



15 Days of Worship (1st edition – Rev1)



15-day devotional guide
for worship team
members

Day 1 - What is worship? Where do we find the answer?

Undoubtedly, many people have many different opinions, views and ideas of what worship is, how it should be done and how it cannot be done. Where can we find the most reliable answers to these questions?

According to 2 Peter 1:3-4:

- What has God's divine power given us? _____
- God gave us "everything we need for life and godliness" through what? _____.

According to the previous passage, if we get "everything we need", through our knowledge of Him [Jesus], how do we access and understand this knowledge? How can we in our physical life access this 'divine power' and understanding of all things?

Read John 1:1-5 and 1 John 1:1-4 and notice that the writer starts talking about "the word" as being God the creator, and he continues identifying that person "The Word" as Jesus Christ.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21. Who inspired the very words you read in your Bible? _____.

The Bible is not the only 'sacred' book' that claim to have 'the word of god', However, it is the only book (or collection of 66 books/letters) that:

- Is made of 66 different ancient writings (of which we have more archeological evidences than any other ancient literature piece)
- written in a span period of 1,500 years
- in 3 different languages
- from 3 different continents
- by some 30+ authors coming from different socio-economical backgrounds,
- with more than 1/3 of events that had not happened when they were written (predicted the future), and
- In spite of all that, keeps a unified message that doesn't contradict itself, while answering the 3 most important questions of humanity: Where do we come from; where are we going to, and what's our purpose.

In summary, we have the confidence that when searching and studying the Bible, we can find everything we need to know about worship and how to do it the way He will be pleased.

Application: What can you do today to begin a change in your perspective and view of the Bible –not as a complicated religious book with incredible stories but, as a 'manual of instructions' that God gave YOU to help you be who He wants you to be?

Let the journey begin!

Day 2 - What is worship?

If you had to define the word worship, based on what you know today and what you have heard and what you see, how would you define it? "I think worship is _____"

The Bible doesn't give a formal definition of worship. But perhaps we can start by seeing what various words for worship mean.

The English word "worship" comes from two Old English words: 'weorth', which means "worth," and 'scipe' or ship, which means quality. Therefore, in short, 'worth-ship' is the quality of having worth or of being worthy; to declare worth, to attribute worth, to show someone how much they are worth to us, to show others how much someone is worth for us.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word used for worship is '*shachah*', which means 'to bow down', to 'prostrate oneself', 'to give honor'.

In the New Testament, the Greek word used for worship is '*proskyneō*', which means 'to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence', 'to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence', 'kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication, 'homage shown to men and beings of superior rank'

Some specific ways in which we see that Bible expressing this concept of worship are in 'giving glory', giving thanks, showing gratitude, sacrificing, following, obeying, trusting, pleasing, etc.

Based on the previous definitions, how different do you see worship? Is there anything new that jumped to your mind? How different would you define it now? "I now think worship is _____"

Application: List 3 ways in which you can worship God today:

- _____
- _____
- _____

**Day 3 - What is worship?
Who and why worship? Part 1**

Read the following passages and write who seems to have been made for the glory to God:
Isaiah 44:23 _____
Colossians 1:15-18 _____
Luke 19:37-40 _____

As you may have concluded, the whole creation –everything, mountains, rivers, animals, humans and angels, have been created by God with one ultimate goal: to give glory to God. Everything and everyone was created to worship God.

What were YOU created for? Have you been called by God? Read 1 Peter 2:9 and answer:

- Who is Peter talking to? _____

If you answered, 'the church' or 'me' or 'Christians', you are right! We call ourselves 'the church'. The church doesn't mean 'the building' or 'a denomination'. From the Greek Bible text, 'church' is 'ekklesia' which means 'the called-out one'. If you are a Christian, if you have been born again, if Jesus lives in your heart, if you are saved, that means you are part of the church; you have been called by God from darkness to light.

Now, knowing that YOU have been called, according to Isaiah 43:7, what were you created for? _____.

Furthermore, Ecclesiastes 3:11 shows us that we all were created with a sense of 'eternity'. Although we were all created for the purpose of worshiping, not everyone chooses to worship God. We all give importance and awe to something or someone. We all worship something or somebody, however, our highest purpose –what we were created for, is to worship God.

Application: How can you live out today what God has made you to be?

**Day 4 - What is worship?
Who and why worship? Part 2**

Imagine that towards the end of the school year, you are walking down the hall at your school and one of your teachers, who is coming from the opposite way randomly stops you and asks you: "thank me!". What do you do? _____

I know, it doesn't make much sense. I wouldn't know what to do either. I would probably ask "excuse me?" –"what did you say?". Perhaps even if you want to "go along" with it, you may say: "thank you...", and wait to know what was all that about.

Now, imagine that throughout the school year, you have been horrible, lazy irresponsible student and you are justly failing this teacher's class. Imagine that because of failing this class, you will have to repeat the whole year (that's what it was like when I was in School back in my country). Then you hear that the teacher finds the way to pass you –no just pass you, but giving you the greatest possible grade –without asking anything in return. You don't deserve it but the teacher eliminated all our bad grades and gave you the best possible grade -that you didn't deserve. The next day after you learned of this fabulous gift, you are walking down the hall at your school and the one teacher who helped you, is coming from the opposite way randomly stops you and asks you: "thank me!". What do you do? _____.

Hopefully the answer is that you would thank the teacher –very eloquently and heartfelt. In fact, I don't even think you would wait for the teacher to say "thank me!" –you would probably, out of your own initiative, find the teacher, thank her, give her a hug, a box of chocolates and offer to cleaning her room

Why was it easier to thank the teacher in the second instance? _____.

Hopefully you see the patterns here. If someone asks you to randomly press gratitude for something you don't understand, it will be difficult, forced and awkward. However, when you realize and understand what someone has done for you, such gratitude will come spontaneously, naturally, and from the bottom of your heart.

- Have you ever disobeyed God? _____ (see Rom 3:23 and 10)
- If you indeed have broken God's laws in disobedience, what do Deuteronomy 27:26; Romans 3:19, 6:23, and James 2:10 describe about you _____

The good news is that God being a fair just judge chose to execute that punishment you and I deserved –not on ourselves, but on his son Jesus. The punishment had to be done, but He gave himself to be the sacrifice. Now you and I, not only don't receive what we deserve (mercy), but we also get blessings beyond our understanding (grace). In Jesus, we are declared 'clean', justified, righteous, accepted and loved. This is why we worship.

Application: The more we understand the severity of our offenses towards God, and the amazing gift He gave us in salvation, the better and easier we can truly worship from our hearts. Pray and ask God to give you a glimpse of what He paid for you; what He suffered in your place, so that you could enjoy the same benefits He enjoys as son of God.

Day 5 - How to worship?
With all your heart...

At this point we have learned from scripture that worship goes beyond 4 songs we sing on Sunday morning. It is deeper than singing or listening to Christian music. It is what we were made to do; it is how we are to love and respond to God's first love for us.

But, what does worship look like in daily living? What does the Bible tell us about how to do it? Read Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37; Luke 10:27. There are four areas or ways we can and should love (worship) God. What are those?

- With all our _____

How can we love or worship God with all our heart, according to:

- Exodus 20:3. _____
- If we define 'idol' as anything or anyone who is more important than God, what are some 'idols' that we have in today's culture that can cause us to make decisions and do things for their sake rather than God's? _____
- John 14:15. _____

Although you can make the argument that 'love' is not necessarily a feeling (butterflies in your stomach), but more a choice you make, often time we associate love with passion, heartfelt conviction and deep desire for someone. Please read Revelation 2:4-5 and write what dos Jesus say is the solution for those who have 'left their first love'. _____

Application: If love in a sense is a passionate feeling, spend some time in prayer asking God to increase and fire up that passion for Him. If love in a sense is a choice you make – and our feelings will follow, write what steps you can take to 'chose to love God with all your heart' as a response to what He has done for you.

Day 6 - How to worship?
With all your soul and mind...

The words 'soul and mind' are kind of complex in understanding and many scholars have a variety of interpretations. They are part of a complex area of our human make up that can be taken in many different directions. Nevertheless, most agree that these aspects of the human being as a reflection of God's nature are related to our emotions and thoughts.

As human beings, we were created with the ability to experience emotions. This emotions and affections can often help us to go in the right direction but also, sometimes they will take us off the path we are to follow.

To what extent is it possible to 'control' our heart and decide what does it feel for? _____

Can we choose who we fall in love for? _____

Can we choose not to fall in love for someone who is not going to help us to get closer to God?

Can we choose feel fear or not? (see Isaiah 41:10) _____

Can we choose to be angry –or not? (see Ephesians 4:26) _____

Can we choose to be happy or joyful? (se James 1:2-4) _____

Can we choose to be sad? (Psalm 40:16) _____

According to these scriptures, what can we do to guard our minds/hearts?

Proverbs 4:23. _____

Philippians 4:6-7 _____

Philippians 4:8 _____

Application: In what areas in your life can you take steps towards "guarding" and protecting your heart/mind?

**Day 7 - How to worship?
With all your strength...**

According to Colossians 3:17 and 23, in what specific things that we do, can we please God? _____

I am sure, if we were reading the same Bible, your answer was 'everything' we say and do. That is awesome, that means, 'everything'. Let's see some other examples:

What area of your life does this verse describe you can worship God?

- Ephesians 6:5-7. _____
- Ephesians 6:9. _____
- Colossians 3:20 and Ephesians 6:1-3. _____
- Ephesians 6:4. _____
- 1 Corinthians 10:31 _____

At work, at school, as children, as parents, when we volunteer at church, when we help someone in need, when we give offerings, virtually everything we do, can become worship if in some way it obeys His commandments, points others to Christ or tells others about what He has done.

Finally, and more to the point of this study, one way of worshiping God with our strength (and in part with our heart, soul and mind), is with the arts –and more specifically, by singing and playing songs corporately in church, small groups and even alone. We will discuss musical worship in following chapters. In the meantime, read the following verses from the book of **Psalms** and write down what **ways** and **instruments** are we commanded, encouraged or allowed to worship God.

- 5:11; 32:11; 7:17; 9:2; 9:11; 13:6; 21:13; 33:3; 51:14; 59:16; 63:3; 67:4. _____
- 28:2; 47:1; 63:4; 77:2; 98:8; 134:2; 141:2; 143:6. _____
- 95:6; 134:2 _____
- 33:2; 71:22; 81:2; 92:3; 98:5; 144:9; 147:7; 149:3; 150. _____
- 22:22; 35:18; 57:9; 107:32. _____
- 149:3. _____

Application: Think about two areas in your life in which you can intentionally let others know about God by doing your job –or going beyond what you are supposed to do.

**Day 8 - Worship and Music
Where does music come from?**

To my knowledge, the first mention of any musical related item in the Bible, is found in Genesis 4:21 when describing Jubal (About 5 generations after Cain) as 'the father of all those who play the harp and flute'. This happened about 2,500 years before Christ –or about 4,500 years ago.

Some historians argue that musical instruments have been found in China dating around 6,000 before Christ.

However, there are passages in the Bible that seem to describe music and it seems to take us even further back in history –perhaps even before the creation of men.

Many scholars make the case that Satan, before the fall, was , not only an angel, but something like the 'worship leader' in heaven. The leader of music and praise to God, the best gifted with the most beautiful voice... until pride overtook him and he attempted to be like God... and was cast out of heaven –with a third of angels.

This theory says that the passage we read in Ezekiel 28:11-19, describes who Satan was before the fall and how he was destitute from heaven. In Ezekiel 28:13 (NKJV), we read "The workmanship [or the job] of your timbrels and pipes [musical instruments] was prepared for you on the day you were created." Also, Isaiah 14:11 seems to describe what happened with his musical gifts after the fall: "Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments;..."

Whether this interpretation is accurate or not, we can confidently conclude that indeed God created music as He ordained it to be used in the temple (we will look at this later on) . Although today music can be used to worship other things, He created it, for His glory.

What music style is 'godly'? Is God pleased with hymns the same as He can be worshipped with other styles like rock, pop, and rap? _____

Hopefully after the previous chapters, you will agree with me that any type of music can be used to glorify God –lyrics are more relevant than style.

Application: I remember growing up listening to some people –usually older folks, who would say that rock or rap was 'the music of the devil'. How would you lovingly and respectfully respond to people who don't like or agree with your worship music style?

**Day 9 - Worship in the Old Testament.
The Levites – Part 1**

In the days of the Old Testament, more exactly in the days of Moses, the Israelites had a 'tent' called The Tabernacle, in which they gathered and the presence of The Lord dwelt – and they worshiped (kind of a church building for us today). Later, David built a more temporal temple. There was a tribe (a family) called the Levites (sons of Levi) that was in charge of all the priestly jobs (picture one family from which everyone who serves came from: i.e pastor, worship leaders, sound etc). (see Deuteronomy 10:8 and 1 Chronicles 23:28)

Read Numbers 16:8-9 in which Moses is talking to some of the Levites. What does it mean 'separated/consecrates'? _____

This text says that The Levites were to 'stand' between _____ and _____.

What do you think this means? _____

According to 1 Chronicles 15:16, 16:4 and 25:1, what tasks were some of the Levites assigned to: _____

If the Levites serve as an ideal example and pattern for people involved In worship today, Read 2 Chronicles 5:11-14 and answer the following questions: In verse 11, what would it mean for you to be consecrated? _____

From verse 12, what would it be for you to be "dressed in fine linen"? _____

From verse 13, what would it mean for you and other members of the worship team to be "in unison, as with one voice"? _____

From verse 13 and 14, what do you picture in our mind this moment was like? How would you picture a similar moment today, as you lead worship? _____

If you are given the privilege and opportunity to be part of the worship team, and therefore to represent Jesus and the church up on stage and out of stage, how does that affect the way you carry yourself in public and privately? _____

Application: pray, think about and write down what being a Levite today could mean for you.

**Day 10 - Worship in the Old Testament.
The Levites – Part 2**

As we learned in the previous chapter, the Levites were chosen by God to be somehow the intermediaries between God and the people. They were to be set apart for God, for service to God and service to the people. They were to bring God's presence to the people and the people to God's presence. The Levites assigned to music were to live exemplary lives of character with excellent reputation and to be united among themselves. Although today we don't need an intermediary before us and God because Jesus made the way and we all are now priests to Him, in a sense the worship team is still a kind of 'connection' between God and people in the sense that the worship team also serves the people in facilitating that 'entering into God's presence'.

Let's see another trait from the Levites from which we can draw lessons for us today.

According to 1 Chronicles 25:6, were the Levites 'lone rangers' who did what they pleased and were the 'stars' of the temple worship just because they were artistically gifted? _____

If the Levites were under 'supervision', what does it look like for you today? As a worship team member, who are you under 'supervision'? _____

What should your attitude be, as a worship team member, when the pastor or leader asks not to play a specific song or change the set-list or do something that you don't agree or want? (Aside from issues that are clearly unbiblical, unethical or immoral) _____

Because worship leaders are often gifted and seen-by-all up in stage, there is often the temptation to let pride climb our hearts. One of the most important qualities in a worship leader is to be able to align with the leaders' vision and to follow instructions from them in order to accomplish and 'deliver' a unified 'package' to the church or group being led in worship. It is important to remember that if God wants you in a place or position to 'call the shots', He will make it happen –without you pushing your way. This mindset is also useful when receiving criticism –which will happen more often than you may think. You can't be liked by everyone, but should do everything according to your, call, gifting and the church or ministry vision.

Application: How do you usually manage yourself when faced with instructions contrary to your wishes, by people in authority over you? Ask people who 'supervise' you (mom, dad, teachers, leaders, authorities) and ask them to give you feedback on this area of your life. Pray about it and think about how you can improve.

Day 11 - Worship in the Old Testament.
The Levites – Part 3

Let's consider another trait from the Levites from which we can draw lessons for us today.

Read 1 Chronicles 15:22 and 25:7; 2 Chronicles 34:12. What common trait do you notice the musicians had in these three passages? They were _____.

Being skilled or skillful is one who has skill. Skill is defined as 'the learned capacity to carry out or perform a task'. Although people involved in music will inherently be required to have some innate abilities and gifts (decent voice, rhythm, tone etc), this idea of being skillful implies a habit and intentionality in learning and working towards being better and better at it.

What does Psalm 33:3 and Ecclesiastes 10:10 tell us about being skillful? _____.

Even though as musicians we are not to play so extremely 'cool riffs' and extravagant voice changes and in ways that attract the attention of the audience to us instead of God, we are to strive to be excellent at what we do. This often will require an extra effort in properly preparing, practicing, learning new techniques and improving our abilities. To be better or skillful is often costly in time, resources and effort. What does David say about his 'sacrifices' (a form of worship) in 2 Samuel 24:24? _____.

Application: Think and pray about how can you work towards being better at what you do –or want or do in the worship team?

Day 12 - Worship after Jesus

Although most of the practices from the Old Testament are no longer practiced or required because they were a 'shadow' or 'type' of what Jesus accomplished at The Cross (i.e. The Temple, the sacrifices, etc), and fulfilled in Him (The Levites priesthood, the holidays etc), worship is now more than ever encouraged, commanded and required. Of course, part of that, is worship through music.

The way we do musical worship in church today (or in any Christian gathering), is a contemporary expression and continuation of what the early Christians did. These are some examples:

In Matthew 26:26-30, Jesus and the disciples were gathered at the Last Supper. Who sang a hymn? _____.

In Acts 16:25, what are Paul and Silas doing? _____.
In 1 Corinthians 14:26, what does Paul expect Corinthians to do and why? _____.

How can you apply in your personal life Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16? _____.

According to James 5:13, what can we do when we are happy? _____.

Please read the following extract of a letter that a non-Christian governor wrote in year 112 A.D. to his superiors describing a Christian gathering:

"On an appointed day the Christians are accustomed to meet at daybreak and **recite (or sing) a hymn to Christ**, as to a god, and bind themselves by an oath (sacramentum) to abstain from theft and robbery, adultery, and breach of faith. After this they depart, and meet again to take food. To find out the truth concerning them I applied torture to two maidservants who were called deaconesses. But I found nothing but a depraved and extravagant superstition." (Pliny, Letters, 10.96)

Application: Go into a private place by yourself and sing a song to God –it is fun!

Day 13 – Make it easy to 'worship'

As we considered earlier on Day 9, according to Numbers 16:8-9, the Levites were to 'stand' between God and the people. That concept in application to today's context means that worship leaders and teams are to –through the music segment of the worship service, provide an environment in which the people can **easily** 'connect' with God in praise and worship. There are several steps that the worship team can take to facilitate this process

Please answer to the following questions from your personal point of view and experiences. Does it make it easier or more difficult for you to 'worship' (i.e. on Sunday morning) when:

- You have never heard the song the band is playing. _____.
- You know the song but it sounds too higher too low for you to sing. _____.
- The song(s) and the message have the same theme and you can vocalize what the message is challenging you to do. _____.
- There are interruptions between songs or the leader speaks during songs _____.
- The leader explains what and why we are doing. _____.

As you may notice, some of the answers to these questions can be very subjective depending on who answers them. Not everyone has the same tastes and preferences. However, they hopefully awaken you to how much certain areas can so much affect a person's experience in worship. We as worship leaders are to strive for understanding what the people we are serving may or may not find conducive to worship and accommodate such things to make it easier for them.

These are some considerations I try to keep in mind –they are not rules but suggestions that, again, are based and geared towards your audience:

- Play no more than one new song per day –maybe two new songs a month, and play them again to give people the opportunity to learn it
- Keep tones and ranges in a level that 'normal' people can sing. It's not about you showing off your voice but leading them into worshipping with you.
- Prepare the set list in coordination with the speaker and find common themes.
- Pray heartfelt, guide and give directions, talk to them, but don't talk too much, someone else is doing the preaching 😊

Application: Start building your 'repertoire' (set of songs you can or want to do) –especially if you lead or prepare the set lists. You can organize them and label them by key, theme etc. This will help you to at-a-glance view the songs and prepare set-lists)and even start practicing songs for the future. Add new songs as you hear.

Day 14 – In spirit and in truth

Has anybody ever given you a gift you don't like? It is awkward, isn't it? I think sometimes we take the risk of giving gifts to God –in worship, that He may not like.

How do we know what pleases Him? Read 2 Peter 3:18. _____

One of the most popular 'worship' passages in found in John 4:1-26. In this passage Jesus speaks the famous words: "*But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*". There are multiple applications and interpretations for this passage. One of them, is that worship is not just music and fuzzy feelings. Biblical worship needs to be anchored on and always according to "Truth" which is the Word of God.

A very important aspect of leading worship is having a balanced life of personal time with God. Though practicing your instrument and listening to Christian music and all that can be helpful and indeed is good, nothing replaces your personal time with God in prayer and devotional Bible study. The more you know God through the more you can offer gifts to Him that He will find pleasing and the better you can lead others into worship.

What do you think this quote means? "*You can't take people to a place where you have never been or guide them into a road you randomly travel!*" _____

Let your time of leading worship be a reflection of what you have been doing all week long; lead people onto God's presence knowing you hang out there all the time

Application: If you haven't yet, set aside a time –make it a daily priority, to spend time with God in prayer, read the Bible, study it and even start a journal to document your experiences, learning and growth with God.

Day 15 – This is just the beginning

Throughout 15 days we have seen how we all were created to worship God with our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, our affections, with our obedience, our gratitude, our work, with our voices, with our hands, with our instruments –with everything.

We also briefly touched on how the Old Testament Levites (family divided in 24 groups who were the worship leaders of old), serve us as a pattern to follow on what the worship leader's position (servant to God and to people) and goals (to bring God's presence to people, and bring people to God's presence) are.

In considering why we worship, we looked at the reasons we have –not only we were created for it, but I I the least we can do for God, to please Him n return for paying our penalty of death and giving us Hs glorious riches and position before God the father. But, there is another reason. In the book of Revelation chapter 4, we get a peak of what the end –heaven is going to be like. Read Revelation 4:10-11. Just to give you a bit of background, the "24 elders" seem to be a representation of us, the church. What are they doing before the throne of God?_____.

Read now Revelation 5:8-14. Here we have the 'living creatures' and the '24 elders' (that's us –the church), doing what?_____.

Read now Revelation 7:9-12. What's going on here? _____.

What strikes you or calls your attention of these three passages?_____

_____.

We worship because He has redeemed us and bought us to himself. You would maybe conclude that when we get there, to heaven, whatever that is going to look like, we will be in some sort of 'worship' and awe with Him. Our worship today and Sunday and next Sunday them, is in a sense, preparation for what we will be doing for eternity. Something fabulous and so amazing that we can barely get a bit of understanding.

Application: Find on your mp3 player, youtube or your player/music market of choice, the following songs. Listen to them and picture in your mind what they are attempting to describe:

- "You Hold Me Now" (Hillsong United)
- "I can Only Imagine" (Mercy Me)
- "Great I Am " (New Life Worship)