

Life-Sharing Lesson 1 What Is Worship? Exodus 20:1-7 Matthew 22:37-38

1. What would it take for you to voluntarily give your life for another person?

I probably would have to know the other person or at least feel there is a greater value in saving the person's life than continuing with my own. It's one thing to die trying to save another person, but its quite different knowing that you will die if you try to save another person.

Exodus 20:1-7 Today's New International Version (TNIV)

The Ten Commandments

¹ And God spoke all these words: ² “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ³ “You shall have no other gods before^[a] me. ⁴ “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. ⁷ “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

Commentary

The words God spoke next have come to be known as the Ten Commandments. The commandments became the official code of the **covenant** but were much more than that. They clearly echoed the will of God for man. Although Jesus Christ would later give the **law** a searching exposition in his Sermon on the Mount, describing the obligation to keep it in the heart as well as externally, these words would become the primary moral code of Israel. Moses repeated these commandments in [Deuteronomy 5:6-21](#).

God began by identifying himself as the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. In so identifying himself, God established his rights as the sovereign Lord over Israel. The first command was that the Israelites have no other gods before me. The command itself is quite general and would outlaw not only any species of polytheism but also **idolatry** of any sort and all erroneous depictions of God.

The second command comes close on the heels of the first in both sequence and thought. Here God defines what is proper worship. Since God is spirit ([John 4:24](#)), God forbids any attempt to capture an image of God, whether by comparing him to another man-made

image or any natural phenomenon. Perhaps this command especially prohibits constructing images for the purpose of worshiping them.

God appended a threat to this command, describing himself as a jealous God who would inflict such fury on violators of this command that their third and fourth generation descendants would suffer some consequences if they broke it. By contrast, he would bless and smile upon the succeeding generations of those who loved and obeyed him.

The third command instructed the Israelites not to misuse the name of the LORD your God. We should apply this command as broadly as possible. These words forbid any frivolous use of God's name, whether in swearing over trivial matters or in emotional outburst. God's people should use his name only in reverent contexts and never in questionable worship.

The fourth command sets apart the seventh day as a **Sabbath** (Heb. "to cease," "rest"). Although formally instituted here, the **Sabbath** originated with the giving of the manna ([Exod. 16:23](#)). Man should work six days and rest on the seventh. God himself symbolically "rested" on the seventh day of creation, thus sanctifying the day. The command applied to "both man and beast without exception" (KD, 119). God knew the effects of constant physical toil not only on the body but on man's spirit as well. The later Hebrew writers would repeatedly decry **Sabbath**-breaking ([Neh. 13:15-18](#); [Jer. 17:19-23](#)). Modern authors continue to debate the relevance of the **Sabbath** for today and whether the Lord changed its observance to the Lord's Day, Sunday. The writer of Hebrews links the **Sabbath** to the final rest that all of God's people will one day enjoy ([Heb. 4:3-11](#)).

Holman Old Testament Commentary - Holman Old Testament Commentary – Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers.

2. Why would God begin this passage with the wording in verse two above?

God is reminding the children of Israel that they have a reason to be grateful to God and to appreciate God for all that God has already done. God has a legitimate claim upon them and their obedience. They have what they have because of the power and presence of God. Without God, they would still be in slavery and bondage.

3. What is the connection between worship and being grateful?

We worship God because of all the great things God has done on our behalf. Part of worship involves sacrifice. Romans 12:1 (NIV) ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.

In the Old Testament, there were sacrifices for sin as well as sacrifices of gratitude and praise. Christ has obviously fulfilled the sacrifice for sin once for all ([Heb. 9:26](#); [10:10,12,14](#)), and there is nothing that the believer can add to that sacrifice. But living sacrifices of gratitude and praise are the appropriate (reasonable, spiritual) sacrifices to be made by those who live only by the mercy of God. These sacrifices are as much the act of worship of the believer today as the sacrifices of dead animals were the act of worship of Old Testament Israelites. *Latreia* is the word Paul used for the worship practices of Israel in [Romans 9:4](#), so he obviously has the same concept in mind for New Testament believers. The root of worship is *latreuo*, to serve. God was served in the Old Testament by sacrifices of property owned by the believer, but he is served in the New Testament by the sacrifice of the believer himself or herself. Paul does not tell believers to "make" a sacrifice, but to "be" a sacrifice.

It was the great missionary to Africa, David Livingstone, who put "making a sacrifice" in perspective: "I never made a sacrifice. We ought not to talk of 'sacrifice' when we remember the great sacrifice which he made who left his Father's throne on high to give himself up for us" (Ward, p. 180). The sacrifice we are to offer is our bodies, which recalls Paul's earlier words in [Romans 6:13](#): "Do not offer the parts of your body to sin. . . but rather offer yourselves to God... as instruments of righteousness." God's mercy resulted in our being bought out of the slave market of sin and adopted into the household of righteousness. Therefore, our bodies are to become living sacrifices as we worship the one who redeemed us by his mercy.

It takes many times of hearing this truth for the contemporary believer to get it right. God is not asking the believer to dedicate his gifts, abilities, money, time, ideas, creativity, or any such thing. He is asking the believer to sacrifice himself or herself. Oswald Chambers says, "We have the idea that we can dedicate our gifts to God. However, you cannot dedicate what is not yours. There is actually only one thing you can dedicate to God, and that is your right to yourself. If you will give God your right to yourself, He will make a holy experiment out of you—and His experiments always succeed. The one true mark of a saint of God is the inner creativity that flows from being totally surrendered to Jesus Christ" (*My*

Utmost, June 13).

Holman New Testament Commentary - Holman New Testament Commentary – Romans.

4. What are the gods that we have in our lives other than the true God and why do we create them?

We make gods out of people, out of careers, out of hobbies, out of positions, out of money, and out of philosophies and lifestyles. We create them because we do not trust God enough to keep God as first in our lives. We think that if we put God first, then we are going to lose these other things or people. Whatever we put at the center of our lives, that's what or who we are truly trusting in.

5. What are the images that we are tempted to bow down to today (especially those that are not seen physically) ?

We are often tempted to bow down to peer pressure. We are tempted to bow down to wanting to fit in with others. The demand that we go along with the culture is much stronger than we think. Even though the bible can be quite specific at what God has called sin, we will reject it as sin, because the world considers it an acceptable form of behavior. We are tempted to bow down to gossip when other Christians are involved in it with us. We may claim it's for prayer requests, but in reality it may just be gossip. We are tempted to bow down to compromise when it comes to dress and fashion. This goes back to peer pressure. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego was asked to bow down, it was more bowing to peer pressure than it was to worshipping Nebuchadnezzar god. They could have easily bowed their knees outwardly, while denouncing the gold statute inwardly. The real god facing them was peer pressure. Would they conform. Peer pressure is probably our biggest enemy, regardless of our age. It may even determine how we spend our money and our time, rather than giving God a say so in the matter.

The ultimate display of godly courage is not to die with desperate expectations that God will somehow intervene at the last moment but rather to live or die in complete confidence that God will do what he will do. The Book of Daniel depicts the sovereignty of God in the lives of his people and in the affairs of the nations of the world. In the dynamic final chapter of Hebrews, that author cites the passage from [Psalm 118](#) to summon Christian courage in his readers: "So we

say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?'" ([Heb. 13:6](#)). Holman Old Testament Commentary - Holman Old Testament Commentary – Daniel.

6. How do we know when we have crossed the line from admiring someone or something to actually worshipping him/her/it?

We have crossed the line when we chose to deliberately disobey God's word to adopt the standard the other person or thing has for our lives. It all starts with compromising. There is usually a fear that if I do not do this thing, then I will somehow lose what I have. King Jeroboam faced that issue after God made him king of Israel. He became afraid that the people would desert him. He forgot that the people had not chosen him in the beginning. It was God that gave him the position.

1 Kings 12:25-30 (NIV)

²⁵ Then Jeroboam fortified Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there. From there he went out and built up Peniel. ²⁶ Jeroboam thought to himself, "The kingdom will now likely revert to the house of David. ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, they will again give their allegiance to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to King Rehoboam."

²⁸ After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." ²⁹ One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. ³⁰ And this thing became a sin; the people went even as far as Dan to worship the one there.

The people of Israel never recovered from this compromise with sin that Jeroboam led them into.

7. Some people think having the cross is an image we should not have. Is the cross the kind of image that God is speaking of here? Why or why not.

This can go either way for people. For some people, the cross is merely a symbol for Christianity. For others the cross becomes something endowed with a supernatural presence of God. The cross is not something to be worshipped. It does not have magical powers nor supernatural powers. There is nothing in the bible about holding up the cross to ward off demons, devils or vampires. The symbol for Christianity for the first 300 years was not the cross, but the fish. We must remember that God is Spirit and we worship God in Spirit and truth. We have people insisting on their being a cross in the church, when none of the Christians for the first 300 years associated it with Christ. The cross for them was the same as the electric chair is for us.

The forms in which the cross is represented are these:

- 1. The crux simplex (I), a "single piece without transom."**
- 2. The crux decussata (X), or St. Andrew's cross.**
- 3. The crux commissa (T), or St. Anthony's cross.**
- 4. The crux immissa(t), or Latin cross, which was the kind of cross on which our Saviour died. Above our Lord's head, on the projecting beam, was placed the "title." (See [CRUCIFIXION](#).)**

After the conversion, so-called, of Constantine the Great (B.C. 313), the cross first came into use as an emblem of Christianity. He pretended at a critical moment that he saw a flaming cross in the heavens bearing the inscription, "In hoc signo vinces", i.e., By this sign thou shalt conquer, and that on the following night Christ himself appeared and ordered him to take for his standard the sign of this cross. In this form a new standard, called the Labarum, was accordingly made, and borne by the Roman armies. It remained the standard of the Roman army till the downfall of the Western empire. It bore the embroidered monogram of Christ, i.e., the first two Greek letters of his name, X and P (chi and rho), with the Alpha and Omega. (See [A](#).)

Illustrated Bible Dictionary: And Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature.

8. What do you think God means when He says we are not to worship other gods. What exactly is worship in this passage?

God is saying that nothing is to have a claim of allegiance on our lives that is higher than his claim. This is very similar to what Jesus says in Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

²⁴ **"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.**

The term Money is from the Aramaic *mamon*, meaning "wealth" or "property." It is anything in which a person places confidence. Jesus carefully chose here the picture of a slave. There could be no doubt about the issue of control. No person can serve two masters.

Any compromise of allegiance in this issue reminds us of the Lord's attitude toward those who are "lukewarm" in [Revelation 3:15-16](#). It seems to suggest he thinks even less of those who claim to serve him, but have other loyalties, than he does of those who claim no loyalty to him at all. The terms hate and despise should be taken to mean "be less devoted to," "disregard," or "love less." On the other hand, love and be devoted to would imply a higher priority commitment, not necessarily an exclusive commitment.

Holman New Testament Commentary - Holman New Testament Commentary – Matthew.

Worship is to be completely devoted to God. If we have a love for anything else, it will crowd out our love for God.

9. Can we fully participate in a Muslim service. Why or why not?

No. Allah does not claim to be Yahweh/Jehovah, and Yahweh does not claim to be Allah. It would be a deception to think you could participate in a non Christian service and not offend the Spirit of God. Even Naaman the Syrian knew something was wrong with not being fully devoted to God. God had cured him of leprosy and this is what he said.

2 Kings 5:15-19 (NIV)

¹⁵ **Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Please accept now a gift from your servant."**

¹⁶ The prophet answered, "As surely as the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will not accept a thing." And even though Naaman urged him, he refused.

¹⁷ "If you will not," said Naaman, "please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry, for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the LORD.

¹⁸ But may the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I bow there also--when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this."

¹⁹ "Go in peace," Elisha said. After Naaman had traveled some distance,

God strictly forbids us from participating in the worship services of idols and false gods, stating that if we did, it would turn our hearts away from Him.

Solomon found out this truth the hard way. 1 Kings 11:1-6 (NIV)

¹ King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter--Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites.

² They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love.

³ He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.

⁴ As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

⁵ He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.

⁶ So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.

10. Why is God jealous when it comes to worship?

God knows how quickly we will turn away from Him, the moment we attach our hearts to other things.

³⁷ Jesus replied: ““Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’^[c] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.
Matthew 22:37-38 TNIV

Jesus quoted the Septuagint almost verbatim, but he substituted mind (*dianoia*) for the similar sounding "might" (*dunameos*). We are to take this list as an emphatic way of saying, "Love God with everything you are in every way possible." But it was not without significance that our Lord deliberately substituted "mind" here rather than some other term. Christians need to take a lesson from this. We should learn to *think* critically and biblically.

Jesus emphasized his answer by identifying this commandment as the first and greatest commandment. This commandment was greatest because of the statement in [Deuteronomy 6:4](#) which preceded it: "Yahweh is your God, Yahweh alone" (paraphrased). To honor Yahweh as the one true God is to love him exclusively, from among all others who claim to be gods.

Holman New Testament Commentary - Holman New Testament Commentary – Matthew.

11. What is the connection between love and worship?

It is easy to worship that which we love the most. It is our love for God that should motivate us to want to worship God.

12. What do you need to do to become a better worshipper of God?

I need to refrain from getting upset when things do not go my way.

Life-Sharing Lesson 2 “What Is The Purpose Of Worship” Eccl. 5-17 Isaiah 27:13

1. How would you answer the question “why bother going to church, can’t I worship God at home?”

God calls us to be the body of Christ for a reason. We need each other for worship and for service. There is a strength and encouragement that comes from meeting together. The Bible also tells us to come together for service. Hebrews 10:24-25 ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

2. What’s the difference between “coming to church” and “coming to worship”?

In “coming to church”, the word church is being used as place such as coming to a theatre or coming to a store. Coming to worship is coming to a place with the expectation of actively engaging in an action. Coming to worship means you are coming to actively participate in an event. You are not coming in the sense of coming to listen to a concert, you are coming with expectation of being on the stage involved in making the concert happen.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 Today's New International Version (TNIV) Stand In Awe Of God

¹ **[a]** Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. **[b]**² Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. ³ A dream comes when there are many cares, and many words mark the speech of a fool.

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. ⁵ It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. ⁶ Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, “My vow was a mistake.” Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? ⁷ Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore fear God.

Commentary Material

A Improper Versus Proper Worship (5:1-7)

SUPPORTING IDEA: When it comes to the worship of God, we want to fill quiet spaces with meaningless chatter. This not only reflects spiritual immaturity; it also demonstrates the sin in our hearts.

5:1. The possibility of presumptuous and foolish worship is described in this opening verse. The fool's sacrifice is a habit that is hard to break because he is ignorant of the fact that he is doing evil. Religious sincerity not anchored in truth is lethal. Our inclination to self-deception is taught in both testaments of God's Word ([2 Sam. 12:1-13](#); [Ps. 19:12](#); [1 Cor. 4:1-5](#); [Heb. 3:13](#)). Without regular intake of the Bible, Spirit-led prayer, and the accountability of others, we are doomed to keep repeating our foolish prayers.

If we don't come to God with a willingness to hear from him first, we are doing something far more sinful than we could ever imagine. We should "not talk to God as boldly and carelessly as we do to one another, not speak what comes uppermost" (Henry, 1006).

5:2. In this verse we see the Creator/creature distinction that is essential to God-honoring prayers. Hasty words and impulsive thoughts have disastrous consequences. An example from the history of Israel should prove helpful.

In [Numbers 11](#), the Israelites wanted meat to eat because they were tired of manna. They fondly recalled the food they had eaten in Egypt ([vv. 5-6](#)). The Lord decided to grant his grumbling people what they thought they needed ([v. 18](#)). The food that the people of God so desperately wanted would become loathsome to them ([v. 20](#)). The very thing that the people of God *felt* would bring life actually brought death and God's judgment ([v. 33](#)).

Because of our tendency to speak hasty words and use impulsive speech, it is wise to let our words be few (cf. [Ps. 46:10](#); [Matt. 6:7](#)). The phrase do not be quick with your mouth can be misunderstood. This warning is given in a context that has a specific point to make: Don't be so quick to list personal requests when talking to God.

This warning doesn't prohibit lengthy prayers or even repetitive prayers. There is clearly biblical support for those types of prayers. The words of Charles Bridges are instructive in this regard: "Solomon speaketh not against all length in prayer (for Christ prayed whole nights), not against all repetition, when it proceedeth from zeal, love, and holy fervency—as that of Daniel ([9:16-19](#)), but of that, which

is a 'vain ingeminating [reiterating] of the same things without faith or wisdom'" (Bridges, 102).

We need to keep in mind that [Matthew 6:7](#) prohibits *meaningless* repetition, not *meaningful* repetition. Depending on a person's motives, the Lord's Prayer could fall into either of these categories.

5:3. Some interpreters take the mention of dreams here as an indication of daydreams (Kidner, 53; cf. Garrett, 311), which is well served by the context. I lean toward the idea that Solomon is describing the reality that dreams come at night as a result of much worry (cf. [Eccl. 5:12](#)). Many cares or great anxiety caused the dreams.

5:4. God delights in those people who keep their word because he is the original "promise keeper" ([Num. 23:19](#); [2 Cor. 1:20](#)). The importance of the spoken and kept word is not something he takes lightly. Those who are devastated by the severity of this verse will want to remember that "promise breakers" like Peter can be restored ([Matt. 16:21-23](#); [26:33-35](#); cf. [John 21:3-17](#))!

5:5. This verse is quite clear and is further illustrated by both positive and negative examples in the Bible. We think of Jephthah's presumptuous vow about his daughter ([Judg. 11:30-31](#)), Ananias and Sapphira's pride-filled vow ([Acts 5:1-4](#)), and Jonah's desperate vow ([Jonah 2:9](#)). We also remember one of the most God-glorifying vows recorded in Scripture—the one Hannah made about her son Samuel ([1 Sam. 1:11](#)).

As [Proverbs 20:25](#) exhorts, "It is a trap for a man to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider his vows." We must be careful about how quickly we make vows.

5:6. Our speech is powerful ([Jas. 3:5-6](#)) and can cause great evil ([Prov. 10:19](#); [12:18](#)). Much destruction comes from not heeding this clear and powerful teaching.

5:7. There is nothing substantive or long-lasting about dreams. The morning comes and the dream is forgotten. Many words are also empty and don't amount to anything of real value. But the person who fears God (a common theme in Ecclesiastes) is on solid ground ([1 John 2:17](#); [Ps. 34:9](#)).

Holman Old Testament Commentary - Holman Old Testament Commentary – Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs.

Chapter 5

WHAT RENDERS DEVOTION VAIN. (5:1-3)

Address thyself to the worship of God, and take time to compose thyself for it. Keep thy thoughts from roving and wandering: keep thy affections from running out toward wrong objects. We should avoid vain repetitions; copious prayers are not here condemned, but those that are unmeaning. How often our wandering thoughts render attendance on Divine ordinances little better than the sacrifice of fools! Many words and hasty ones, used in prayer, show folly in the heart, low thoughts of God, and careless thoughts of our own souls.

OF VOWS, AND OPPRESSION. (5:4-8)

When a person made engagements rashly, he suffered his mouth to cause his flesh to sin. The case supposes a man coming to the priest, and pretending that his vow was made rashly, and that it would be wrong to fulfil it. Such mockery of God would bring the Divine displeasure, which might blast what was thus unduly kept. We are to keep down the fear of man. Set God before thee; then, if thou seest the oppression of the poor, thou wilt not find fault with Divine Providence; nor think the worse of the institution of magistracy, when thou seest the ends of it thus perverted; nor of religion, when thou seest it will not secure men from suffering wrong. But though oppressors may be secure, God will reckon for all.

Matthew Henry Concise Bible Commentary.

3. What do you think we are being challenged to do in verse 1 when it says to guard your steps when you go the house of God?

We are being challenged to think about what we are doing when entering the presence of God. Before just blabbing off requests, we should be in awe of who God is and respect the Lord for whom God is. We should be far more ready to listen to God, than to start speaking in the presence of God.

4. How important is the condition of our heart when we are involved in worship?

If our hearts are not right, there is no worship taking place. We may be going through some religious rituals but that does not mean any worship of God is actually taking place. Jesus quotes the following verse from Isaiah
Matthew 15:7-9 (NIV) .7, "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied against you . 8 "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men."

Jesus addressed the Pharisees and scribes here as hypocrites. The English word is transliterated from the earlier classic Greek term for "one who wears a mask" on stage in a Greek drama—an actor or pretender—although, by Jesus' day the language used the term exclusively for its present negative meaning. A hypocrite is a person who puts on an outward display that is not representative of what is truly inside. (See comment at 6:2.) As Jesus had demonstrated in [15:3-6](#), the religious leaders were putting on a show of spirituality and devotion to God and his Word. In reality, they were in rebellion against God and his Word
Holman New Testament Commentary - Holman New Testament Commentary – Matthew.

5. What type of examination should we be doing before attempting to worship God?

We should be starting with the obvious of looking to see if there is any unconfessed sin

In our lives that we refuse to acknowledge or we're trying to willingly conceal or justify. Nothing keeps us from worship than deliberately choosing to sin. We find in 1 Corinthians 11:27-31 1Today's New International Version (TNIV)

²⁷ So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment.

To avoid such serious offenses, every believer ought to examine himself. Christians must scrutinize their motives and actions to see that they match the significance of the Lord's Supper. This self-examination is to take place before eating and drinking. The reason for taking time for self-examination is evident: He who participates without recognizing the body of the Lord brings divine

The solemn occasion of the Lord's Supper was to be celebrated carefully and entered into with spiritual readiness. When Paul said that no one should take the Lord's Supper *in an unworthy manner*, he was speaking to church members who were rushing into it without thinking of its meaning and, thus, were "not honoring the body of Christ" ([11:29](#) NLT). Those who did so would be *answerable for the body and blood of the Lord*. To treat the symbols of Christ's ultimate sacrifice irreverently is to be guilty of irreverence toward his body and blood shed on sinners' behalf. Instead of honoring Christ's sacrifice, those who ate unworthily were sharing in the guilt of those who crucified him.

LIFE APPLICATION

CAUTIONS

Paul gives specific instructions on how the Lord's Supper should be observed:

I We should take the Lord's Supper thoughtfully, because we are proclaiming that Christ died for our sins ([11:26](#)).

I We should take it worthily, with due reverence and respect ([11:27](#)).

I We should examine ourselves for any unconfessed sin or resentful attitude ([11:28](#)). We are to be properly prepared, based on our belief in and love for Christ.

I We should be considerate of others ([11:33](#)), waiting until everyone is present and then eating in an orderly and unified manner.

Ironically, the realization that we are not worthy (that we don't deserve a place at the Lord's Table) is the very position from which Christ welcomes us to the feast. We are the guests whom the host has graciously invited. Humility must be the engraving on our invitation.

We should prepare ourselves for Communion through healthy introspection, confession of sin, and resolution of differences with others. These actions remove the barriers that affect our relationship with Christ and with other believers. Awareness of your sin should not keep you away from Communion but should drive you to participate in it.

In reality, no one is "worthy" to take the Lord's Supper. All believers are sinners saved by grace. But because they are saved, believers can celebrate this solemn rite as given to them by the Savior.

The very nature of the rite calls for introspection. Therefore, Paul told the believers to *examine* themselves. No one should partake of the Lord's Supper who had not accepted Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for salvation. Neither should they come to the table drunk, angry with others, or with known but unrepented sin in their lives. Coming to the Lord's table "in an unworthy manner" means to come without a solemn understanding of what is being remembered, and without a repentant and humble spirit before the Lord.

Life Application Bible Commentary - Life Application Bible Commentary – 1 & 2 Corinthians.

6. What should we be listening for when we are in the midst of praise and worship songs during the service?

We should be listening for the Spirit to speak to our hearts to either let go of the things around us to come closer to God, or for the Spirit to reveal to us what is keeping us from fully entering into God's presence. Sometimes God simply wants to fill us with the joy of God's presence. Other times God wants thankfulness to overflow within us. Sometimes the Spirit wants to reveal things to us about God or about our circumstances. We never know what it is going to come out of a true worship experience of God.

7. What are you visualizing in your worship of God during the singing portions of worship?

Each person will undoubtedly envision different things during the songs depending on the words of the songs. For me, I often envision entering into worship as a church joining in with other churches as they approach the presence of God. It is as though we come in shifts from around the world to offer praise and worship to a God. We all come in with different banners, but with the same purpose of offering praise and worship to the One True God. Sometimes its just me on a hill reaching up to God. Other times I am surrounded in the sea of saints in one loud chorus together. We should use our minds to engage the words and scenery of a song to give our worship greater depth and meaning. Look at how the psalmist includes images of nature in his worship of God in Psalm 96 11-13 ¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. ¹² Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy. ¹³ Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth.

8. What does one do to be “guilty of offering the sacrifice of fools?”

To offer the sacrifice of fools is nothing more than uttering words in the presence of God without giving thought to their meaning. It can be as simple as singing to the Lord, “All to Jesus I surrender” and yet have not desire to let go of the blatant sin we have in our lives. Many of the praise and worship songs that we sing, can very easily make liars out of us.

Isaiah 29:13 TNIV

¹³ The Lord says: “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.”^[a] Isaiah 29:13

9. How do we move beyond worship that is based on merely human rules?

The people in the Isaiah 29:13 passage above had an entirely different picture of things. They continued going to worship, singing hymns, and saying prayers. The temple was flourishing. But they were doing only what the priest taught them! They did not know God through personal experience. They expected

nothing from him. Religion had become routine rather than real. God promised to make it real. He would again astound them with wonder upon wonder. These miracles would not deliver Judah from political crisis. They would deliver the politicians from their burden of human wisdom that prevented them from seeking divine wisdom. Human intelligence would vanish. Holman Old Testament Commentary - Holman Old Testament Commentary – Isaiah.

Worship is not something that somebody else should be responsible for having us do. The Praise Team is not responsible for our worship of God. We are responsible for our worship. We have to make a choice to engage in worship. The Praise Team merely offers us a vehicle on which to travel in assisting us in getting to worship. Our bodies, our hearts, and our minds must all be engaged if we are to move beyond worship being nothing more than rules taught by people. Worship is something we have to want to do, otherwise, no worship takes place.

10. How do we bring a sense of “awe of God” to our morning services?

We come with an expectation in our hearts that somehow God is going to reach us in a special way this morning, and we’re going to be ready to receive it regardless of how it comes. We recognize that God could use any part of the service as our “moment” so we give our best throughout the service. We also believe that God is going to do something for others in our midst as well. We bring a faith of expectation of a fresh move of God to the service.

11. The passage in Ecclesiastes warned us against making vows hastily. What are the kinds of vows we make in church, that we quickly leave behind once the service is over?

We vow to forgive others, we vow to leave sin, we vow to serve at home, we vow to give, we vow to change, and we have a host of other things.

12. Why would people make a vow and then not fulfill it?

Some vows are made to show off. In this passage, people were making vows to impress other people, but once the crowd was gone, the person would come back to the priest and claim their vow was a mistake. They would therefore have received credit and admiration from others for a vow, that they knew they were

not going to keep it. This is not the same as a person who makes a vow or pledge in their giving, and then changes the vow or pledge because they lost their job or had some other major change in their lives. This passage is teaching us, that when we do vow to do something, have the right motive before making the vow, and then do all that you can to complete your vow. God is not trying to place anyone who is sincere in a great financial burden. God is after our hearts of being faithful to God. In Acts 5, we find Ananais and Sapphira who made a vow, but had no intention of fully keeping the vow.

13. What vows do you make that you need to give closer attention to?

Vows to let go of annoying habits I have that causes headaches for others in the home such as closing cabinets and closets, or leaving items on the table that should be put in the sink or thrown into the garbage.

Life-Sharing Lesson 3 “What Does Worship Do To Us” 2 Samuel 6:12-22. 1 Timothy 2:8 Psalm 134:1-2

1. What benefit do you get out of offering worship to God?

I get a new joy in my spirit. I get lifted above my circumstances. I see things from a new perspective. I recognize that God is far greater than I had imagined. I get a peace in the midst of my situation. I recognize that God has not forgotten me. I see myself as part of the body of Christ, which is much larger than our local church. I get encouraged.

2. Worship involves some form of sacrifice. What do we sacrifice in order to worship God?

We sacrifice our time. Worship takes time to do it. We sacrifice our pride. Pride says I really don't need to worship God. I'm okay as I am. We sacrifice our money. Worship takes place in the context of people, usually in a building, with people who assist us in making worship happen. All of this requires money.

2 Samuel 6:12-22 TNIV

¹² Now King David was told, “The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God.” So David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the LORD with all his might, ¹⁵ while he and the entire house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

¹⁶ As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart. ¹⁷ They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD. ¹⁸ After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. ¹⁹ Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.

²⁰ When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!” ²¹ David said to Michal, “It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”

Commentary

The Ark Enters Jerusalem (6:12-19)

SUPPORTING IDEA: *David brings the ark of the Lord from Obed-Edom's house to Jerusalem, taking care to do so in accordance with God's guidelines. Dressed as a priest, David leads the joyous procession. Once the ark is inside the city, sacrifices are offered and generous gifts of food are provided for everyone in attendance.*

6:12-13. When David received a report that the Lord had **blessed the household of Obed-Edom** because of the ark of God, he decided to make a second attempt to bring it to **the City of David**. The king was confident that if the ark could be a source of blessing for one family, then it could become a source of blessing for an entire city and the nation it represented. Thus the event was a cause for **rejoicing**.

The question was, How could the ark be moved properly? The answer was to move it in accordance with divine guidelines. It must be carried on the shoulders of Levites from the clan of Kohath, being transported with poles to avoid touching the sacred object itself ([Num. 4:6,15](#)). These guidelines were implicitly followed, since the text notes that men **were carrying the ark of the LORD**. As a symbolic dedication of the entire journey from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem, David had the men stop after they had carried the ark **six steps** so that **a bull and a fattened calf**—very costly sacrifices—could be made to God. This "Sabbath rest" symbolically sanctified the remainder of the undertaking ([Gen. 2:2-3](#)).

6:14-15. David had prepared himself for the joyous occasion by putting on a **linen ephod**, a garment generally associated with the priesthood ([Exod. 28:4](#); [Lev. 8:7](#); [1 Sam. 2:28](#)). This may suggest that he considered himself a priest of the Lord in the order of Melchizedek (see [Ps. 110:4](#)). Perhaps he received this title when he conquered Jerusalem, the city the priest Melchizedek had once governed ([Gen. 14:18](#)). The ten-mile journey was marked with celebrative sacred dance ([Exod. 15:20](#); [Pss. 30:11](#); [149:3](#); [150:4](#)), with David himself leading the way. The **entire house of Israel** rejoiced with **shouts** and **the sound of trumpets**, probably sacred trumpets blown by the priests ([Num. 10:2](#); [Josh. 6:4](#)).

6:16. David's hopes were realized as the **ark of the LORD** entered the city of Jerusalem. The king was ecstatic as it made its way down the streets of the capital city, and he expressed his joy by **leaping and dancing** before the

Lord. Michal, David's first wife and the daughter of King Saul, was not part of this significant event, even though other women were ([v. 19](#)). Not only was she physically absent from the group, she was emotionally and spiritually distant as well. Her resentment toward her husband—perhaps because of the fact that he had taken her back after Saul had forced her to live in an adulterous relationship with another man ([1 Sam. 25:44](#))—caused her to despise **him in her heart** as she watched him in the procession.

6:17-19. In anticipation of this day, David had **pitched a tent** for the ark of the covenant. This structure probably resembled the one prescribed in [Exodus 26:1-37](#). The procession reached the end of its journey as the ark was **set... in its place** inside the tent.

With the ark now properly situated in its new home, David offered sacrifices consisting of burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he **blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty** and gave a food gift to **each person** in attendance. The **bread, dates, and raisins** would have helped to sustain the people as they returned to their homes after the celebration.

I. David Confronts Opposition in His Own Home (6:20-23)

SUPPORTING IDEA: *David's first wife, Michal the daughter of King Saul, criticizes David for his conduct during the procession into Jerusalem. David responds that he behaved as he did "before the Lord" and that others would honor him for it even if she didn't.*

6:20-22. David returned to his household following the celebration to **bless his household**, even as he had blessed the public assembly. But before he could enter his residence, his wife **Michal** came out to meet him. She began to berate him, accusing him of **disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants**—an apparent reference to David's enthusiastic leaping and dancing. Did David actually expose himself in public? It seems highly unlikely. The text never confirms the accuracy of Michal's accusation, and if David were dressed as a priest, he would have worn a linen undergarment beneath the priestly ephod ([Exod. 28:42-43](#)).

David responded to Michal by saying that his actions were done **before the LORD**, not people. And the Lord had accepted him; he had placed his seal of approval on David by appointing him **ruler over the LORD's people Israel**. Though he was king, David

was willing to **be humiliated in his own eyes** in his attempts to honor God. Michal might not appreciate David's public worship of God, but the **slave girls** would hold him **in honor** for what he had done.

Holman Old Testament Commentary - Holman Old Testament Commentary – 1, 2 Samuel.

3. What all was involved in the worship service bringing the ark to Jerusalem?

The worship service required time and planning. A lot of people were involved in making sure the ark was carried in the proper way to Jerusalem. The worship required commitment. The priests, the band, the people all had to walk the 10 mile journey to Jerusalem. The worship required money. The bull and calf that were sacrificed after just six steps required money. David had a special outfit for himself made. David gave food to all the people who came to the service. That all required money. The worship required being free before the Lord. David forgot about being stately as a king and got out and danced and leaped into the air before the Lord with all his might. Everyone knew he was excited about following the Lord. The worship involved obedience. The first time they had tried to bring the ark to Jerusalem on a cart, when the law had specified it was to be carried on the shoulders of the priests.

4. Is worship to be a quiet experience or a joyful noisy one? Why?

In this context of David worshipping, worship is very loud and very noisy. There is a lot of praising and shouting going on by the people around. Yet we need to see worship in other contexts as well.

Worship can also be done in times of quietness and agony. Abraham had told his servants, that he and his son Isaac would go up the mountain alone to worship. God had told Abraham to bring his son up the mountain to sacrifice him. Abraham's journey was a three day worship experience. When Abraham was there to worship, it is very unlikely that he was shouting praises and dancing before the Lord. See Genesis 22

We find Isaiah in a period of worship in which it is very loud, yet it is very solemn.

Isaiah 6 Isaiah's Commission ¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.⁵ “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

In the New Testament, we find Jesus accepting worship from a person that is both quiet and soft. Jesus had healed a man in John 9 who had been born blind. Jesus comes back a second time to the man.³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”³⁶ “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.”³⁷ Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.”³⁸ Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

5. Why is David dancing and leaping before the Lord?

David is grateful that God is blessing his effort to bring the ark to Jerusalem. He knows that it can only mean great news for the nation.

When David tried to bring the ark of God to Jerusalem the first time, it was carried on an ox cart rather than by Levites, as the Law instructed. The cart, jolting along the rough track, tipped and seemed about to fall. A man named Uzzah who was guiding the cart reached out to steady it—and was struck dead!

This event angered as well as puzzled David. It did not appear to fit with God's character, and a suddenly fearful David left the ark at the household of Obed-Edom. But God blessed the household of Obed-Edom, and David's fears were relieved. David must also have studied the Scriptures or inquired of a prophet, for when David next tried to bring the ark to Jerusalem the Bible speaks of "those who were carrying the ark" ([2 Samuel 6:13](#)).

This time the ark arrived with a joyous David leading the company of dancing, shouting, praising worshipers.

What an important lesson David and all Israel were taught. You and I can revel in the love and compassion of our God. But we must always treat Him with respect! He who loves us is also the Holy One of Israel, and our love for Him should be tempered with a deep awe of who He is. The Teacher's Commentary.

6. Why do some of us resist strong demonstrations of physical activity such as dancing, clapping, and leaping when it comes to worshipping the Lord?

Most of us worship God based on the tradition that we grew up in. We are taught that our way to worship God is either the best way or the true way to worship. We confuse our tradition with God's word. Our tradition may be a way of doing something, but it is not the only way of doing something. We build in strong resistance to recognize and accept that others could be just as right or even more right than we are. Some of us will not allow any part of our belief system to be challenged because we think if one part is not correct, then it means the other parts are also suspect. God is bigger than our church, or our denomination. Some of us deliberately put habits on our expression of thanks in church, that we do not put on ourselves in other contexts. People who would never clap or leap to their feet in church, have no problem doing that same thing at a concert. Some times it is simply pride and prejudice that keeps us from doing some things in church. We have looked down upon others who have done those things, and we simply won't allow ourselves to go there.

1 Timothy 2:8 Today's New International Version (TNIV)⁸ Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.

Psalm 134:1-2 A song of ascents. ¹ Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD who minister by night in the house of the LORD. ² Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD.

7. Here are two biblical passages telling us to lift our hands during prayer and during worship. Why then do we often think only Pentecostals and Charismatics are to be the ones to lift up their hands during worship?

For the most part, we think it because that is what we have been taught in our churches through our tradition. Our worship style in many denominations that came out of Europe, reflect the formality that existed in Europe with its formal observance of Kings and Queens, and the very formal Roman Church. Pentecostals and Charismatics did not come out of a European tradition. They were freer in their expression of gratefulness and thanksgiving to God. We have often look to our culture to tell us how to worship, rather than looking to God.

8. Why does Michal despise David in her heart when she saw him out the window?

Michal does not share in David's exuberance for the Lord. She may not have been aware of how great it was to have the ark coming into Jerusalem. On the other hand she may have wanted her husband to act more like a dignified king would have acted. She knew her father King Saul, would not have acted in such a manner. She saw David making a fool of himself in his form of worship.

9. How do we become guilty of despising others in our hearts in their form of worship?

Like Michal, we could be thinking, it surely does not take all of that to praise God. We can think the person is just putting on a show. We can also think, the person is making a fool of him/herself in doing all of that. Or we can despise people who are not as active in their expression of worship, and insist that they show a lot more emotion if they really want to know God. God created us with different temperaments. Those temperaments will reveal themselves in how we worship God. The key is for us to worship God fully in the way God calls us to worship, and to give others the freedom to worship God as they seek to worship.

10. What is the value of knowing how to worship the Lord in quietness?

There will be times when we are all alone and in places where we can't shout and praise God as we may desire. That should not stop us from worshipping the Lord. There will be times in services, in which the music may be soft and contemplative. We need to be able to hear God in that situation as well. Sometimes we just need to be obedient to the passage of Scripture in Psalm 46:10 Today's New International Version (TNIV) ¹⁰ "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

11. What is at the core of genuine worship before the Lord?

At the core of genuine worship is a heart that seeks to be right before God, so as to enter into God's presence with praise, unhindered by anything. The form in which the worship takes place is going to be different depending on the time, the place, the sacrifice, and the willingness involved. We are told in 1 Chronicles 16:29 ²⁹ Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him. Worship the LORD in the splendor of his^[a] holiness.