

**BETTER TOGETHER IN WORSHIP  
WE'RE CREATED TO WORSHIP TOGETHER  
What does God want from us more than anything else?**

**Good Morning. It is good to see you here; it's good to be with you in worship.  
God wants us here together...to worship together.  
This is the last of the Better Together series and it is about worship,  
our Corporate WORSHIP**

**Someone has said, corporate worship is to make it easy to experience God  
and make it difficult to forget him. I like that.**

**Let me say it again.  
Worship is to make it easy to experience God and make it difficult to forget him.**

**I hope it is easy for you to experience Jesus here each Sunday and to feel you belong,  
to feel you are loved, to feel you are part of something bigger than yourself,  
and that I hope worship is so that your experience of Jesus will be hard to forget.**

**But the question is really not what I want, or what you want. The question is really  
What does God want from us? And what do you think the answer is?  
Surprise, Surprise, the answer is WORSHIP**

**Before I say more, let's ask our worship leaders "What worship means to them."**

**VIDEO CLIP**

**Mark Shoupe: "I love music and I love to see people open up to music  
open up minds to their Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.  
Open up and just think about God. Not think about anything else**

**Diane Lee: Worship to me is focusing on God. I feel God called back to this  
ministry and I just want to help others focus on God.**

**Cindy Haskell: Since Jesus saved me it is a matter of my heart focusing on him.  
The music helps prepare our hearts.**

**Billy: Worship to me is giving it up to God. One of my talents is to play guitar.  
When I pick up my guitar, I give that to God that others might know him.**

**Don Stengel: I want to share music with others. Hopefully it's upbeat music.**

**Good people with good words, with good hearts, with Godly hearts,  
God inspired people...called to inspire you, and help you worship**

We've heard about worship. I'm sure we all have an idea of what it means. We have 150-200 people here this morning so there are probably 150-200 different ideas of what worship means. Let's try to define the word itself.

In the first blank of your outlines put WORTH. How would you define worth? Worth is something or someone you love, or that has value, or that has worth.

In the second blank put SHIP.

We're going to define ship as the state, quality, or condition of something.

That quality or condition can be anything.

It can be in SHIPSHAPE condition, that means it's in good condition.

Or it could be a SHIPWRECK, that is not so good.

So, WORSHIP is the act of placing value on someone or something?

In this context of being here today for corporate worship;

because we are present and we proclaim, when we sing, say, give or pray, we are saying we value our relationship with God.

Before we look at a couple of scriptures,

let's ask a few more of our worship leaders, what worship means to them.

#### VIDEO CLIP

Melody Miller-Rostad: I play the piano for worship services.

I love music and it is a way that I can help people focus on God and share God's love with them. I want them to feel God's love.

Joye Ward: I sing with the praise team. I want people to just feel the wonderful love God. I hope the music draws out their passion for God and helps them focus on God.

Julie Ford: I direct the chancel choir and we feel the music, we feel each note and that is what we hope to convey to or to help the congregation to do.

More good words and more good insight.

It's always interesting to hear from others as to why they do what they do.

Keep track of those words-focus, passion, feel, and share...they'll fit into our outline.

We're going to say that worship should help us

*focus our attention on God, express our affection to God, and use our abilities for God.*

Roland Pond was feeling a little sad he missed the taping these interviews. So let's let him have his say. Roland, how would you describe worship?

Roland: "Let the good times roll."

Lets ask, **WHY DO WE WORSHIP?** And see what the scriptures say,

We're given a pretty good clue in Romans 12.1,  
*“Therefore, I urge you, in view (because) of God’s mercy,  
to offer your bodies as holy and living sacrifices to God.  
This is your spiritual worship.”*

*In view or because of God’s mercy, because of God’s mercy...*  
God has shown mercy to us in the life and death of Jesus...  
God through Jesus has sought us, bought us, and taught us with his redeeming blood.  
That’s a pretty good reason to worship.

Liz Higgins Curtis, author of Bad Women of the Bible had a terrible life.  
She had been used and abused. Then she used and abused anything and everything.

Being very talented she had her own radio talk show.  
I’m told her language made Howard Stern sound like a choir boy.  
If you don’t know who Howard Stern is, that is probably a good thing.

A friend after much encouragement, you know a lot of begging, pleading,  
and nagging finally got her to go to church

The sermon was from Ephesians 5, about the roles of husbands and wives.  
Verse 22 says, *“wives be submissive to your husbands out of reverence for Christ.”*

Well, imagine the colorful commentary being played out in her mind  
considering her experience with men and her view about life.

The preacher then went on to explain that the husband is to love his wife  
as Jesus loved the church, which means the husband is to go all out to show  
her that love, even give his life for her.

Liz leaned over whispering to her friend, **“I would certainly love to meet a man like that.”**

Her friend, at first taken back and surprised hid the smile on her face  
but kept her presence of mind said, **“Well, let me introduce you to him.”**

So began the love relationship between Jesus and Liz Higgins Curtis.  
She now writes commentaries and books and speaks publicly about how  
God has worked in her life and the lives of the Bible characters.

We may not know everything about him. We may not know much about him.  
The song says, **“He loves us ere we knew him...**  
All we need to know is that he knows us, he loves us, and he forgives us,

It is *“because of his mercy, we worship.*

**And our worship is to offer our bodies as holy and living sacrifices to God-  
This is true spiritual worship.**

### **WORSHIP IS OUR RESPONSE TO GOD**

(Put Response in the blank) When I was in confirmation we learned that the worship service was a conversation or dance with God and that God initiates everything in that conversation or dance.

There is a call to worship-we come, we sing  
There is a call to prayer-we pray,  
There is the Sermon, an invitation to do something or trust more  
There is the offering, an invitation to give,  
to give back to God our attention, affection, and our abilities.

### **WORSHIP IS GIVING BACK TO GOD**

(Put Giving Back in the blank)

Well, so **HOW DO WE WORSHIP?**

The song says, all my love is due him. We love God back.

You were created to be loved and to love.  
God made you to be an object of his love and to share that love.  
He made you for relationship. Basically we're here to love and be loved.  
So we love God back.

Did you know that it is a commandment? Mark 12.30 tells us it is.  
In fact it's actually the first commandment, "*Love the Lord your God  
with all your heart, with all your soul, with all you mind and with all your strength.*"

That is the most important thing you can do in your life-love God.  
I know that might be uncomfortable to think about that in terms of worship  
but WORSHIP is a very appropriate term for expressing our love to God.

Let's look at that scripture and see if we can alleviate some of that anxiety.

1. We worship with our hearts and souls **PASSIONATELY.**
2. We worship with our minds **THOUGHTFULLY.**
3. We worship with our strength **PRACTICALLY.**

**AND HOW IS THAT PLAYED OUT? We worship...**

1. With our hearts and souls when we **EXPRESS OUR AFFECTION TO GOD.**
2. With our minds when we **FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON GOD.**

**3. With our strength when we USING OUR ABILITIES FOR GOD**

**Think about your abilities, gifts, and talents...the things you have done and can do...**

**It isn't just the preacher or worship leaders that make worship happen.  
There are so many things that make worship happen.**

**All are important because whatever we do... we are BETTER TOGETHER.**

**We do need musicians and worship leaders in worship. Would you please stand.**

**There are the ushers and greeters, those people who have those nice big smiles and warm handshakes as you come in the door. Ushers and greeters please stand**

**Dave and his media crew here and at the MOC do such a wonderful job making us look good. There in the first row of the balcony, they're too busy to stand.**

**Grace is here most Saturdays setting something up for either for our college friends, or a table to promote a study or event. Please stand.**

**The worship team has the sanctuary decorated up. Bun has it cleaned up. Please Stand**

**Then there are our communion stewards and the hospitality folks who set up refreshment table. Please Stand**

**Carol and her staff get the bulletins typed and folded. Please Stand**

**Donna, Grace, Paula, and Pricilla, and Carol I. follow-up on all the guests and people in need**

**Carlton and his crew count your gifts, tithes, and offerings each week. Please Stand**

**Mary keeps track those of those gifts, tithes, and offerings. Please Stand**

**Now I saved the best till last.**

**My friend Julian Wigan says he doesn't go to church for himself or for what he can get out of it. He thinks that, and rightly so that his presence is the best gift to God and to the people**

**Whether you think so or not, your presence is a gift to us and to God and adds to worship.**

**The contemporary term for that is SYNERGY.**

**So would all of you here today stand and know your presence is important.**

**We're here to worship together, and because of it we're BETTER TOGETHER.**