

April 2, 2017

## Prepare for Worship Revelation 5:11-14

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Worship is an intentional act of the \_\_\_\_\_, but many people take little time to prepare for worship. God expects us not only to prepare our hearts but also our \_\_\_\_\_ when we come into His presence. How do we prepare for worship?

The English word “worship” comes from an old word “worthship”! It’s by our attitude, our words, and our actions that we tell God that He is \_\_\_\_\_ of our praise and adoration. He \_\_\_\_\_ our love and thanksgiving. Worship is not an experience that we have in the presence of God, but the act of offering God our \_\_\_\_\_ when we are in his presence.

Worship is a spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ that entails a sense of awe and reverence in the presence of the DIVINE. Worship comes from the Greek word *proskuneo*, which means, “throwing oneself on the ground to show \_\_\_\_\_ and awe.” When Moses saw the burning bush, he thought it was a marvelous \_\_\_\_\_. He wanted to know \_\_\_\_\_ the bush didn’t burn up. God called him from the bush and told Moses, “Take your shoes off your feet, for the place where you stand is \_\_\_\_\_ ground” (Exodus 3:5). When we come into the \_\_\_\_\_ of God for worship, we are entering holy ground.

The Bible says, “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God \_\_\_\_\_ worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:28-29). Worship is, by its very nature, an act of reverence and awe. It focuses on honoring and \_\_\_\_\_ God. Worship that pleases God \_\_\_\_\_ some preparation. Today we’re going to \_\_\_\_\_ the Scriptures to see how we can show God reverence and awe.

### **Our reading today comes from the book of Revelation 5:11-14.**

What are we \_\_\_\_\_ when we gather for worship? What does it \_\_\_\_\_ to worship and praise God? If we’re to prepare for worship, we must \_\_\_\_\_ something about worship and about God. First, worship is \_\_\_\_\_; it comes from the heart. One can worship internally without doing anything externally, but one cannot worship externally without doing something internally.

Zechariah 7:5-6 says that the Jews of Zechariah’s day feasted and fasted for themselves and not for God. They went through the \_\_\_\_\_ but didn’t involve the heart. William Temple rightly said, “To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to \_\_\_\_\_ the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to \_\_\_\_\_ the heart to the love of God, and to devote the will to the purpose of God.”

Our worship must come genuinely from our \_\_\_\_\_. In a discussion with the woman at the well, Jesus said, “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the \_\_\_\_\_ worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father \_\_\_\_\_ to be His worshipers. God is

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spirit, and those who worship Him \_\_\_\_\_ worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:23-24). God isn’t seeking worshipers who have their \_\_\_\_\_ elsewhere or are simply going through the motions; He is seeking worshipers who will worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Second, worship is \_\_\_\_\_. We don’t worship God accidentally; it must be an intended act. Naaman was a leper whom God healed through Elisha. Naaman said he would \_\_\_\_\_ worship the Lord God. In 2 Kings 5:17-19, Naaman was worried and told Elisha that he had to \_\_\_\_\_ in the house of Rimmon to another god as a part of his duties. Naaman makes the point that he must bow, but that worshipping a false god is not his \_\_\_\_\_. Elisha understood that unless you intend to worship, it’s not really worship. Unfortunately, some Christians come to church to socialize or to see a production; and they never \_\_\_\_\_ to worship. I hope you’re a \_\_\_\_\_ worshiper.

True praise is not merely “going through the \_\_\_\_\_.” Jesus spoke about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees whose worship was only an outward \_\_\_\_\_ and not from the heart. The Lord said, “This people honors me with their \_\_\_\_\_, but their heart is far from me” (Matthew 15:8). This not only revealed itself in their worship, but also showed in their \_\_\_\_\_. They had forgotten God’s commandments, but concentrated on their \_\_\_\_\_ traditions. The Lord said, “in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of \_\_\_\_\_” (Matthew 15:9). Genuine praise to God comes from a \_\_\_\_\_ devotion and obedience to the Lord.

Third, worship is \_\_\_\_\_. True worship will edify the church; but the primary \_\_\_\_\_ of worship is vertical. Worship takes place when our hearts and spirits \_\_\_\_\_ our thanksgiving and praise to God, our Father. We sing praises to God. We’re not worshipping to \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves but to adore and glorify God. While we may sing to edify or teach others, the primary focus is to \_\_\_\_\_ God. The Bible says, “Through Him (that is, through Jesus) then, let us continually offer up a \_\_\_\_\_ of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name” (Hebrews 13:15).

Fourth, worship is \_\_\_\_\_. Like eating, it has a beginning and an ending. While worship is something that we do throughout our lives; it is an intermittent, heartfelt, occasional act, wherein we put everything else aside and we \_\_\_\_\_ our minds and our hearts for a time on God. Someone says, “Phil, the Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 that we’re to ‘pray without \_\_\_\_\_.’” That’s true, but nobody can pray 24 hours a day, seven days a week. What this passage is saying is that we ought never to \_\_\_\_\_ praying to God. We should pray every \_\_\_\_\_ throughout our lives.

Our lives are spent in momentary acts; and since worship is intentional, we must \_\_\_\_\_ to spend our time in worship. We must make the moments we worship our Father \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus said, “the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:23-24). God wants you to give Him your \_\_\_\_\_ and glorify His name.

Have you considered how important God regards worship? **Read what the Lord said to Israel through the prophet Malachi in Malachi 1:6-9.** It’s common these days for Christians to

come to worship habitually \_\_\_\_\_, and sometimes dressed as if they didn't know they were coming into the presence of God. How does this \_\_\_\_\_ respect and awe for God? Some think, "God ought to be glad I \_\_\_\_\_. God ought to be satisfied he got \_\_\_\_\_ from me at all." Is this the \_\_\_\_\_ of true worship? Where is the love? Where is the humility? Where is the reverence and awe? How is God honored in all of this?

I fear some have little \_\_\_\_\_ of holiness about coming into the presence of God. God deserves our \_\_\_\_\_; we shouldn't give God what is common or profane or leftover. God \_\_\_\_\_ respect in our hearts and in our appearance. I'm not here trying to make \_\_\_\_\_ or tell you what you must wear to worship, but to encourage you to consider whether you have \_\_\_\_\_ God in your worship.

In the tabernacle and the temple, how one appeared before God \_\_\_\_\_. The Bible says, "And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty" (Exodus 28:2). How the priest \_\_\_\_\_ mattered to God. Psalm 29:1-2 says, "Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory \_\_\_\_\_ his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness." The New American Standard says the angels are to worship "in holy array." Why would angels \_\_\_\_\_ to put on holy garments?

Consider Paul's instructions to Timothy, "that women should adorn themselves in respectable \_\_\_\_\_, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works" (1 Timothy 2:9-10). When we assemble to worship, we're coming into the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. What we do there, gathered in His name for worship, is holy and \_\_\_\_\_ our respect for Him.

When the Israelites gathered for worship at the \_\_\_\_\_, they didn't simply show up. They lived in a \_\_\_\_\_ of ceremonially clean and unclean. We have little sense of that \_\_\_\_\_ today. Israelite pilgrims who traveled to a feast in Jerusalem in ancient times first went to a ritual \_\_\_\_\_ to become ceremonially pure before they ever entered the temple area (John 11:55). In fact, archaeologists count as many as eighteen ritual baths surrounding the temple mount today. These purification rituals stressed cleanliness and worthiness to serve and worship the Lord. In fact, Jehoiada, the priest, "stationed gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD so that no one should enter who was in any way unclean" (2 Chronicles 23:19).

Isaiah spoke of his \_\_\_\_\_ in the presence of God in the year that King Uzziah died in Isaiah 6:1-8. Seraphim proclaimed, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his \_\_\_\_\_!" The Lord was sitting on his \_\_\_\_\_, lofty and exalted. The foundations of the thresholds trembled at his voice, while the temple was filling with smoke. Isaiah responded, "Woe is me! For I am \_\_\_\_\_; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" Isaiah was \_\_\_\_\_ by his own sense of uncleanness before God. He expected to die because he was unclean, but God \_\_\_\_\_ him as the Seraphim touched his lips with the burning coal.

When the apostle John came into the presence of the Lord Jesus on the island of Patmos, he fell at his feet as though \_\_\_\_\_. He understood the awesome and special \_\_\_\_\_ of the

occasion. Many worship assemblies have become so \_\_\_\_\_ there is little sense of being in the presence of God or of the reverence of the occasion. The Hebrew writer urged his readers, “let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming \_\_\_\_\_” (Hebrews 12:29). I fear we have \_\_\_\_\_ a sense of the awesome nature of God.

In many worship occasions, I find things that reflect an environment of \_\_\_\_\_ respect for God. I see things like putting a Bible on the floor, people putting their feet up in the pew or on song racks, people who are repeatedly and needlessly late, constant going in and out to get a drink or go to the bathroom, constant talking in the foyer, constant talking in the pews, texting on the phone, passing notes in worship, or clipping fingernails during the sermon. Yes, I care about everyone, and I want everyone to come for worship; but I wonder if God feels honored when our hearts and lives are so \_\_\_\_\_ from Him.

We also must think of our \_\_\_\_\_ as we approach God in worship. The Bible says, “Come and hear, all of you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for my soul. I cried to him with my mouth, and high praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me!” (Psalm 66:16-20). When people cherish \_\_\_\_\_ more than they do God, it should not surprise them that God closes His ears to their prayers.

The New Testament says, “If anyone \_\_\_\_\_ he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself \_\_\_\_\_ from the world” (James 1:26-27). If we wish to worship God in private or in public, we need to \_\_\_\_\_ God by living holy lives every single day. The apostle Paul was concerned about the unruly assemblies at Corinth that kept the people from worshipping \_\_\_\_\_ and from taking the Lord’s Supper in a way that \_\_\_\_\_ God. **Read 1 Corinthians 11:27-30.**

When we worship, we ought to \_\_\_\_\_ God and we need to do this for two reasons. First, it \_\_\_\_\_ God to worship the way that He desires. Second, true worship calls us to \_\_\_\_\_ a purer and nobler life. Let’s prepare to praise and glorify God \_\_\_\_\_ we come into His presence. Let’s get our hearts and minds \_\_\_\_\_ on God. Israel worshiped in \_\_\_\_\_ by living immoral and ungodly lives according to Isaiah 1:12-20. They needed to \_\_\_\_\_ of their sins before they came to worship God. What will please God most is a \_\_\_\_\_ that is right with Him! Is your heart right with God?

To get right with God, one must \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. He must regard Jesus as Lord and turn away from sin in \_\_\_\_\_. Anyone who loves the Lord will not remain in willful sin. He wants to change his life and to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus as the Christ. He’ll also be \_\_\_\_\_ as quickly as possible for the forgiveness of his sins—as the Bible teaches in Acts 2:38. If a person loves the Lord, he won’t want to spend a single moment outside the love and grace of God.