

Surrendering to God – Part 2

Living Worship



When people are asked about worship, many people mention their favourite church songs. Unfortunately in many churches singing and worship are considered the same. But worship is so much more than singing. That's only one component of worship. At its core, worship is surrendering your entire life to God, to his way and his control.

To worship we need to take our eyes off ourselves so we can focus on God. When we go too long without worshipping God, the overwhelming details of life begin to weigh us down and ultimately to trap us. That's when we begin to believe we're too busy or too tired to focus on God. So slow down! You don't have to rush through these questions. Use them as a guide to trigger conversation with friends who you want to know better. Relax. Talk. Enjoy.

Brainstorm a list of ways to worship God.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Write a definition of worship below and then share your definition with the group.

Christians talk a lot about worship, yet somehow misconceptions continue. A lot of the discussions are about the particular styles people prefer. For example, some might talk about their love for contemporary music while others think hymns lead to "real worship." Others prefer silence followed by loud praise songs. Everyone has a preference or two. That's one of the great things about how God has created humanity we're all different! But the words to a song, the style of the music, and the environment where Christians gather aren't as important as the heart of the worshiper. The apostle Paul describes worship in **Romans 12:1-3**

1. What personal mercies have you experienced from God? Get specific? _____

2. What does it mean to offer your body as a spiritual act of worship? _____

3. What's the relationship between mental transformation ("be transformed by the renewing of your mind") and worship? _____

4. What are some signs that you're being transformed by the renewing of your mind? _____

5. Worshipping God leads to renewal, which leads to transformation. According to this passage, what follows transformation? _____

6. Would you consider yourself to be a discerning person (meaning that you regularly know the will of God)? Explain why you think so. _____

7. How do thoughts about yourself impact your thinking about God? _____
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8. How would you describe the last week or two of your life if you were to look at it through a lens of "sober judgment"? _____
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9. We don't worship God on our own initiative. Worship of God is in response to something. What are we responding to? What specific clues do you find in the text to support your answer? _____
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10. How can a better understanding of God's mercy improve your worship of him? _____
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11. What's the connection between the worship of the heart and the worship that happens within a church building? _____
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Just like breathing, worship can happen naturally in your life. The life-altering difference between breathing and worship is that we don't have to remind ourselves to breathe. It happens naturally. Worship isn't as natural as breathing, so we can find ourselves spiritually suffocating if we're not taking regular opportunities to focus on God. Worship can be a spiritual form of breathing.

Living sacrifices

Within the context of Old Testament worship, sacrifices (often animals) were offered to God and put to death. The worshiper surrendered something valuable as the sacrifice. When Jesus died on the cross, he became the perfect sacrifice. Since we don't have a need to offer animal sacrifices to cover our sins, our response is to worship

God in thanksgiving and praise and to offer all that we have left - the sacrifice of our living selves. The sacrifice that we offer to God is described with three ideas:

- Living
- Being Holy (set apart for God)
- Pleasing God

Spiritual act of worship

Our spiritual act of worship is a part of an interesting progression described in this passage:

- God's mercy leads to our worship of him.
- Our worship leads to being renewed by God's presence.
- Our renewal leads to our minds being transformed.
- Our mental transformation leads to the ability to know God's will.
- In this context, we ought to consider ourselves with sober judgment (or as the New Living Translation puts it, be honest in your estimate of yourselves).

Here are a few specific ways to worship:

- Praying (Psalm 95:6)
- Hearing the Word (John 17: 17; Deuteronomy 31 : 11)
- Giving (1 Corinthians 16: 1-2)
- Baptizing (Romans 6:3-4)
- Meditating and being silent (Habakkuk 2:20)
- Celebrating the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11 :23- 26)
- Singing (Ephesians 5: 19)
- Celebrating the arts (Exodus 35:30-36:7)

Transformed

This word means to be changed from one form to another, often a major change. God wants to change us. He wants us to be like Jesus, not the world. Transformation happens when we allow God's Word and his Spirit to renew our minds and clear our vision so we can walk God's way.