, an evangelist, to help him. Philip ran over to the chariot and asked the Ethiopian if he knew what he was reading. The man replied, “‘How can I, . . . unless someone explains it to me?’” (Acts 8:31).

Philip rode along in the chariot and told the story of Jesus. The official accepted Jesus as his Savior and was baptized. Then he continued on his way full of joy (Acts 8:39). His spiritual hunger was met and his questions answered as a result of his taking time to worship. What God did for the Ethiopian, He will do for us today. He will give the answers that we need. Then we will worship the Lord again, praising Him for leading us in the right way, for He has faithfully kept His promises.

Application

1 Read Psalm 89:15–17 and fill in the sentence. In spite of living in a dark world, we can praise the Lord and be assured of as we rejoice

2 Read Psalm 138:2–3. What four reasons for praising and worshipping God are listed in verse 2?
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.....

3 What two blessings to the worshipper are given in Psalm 138:3?
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.....

4 Five of the many blessings a Christian receives through worship are:
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.....
.....



B. THE EXTENT OF WORSHIP

Goal 2. State the importance of worship in eternity.

We have reached the last section of our book on Christian worship. Mostly we have touched on the reasons for worship and how worship affects us as individuals and as members of the church, the body of Christ.

There are, however, other facets of worship that we do not completely understand. One of them is in the story of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As He came riding into the city

on a colt, the disciples and the crowd shouted, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Luke 19:38). Some of the Pharisees looking on objected to their praise. Jesus answered, “I tell you, . . . if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out” (Luke 19:40).

How can stones cry out and shout? We do not know. But the greater significance of the words of Jesus is that praise is important. Worship is not a meaningless, lifeless ritual. Its powerful force can break through the hardest surface. If we as living stones do not praise the Lord, then some other kind of stones will. Genuine praise means that much to God and to His eternal plan. How privileged we are to take part!

There are further mysteries to praise, one of them being the ministry of praise we will have in heaven. Little children especially like to ask questions about heaven. What will it be like when we get there? What will we do? If they have lost grandparents or others dear to them, they want to know exactly what has happened. We answer them as best we can, but our words falter. Jesus assured the disciples, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.” (John 14:1–2)

Heaven has been specially prepared for us. The most beautiful place on earth cannot compare with it, because sin can never enter heaven. Sin destroys and mars God’s creation. But in heaven all will be pure and clean. God will wipe away all tears. There will be no more grief or crying or pain (Revelation 21:4). In heaven will be rejoicing and praise because our victory is complete (1 Corinthians 15:54). And we will forever be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

No doubt God has beautiful surprises waiting for us, most of which He has not told us yet. As mortals we lack the ability to comprehend things eternal. But of two activities we are certain. The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they

cried: Amen, Hallelujah!” Then a voice came from the throne, saying: “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!” Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! (Revelation 19:4–7)

When the heavenly beings are singing and praising the Lord, we will want to do it too. On seeing Jesus we will fully understand the price He paid for our salvation, and we will bow in love and adoration.

We will also rule as kings forever and ever. (See Revelation 5:6–10.) Kings have the responsibility to serve, and serving God is the greatest pleasure of all.

Kings also have opportunities because they have resources to draw from. Treasures, more than they need, are heaped on them. Will not the God of heaven likewise supply us with whatever we must have if we are to rule with and for Him? Perhaps we will be given opportunity to explore the universe. Who can tell?

“I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!’” (Revelation 5:13)

Application

5 Choose the correct answer to the sentence. Two activities we are certain of in heaven are

- a)** resting and playing harps.
- b)** worshipping and ruling.
- c)** building altars and sacrificing.

6 What joyful activity will we and the angels have in common for all eternity?

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7 Has studying this course helped you in your worship? Has it increased your desire to spend eternity with the Lord? Write in your own words what it has meant to you.

.....
.....



Check Your Answers

- 1** light, all day.
- 2** His constant love, His faithfulness, His Name is supreme,
His commands are supreme.
- 5** **b)** worshipping and ruling.
- 3** He answers us when we call. He strengthens us. Look for
other blessings in verses 6, 7, and 8.
- 6** Worshipping.
- 4** You might have listed victory, protection, healing, guidance,
deliverance, joy, strength, material needs met, or other
blessings you have already experienced.
- 7** Your answer

CL4240 Christian Worship**UNIT ONE ANSWER SHEET**

Please fill in the blanks below:

Name

Student Number
(Leave blank if you don't know your number.)

Mailing Address

.....

.....

Country

Directions

When you have completed your study of each unit, fill out the Unit Evaluation answer sheet for that unit. Read each question carefully. There is one best answer for each question. Blacken the space for the answer you have chosen. *Be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question you are answering.*

Example

- 1** To be born again means to
a) be young in age.
b) accept Jesus as Savior.
c) start a new year.

The correct answer is **b) accept Jesus as Savior**, so you would blacken space **(B)** like this:

1. (A) (B) (C) (D)

Turn page over when you are ready to begin.

UNIT ONE ANSWER SHEET

Carefully blacken the correct space for each numbered item.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 11 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 2 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 12 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 3 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 13 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 4 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 14 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 5 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 15 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 6 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 16 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 7 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 17 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 8 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 18 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 9 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 19 (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| 10 (A) (B) (C) (D) | 20 (A) (B) (C) (D) |

This is the end of the requirements for Unit One. For grading, return your Unit One Answer Sheet to your instructor or office in your area. Continue your study in Unit Two.

*For GU Office Use
Only*

Date

Score

UNIT ONE EVALUATION

- 1** The study guide stated that two ways to worship God are by
 - a)** speaking our love to God and doing deeds of kindness.
 - b)** being cheerful and staying healthy.
 - c)** thinking positive thoughts and feeling good about ourselves.
- 2** The most important personal qualities we need in worship are
 - a)** physical strength, confidence, and courage.
 - b)** love, obedience, and humility.
 - c)** love, impatience, and faith.
- 3** To be humble is to
 - a)** give God first place in our lives.
 - b)** realize how worthless we are.
 - c)** give away everything we own.
- 4** If we need help to know how to worship, we can
 - a)** buy a prayer book.
 - b)** ask the Holy Spirit to help us.
 - c)** memorize some phrases that sound nice.
- 5** Over a period of time our worship will
 - a)** settle down to one set pattern or form.
 - b)** change as the Holy Spirit moves.
 - c)** be something we have memorized well.
- 6** The most meaningful way to learn to worship God is to
 - a)** not worship.
 - b)** visit different churches.
 - c)** read about worship in the Bible.
- 7** The kind of worship that God loves to receive is
 - a)** loud.
 - b)** sincere.
 - c)** completely silent.
- 8** We should be ready to trust ourselves to God's love and care
 - a)** because God is all-powerful.
 - b)** whenever we need more faith.
 - c)** only when all else fails.

9 The fear of the Lord is a deep reverence that

- a)** makes us think of a funeral.
- b)** makes us afraid of God.
- c)** draws us to prayer and worship.

10 Holiness means

- a)** fearing God.
- b)** having visions such as Isaiah had.
- c)** being free from sin and upright in every way.

11 The greatest example in giving is

- a)** our pastor.
- b)** Moses.
- c)** our heavenly Father.

12 *Abba* is what a child who speaks Aramaic would call his or her

- a)** teacher.
- b)** father.
- c)** brother.

13 Presenting our needs to God is an example of a prayer of

- a)** worship.
- b)** intercession.
- c)** petition.

14 One way in which worshipping in the Spirit helps believers is that it

- a)** teaches us foreign languages.
- b)** frees us from problems.
- c)** helps us pray with results.

15 When we are “waiting before the Lord” we

- a)** are keeping still outwardly and inwardly.
- b)** can read a book while we wait.
- c)** are sleeping.

16 The Lord most often speaks to us when

- a)** we keep insisting that He tell us something.
- b)** our minds are actively engaged as we pray.
- c)** our minds and spirits are quiet before Him.

17 Worship through service means

- a)** offering ourselves, all that we are and have.
- b)** attending church every day.
- c)** working an “eight hour a day” job.

18 Jesus Christ is the greatest example of total service because He

- a)** worked hard at catching fish for other people.
- b)** helped people only spiritually.
- c)** was always serving others in every way.

19 We can worship God through service

- a)** when our attitudes are right.
- b)** even though we have selfish motives.
- c)** and forget about other forms of worship.

20 When we serve the Lord in giving, we should

- a)** get proper credit for our giving.
- b)** give cheerfully, generously, and with humility.
- c)** be careful not to give too much.

End of requirements for Unit One. Please stop here and return your student report Answer Sheet for Unit One to your instructor. Continue your study in Unit Two.

