

Why Worship?

Imperative #1: Understanding Worship at Christ Center Community Church

"Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

John 4:23-24 (NIV)

What Is Worship?

Worship is our personal heart response to the presence of God. Worship is upwardly directed adoration, and a thoughtful expression of our appreciation and gratitude for all that He is and all He has done. Worship is the gift of love we as God's children give back to Him in response to His prior gift of love to us in Christ. There is no greater expression of our purpose in God's creative plan than when we are worshipping Him. And corporate worship is at the heart of our identity as a church. Consider these thoughts:

- Worship is an action verb, by which we respond appropriately to the presence of God.
- Worship is our faith response to the reality of His presence "right here, right now!"
- Worship includes such responses as awe, fear, humility, love, joy, faith, resolve, obedience, serving.
- In worship we focus, marvel, and rejoice in our God—His perfect character, and mighty acts.
- Worship fulfills us as redeemed people through our enjoyment of God.
- Worship, therefore, is **an authentic encounter with the living God!**

Why Do We Worship?

- 1. Worship Brings Pleasure to God.** Worship is the highest and noblest act that any person can do. When people worship, God is satisfied! The Father seeks those who worship Him in spirit and truth. **John 4:23-24**
- 2. Worship Fulfills God's Purpose in Redemption.** Scripture reveals that the ultimate purpose of our salvation is to become worshippers. That is why God created us and that is why He saves us. **Eph.:3-14**
- 3. Worship Is Obedience to God's Command.** God calls us to worship Him. **Deut. 6:13; Psa. 95:6** God's call to worship is given in love; He knows what great blessings He intends for those who worship.
- 4. Worship Gives Us Spiritual Perspective.** Worship reminds us of the spiritual and the eternal. Worship takes us beyond the world of the five senses, into the real, eternal realm of the Spirit. **Col. 3:1-4**
- 5. Worship Brings Personal Fulfillment.** When we worship, we are fulfilled. We were made for worship. As we worship, we awaken to the vision of the glory of God. In beholding His glory, the creature experiences his highest joy. **Psalm 16:11; 27:4**
- 6. Worship Strengthens Our Endurance.** Worship enables us to endure in our Christian walk. In **Hebrews 11:27**, Moses endured the wrath of the Pharaoh because he saw God and worshipped. As we see God's glory through worship, our heart's desires and life's disappointments are put in proper perspective.
- 7. Worship Brings Wisdom.** We worship to gain wisdom. For example, in **Psalm 73:16**, David's confusion gave way to understanding when he went into the sanctuary to worship.

What Happens to Us When We Worship?

- 1. We Are Cleansed.** Worship reminds us of God, and we are made very acutely aware of His perfect character. In that mirror of His glory we see ourselves. When we compare ourselves to Him, rather than other people, we are aware of our sin. We confess and experience His cleansing in the context of worship.
- 2. We Are Changed.** By some mysterious process, when we worship, God produces changes in our lives. In **2 Corinthians 3:18**, Paul says that as we gaze on the glory of the Lord in our worship we are changed into His image. To worship God the way we ought is to become what we ought to be. We who were once self-centered have to be completely changed so that we can shift our attention outside of ourselves and become able to worship Him. And by extension, as we as individuals are changed, the church, the body of Christ is changed.
- 3. We Surrender.** As we are changed through worship, we find ourselves responding with action. When Moses, for example, stood before the burning bush he was commanded to take off his shoes because he stood on holy ground. Moses worshipped, but then he was expected to put on his shoes and to lead the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. Worship leads to humility, and humility leads to a willingness to be ruled. The idea of authority and submission is crucial to our understanding of worship. Psalm 123:1-2.
- 4. We Serve.** As we learn to be worshipers, we find out that all of life is worship. My daily worship is how I live – loving, honoring, delighting, praising, giving thanks, adoring, serving, discovering, obeying, working, sacrificing, giving – all in response to Who God is!

What Is Our “Style” of Worship?

“Blended Worship” is a term we use to describe a style of worship we are developing at our church. It focuses on the centrality of Christ, using a wide range of worship “tools.” Our objective is to offer to the Lord authentic worship which includes all the gifts and talents God has placed in our body of believers. Since we are an independent church, we have people from a wide variety of traditions – evangelical, charismatic, and liturgical, traditional and historic – and many with no traditional background at all. “Blended worship” is not a compromise to try to please everyone. It is our intentional effort to do the following things.

- To prepare the way for everyone to have a spiritual **ENCOUNTER** with God, right here, right now.
- To please the heart of our God with authentic worship in spirit and in truth.
- To create a dynamic culture of worship at Christ Center which draws us all together in worship.
- To bridge culturally to the unchurched, to the dischurched, and to a new generation.

How Do We Prepare for Worship “in Spirit and in Truth?”

- Truth:** Embrace the Bible as God’s self-disclosure – His perfect character, powerful works, and sure promises.
- Yielding:** Embrace the cross. Empty yourself in honesty and humility. Receive Christ’s grace and forgiveness.
- Filling:** Welcome the Holy Spirit as your worship Partner. Ask Him to show you the glory of God in Jesus.
- Faith:** Seek God expectantly. Know confidently that if we seek Him with all our heart we will surely find Him!
- Praise:** Start giving thanks with a grateful heart. Focus on Him – all that He is and all He has done for you.
- Love:** Discipline your spirit to worship in unity with others. Choose to worship in spite of distractions.
- Awareness:** Practice His presence constantly as a lifestyle. In all your ways acknowledge Him.

Worship – Responding to God’s Presence Authentically!

*Come, let us worship and bow down,
Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.*

Psalm 95:6 NASB