

Examples of the Spirit of Worship

Scripture Reading: Psalm 96

We began to look at the subject of “worship” with words of definition and the example of Christ. Now let us see worship described through the examples of people in the Bible. We want to see the spirit or attitude of the person who is worshipping God. It is possible to make efforts to worship God that do not really involve our inner-man. It is also possible to have heart-felt devotion to God at a time when there is no self-conscious thought of it being an act of worship. The way you live your private life or the way you respond to situations can be a stronger form of worship than what you do in church. We are not suggesting that you should not worship with others in church (Hebrews 10:23-25). We are looking at the involvement of the inner-man, so we can see the total picture of worshipping God in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). Public worship without private worship is shallow. Let’s look at five examples.

Abraham offering his son, Isaac: Devotion, Love, Faith, Sacrifice and Obedience (Genesis 22:1-5)

When God sees faith in a person, He will put their faith through tests – tests that are designed to make that person stronger (I Peter 1:3-9). We don’t always understand what’s going on, but a true worshipper will trust and obey. We can’t always trace His hand, but we can trust His heart (Charles Spurgeon). Make sure you read the rest of the story in Genesis 22:7-19.

Abraham is called the Father of our Faith (Romans 4). God told Abraham that he would give him a son and that, through this son, he would multiply into a great nation (Genesis 12:1-2; 15:1-6; 17:15-19). Yet, God told Abraham to take that son of promise and sacrifice him on a mountain! Does God ever seem unreasonable to us? Does His Word appear to contradict our natural senses? Hebrews 11:17-19 tells us that Abraham had faith that God would keep His original promise and therefore raise His son back from the dead, after he sacrificed him (note Genesis 22:5, “...I and the lad will go...and come again to you.”). Abraham worshipped at a time of extreme faith and sacrifice.

So, we worship God when we believe His promises and obey His instructions. Are we willing to make sacrifices for the Lord? See II Samuel 24:18-25; Psalm 96:8; Romans 12:1-2; II Corinthians 8:1-5.

Eliezer finding a wife for Isaac: Thankfulness – A grateful sense of the presence and providence of God (Genesis 24:26-27, 50-52)

Eliezer was Abraham’s chief steward. He had the task of going to Abraham’s homeland and finding a bride from Abraham’s extended family. The fascinating background story is in Genesis 24:1-60. Eliezer asked God for specific guidance and God gave him specific answers and assurance that he was

doing the will of God. Eliezer's response was to worship by immediately acknowledging and thanking God for guidance and provision.

Are we sensitive to the reality and presence of God in our everyday lives? (Acts 17:22-31 – especially vs. 27-28) Do we forget to seek the Lord about everything? Do we forget to thank Him for the many things that He is doing in our lives? See I Peter 5:6-7; I Thessalonians 5:18.

**Moses Receiving the knowledge of God, His promises, and His will:
Desire to know God and His ways. Spiritual hunger and humble submission
(Exodus 33:13, 18; 34:8)**

Breaking the hold of Egypt and releasing the Israelites from slavery; guiding millions of people through the wilderness to form a new nation – this had to be a daunting task. Yet, Moses' heart desired God as an intimate friend. He also humbly worshipped Him as his glorious God. Read Exodus 33:11 – 34:35.

Do we learn about God and His ways with reverence? Or, is the Bible just a book of rules and ordinances in which we get caught up, with men, in arguments of words? See Psalm 31:19-20; 56:1-13; 92:1-15; 119:1-24, 68, 113-120; 138:1-2; II Timothy 2:14-16, 22-26.

**David receiving the chastening of the Lord:
Repentance and Submission
(II Samuel 12:13-16, 19-20)**

David was rebuked by God, through the prophet Nathan, for the sin of adultery and murder. See II Samuel 11:1 – 12:25. When rebuked, David instantly confessed and repented. God forgave, but also had consequences for David to suffer. His child would die. David asked for mercy on the child's life, but God denied that request. David submitted to God's response and worshipped Him in a spirit of repentance and submission. See Psalm 51 for more about David's attitude.

Do we accept God's chastisement, or do we complain, get bitter, depressed and, more or less, have a tantrum? See Hebrews 12:1-14; Lamentations 3:22-41.

**Job responding to loss:
Grieving and Submission
(Job 1:20-22)**

Job had not sinned. There was a spiritual war happening that Job did not understand. The conflict was between God and Satan. Job was on a battlefield, being tested. God had greatly blessed Job, but Satan contended that if all his blessings were removed Job would curse God. Instead, Job worshipped God and acknowledge His right to do as He pleases. See Job chapters 1-2 cp. Psalm 115:1-3; Isaiah 46:9-10.

Are we able to maintain sweet and faithful thoughts of God when things are very difficult – or even evil? See Psalm 37:1-40; 104:33-34; James 1:2-20; Romans 8:28-39.