

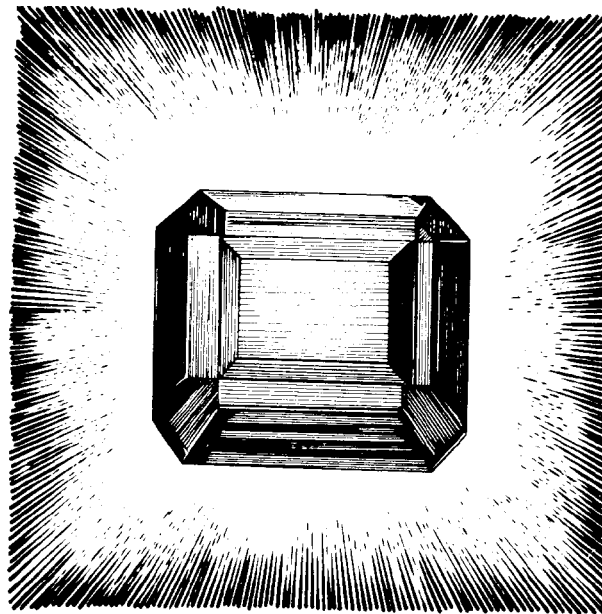
Lesson
1

Worship—a Spiritual Gem

It was a cold day. High in the Andes mountains a young man trudged down a gravel road. Suddenly he saw an interesting-looking rock, picked it up, and put it in his pocket. Little did he know what he had found! That rock, one of the largest emeralds ever found in Colombia, was sold for several million pesos and the man became wealthy.

Wouldn't you like to have found that stone? We would all love to own a precious emerald, diamond, or ruby. But, even though we may not be able to own these, there is one gem we can all have—the gem of worship.

Worshipping God is like a precious stone because it makes us spiritually rich. And, like a beautiful gem, there are different faces or facets to worship. We will study several of the most important ones. As you learn to put these truths into action, you will be polishing your “gem” of worship. The Holy Spirit will help you so that every facet radiates the beauty and glory of God.



In this lesson you will study . . .

The Meaning of Worship

Inner Qualities

Outward Expressions

This lesson will help you . . .

- Define several inner qualities necessary for effective Christian worship.
- Describe several different ways in which you can worship God.
- Compare the way you express worship with the ways mentioned in Scripture.

THE MEANING OF WORSHIP

Objective 1. *State two ways that you can worship God.*

Have you ever loved someone so much that you wanted to show your love in a special way? I'm sure that after careful thought, you said or did what would please them the most. And then, to know that you brought them joy—wasn't that a wonderful and happy feeling?

In this same way our love for God needs to be expressed. He has already expressed His love for us by sending His Son to die in our place. He shows goodness and mercy even to those who have not cared about Him. Matthew 5:45 tells us, "He makes his sun to shine on bad and good people alike, and gives rain to those who do good and to those who do evil."

Expressing love is a two-way street. Is there any reason for us to "hide" our feelings from Him? Though He reads our hearts and sees the love that is there, He longs for us to speak our love and to demonstrate it. In so doing we open the door for Him to speak His love back to us. Then we begin to understand what fellowship and communion with the Lord is all about. Nothing else in all the world can take its place.

A woman who had sung in the night spots of the world for many years suddenly gave up her career and turned to gospel singing. When asked about her conversion, she replied, "I just got lonesome for Jesus."

There is a spiritual need that can be filled only through worship. We need to speak our love to God. We also need to demonstrate that love by our actions. How can that be done? A deed of kindness done in the name of Jesus becomes an act of worship because it pleases the Lord. The story found in Matthew 25:31-40 verifies it.

As a Christian you have already learned that pleasing the Lord brings you satisfaction and contentment. The worshipful person is also a cheerful person—that in itself is a reward. Proverbs 17:22 says, "Being cheerful keeps you healthy." Psalm 128:1 puts it this way: "Happy are those who have reverence for the Lord."



For You To Do

In each of these For You to Do sections, the questions or exercises will help you review or apply what you have studied. Be sure to answer the questions before you look at the answers.

- 1 Circle the letter in front of the correct sentence completion. To truly worship God is to do and say whatever
 - a) seems right at the moment.
 - b) makes us feel good.
 - c) is pleasing to God.
- 2 According to what we have studied, which of the following could be acts of worship?
 - a) Telling God that you love Him
 - b) Reading His Word every day
 - c) Giving a cup of water in the Name of Jesus
- 3 Write two things you could do or say that you feel would be worship to God.

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Check your answers with those at the end of this lesson.

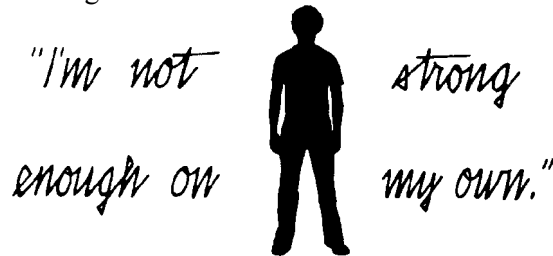
INNER QUALITIES

Objective 2. Give scriptural examples of three qualities needed for worship.

But the time is coming and is already here, when by the power of God's Spirit people will worship the Father as he really is, offering him the true worship he wants (John 4:23).

This verse gives the main details of what is expected of us as worshipers. Let's look at the first part of the verse, "By the power of God's Spirit people will worship the Father."

What do those three words "by the power" mean? They mean that we need power or strength to worship, but the power must be greater than our own. When we admit our lack, we are taking the first step toward real worship—the step of humility. We are saying, "I'm not strong enough on my own. I need help from someone greater than I."



The next three words of this verse complete the meaning. "Of God's Spirit" tells us whose power we need. We must realize that it is not power that we can get from an earthly source. We must have the power of God's Spirit for us to worship as we ought.



The Spirit, by His power, helps us to worship the Father as He really is. This also points us toward humility. In true worship we see ourselves as children in need of love and guidance. To say "Father" is more than saying He is the Creator. It is taking our rightful place in His family and acknowledging His authority.

Does this sound like a step downward? In a way it is. But humility doesn't mean that we are to hide in a dark corner. Humility doesn't mean walking around with a sad face; it doesn't mean giving up everything we own. It means to allow the Lord first place in every area of our life. So it's not a downward step after all, for He lifts us up to new joys in Him.

When we begin to see His greatness, we are more than ready to offer the "true worship that He wants." What does He want? As His children we know that more than all else He is asking for our love and obedience.

We know that in family relationships it is impossible to separate love and obedience. One calls for, or complements, the other. If a child loves his or her parents, to obey them is usually not difficult. Rather, it becomes a pleasure. Love prompts the desire to please.

If we find ourselves wanting to go against God’s commands, we should view our attitude as a warning that our love is wearing thin. We must bow in humility, asking the Lord to forgive our self-centeredness. He will again pour in His love—love that we can pour out in joyful obedience to His will.

Just as the gem that we have mentioned has many facets, worship also has facets. We have studied three qualities that are among the most important. But, as you seek God’s Word, His Spirit will show you many more. Every new inner quality that you add and polish will make your time of worship more valuable and more beautiful.

Why don’t you take a first step in worship right now? Would you, in humility, obedience, and love, bow your head for a moment and read these words?

Dear Father,

To worship You is the greatest privilege I can have. I praise You for Your power, for the power of Your Holy Spirit. I praise You for who You really are—especially for being my Father.

I love you, Lord. Amen.



For You To Do

4 The three personal qualities for worship which we have studied are,and

5 What quality is illustrated by each of the following verses?

a Psalm 10:17

b 1 John 3:18

c 1 John 3:24

6 Read the parable found in Matthew 21:28-32. Which of the two sons was developing the qualities we have studied?

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Check your answers.

OUTWARD EXPRESSIONS

Objective 3. *Identify from Scripture ways in which God can be worshiped.*

Now the facets of our worship gem become innumerable. In every new circumstance we will find new ways and opportunities to worship and glorify God. When we read our Bibles we see how people of long ago expressed their love, and we can learn from their experiences. As we express our love, it, too, will grow.

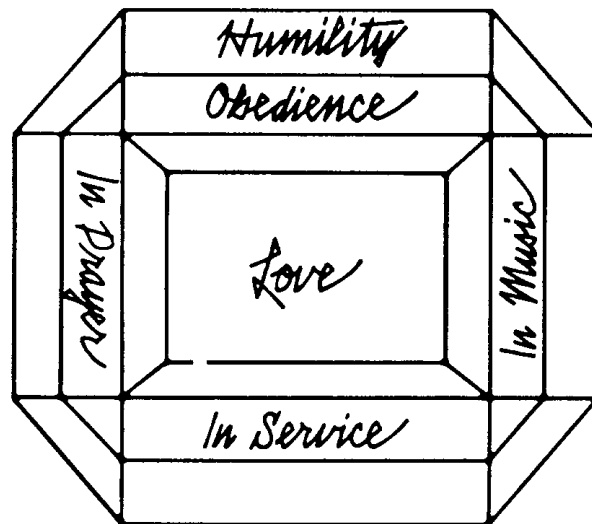
David, the shepherd who became king of Israel, worshiped the Lord with musical instruments and with song. Moses' sister Miriam worshiped with a holy dance. The great woman of Shunem simply bowed in silence, too awed for the moment to utter a word. Dorcas was a godly woman who gave God glory and honor by her consistent Christian life and her quick fingers to sew and make clothing for the poor.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, praised and exalted God. Her words were not her own. As she opened her heart and mouth to praise, she spoke words of beautiful prophecy. You can read this prayer called the Magnificat, or Mary's song, in Luke 1:46-55.

These examples show only a few of the ways we can worship the Lord. With our voices we can praise Him in song. With our bodies we can worship by playing musical instruments, clapping our hands, or raising our arms. Some of the most precious moments of worship are found in complete silence, meditating on the goodness of God. And, as we all know, actions speak as loudly as words. We praise when we obey—when we look about us and see needs that we can fill, and then do what we can to fill those needs.

Sincere worship is a precious stone found in the ordinary soil of earth, yet it can reflect the light, the beauty, and the glory of God.

Below is an illustration of worship as a valuable gem. Several facets are left blank. Fill those in with your own ideas of how you can express worship to your Heavenly Father.




For You To Do

- 7 Choose the correct completion to the sentence. One of the best ways to express our love to the Lord is to
- hide from worldly influence and temptation.
 - repeat the same prayer over and over.
 - show by our actions that we love Him.
- 8 If someone were to ask you how to worship, what would you consider the best answer?
- You can watch others and copy what they do.
 - There is more than one form of worship; you can turn to the Bible for examples.
 - Find what suits you best and start doing it.

9 Look up the following Scriptures and in your own words tell by what means these people worshiped God. The first one is done for you.

- a Acts 2 *Fellowshipping with believers*
- b Acts 4:32
- c Acts 8:35
- d Acts 16:15
- e Acts 16:25
- f Philemon 4



Check Your Answers

The answers to your study exercises are not given in the usual order, so that you will not see the answer to your next question ahead of time. Look for the number you need, and try not to look ahead.

- 1 c) is pleasing to God.
- 6 The older son.
- 2 All of the choices can be considered acts of worship.
- 7 c) show by our actions that we love Him.
- 3 Your answer. Examples: praising and thanking the Lord, reading the Bible prayerfully, or helping a person because you wish to show the love of God.
- 8 b) There is more than one form of worship; you can turn to the Bible for examples.
- 4 humility, love, and obedience.
- 9 Your own words, but your answers will be something like these.
 - b Sharing with others.
 - c Telling the good news.
 - d Showing hospitality.
 - e Praying and singing.
 - f Giving thanks.
- 5 a Humility.
 - b Love.
 - c Obedience.