

Home	1. Precedent for Worship	2. Foundation for Worship	3. Conviction for Worship	4. Galvanized for Worship	5. Worship Reference
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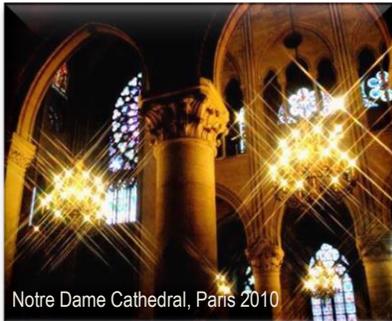
## PREFACE

### I Thought I Knew Worship

#### Core Concepts

The spiritual landscape is changing. It trembles with commotion because *“the knowledge of the glory of the Lord”* has begun to cover the earth.<sup>1</sup> This knowledge redeems the past, transforms the present, and it will define the future.

Information floods our brain. From social updates to media downloads, we text and tweet in massive cyber clouds of data. Yet, after spending so much time engrossed with information, what do we know? Our answer is important because Jesus said, *“we worship what we know”*.<sup>2</sup>



I thought I knew worship. More importantly, I thought I knew God—at least well enough to worship Him. I sang the songs, prayed the prayers, and served with as much enthusiasm as I could muster. Like so many others, I used a performance-based approach optimized for *my* benefit and customized for *my* convenience to say and do religion.

How we worship reflects how well we know God. It reveals our perception of divine reality. A perfunctory response betrays an underwhelming appraisal of His attributes, accomplishments, and promises. Dispassionate worship implies insufficient knowledge or inadequate exposure to reality. Status quo worshipers are mechanical and aloof because they neglect the truth and embrace distraction. They appreciate details learned about God rationally but have yet to encounter the veracity of His life-transforming love, power, and presence. Reading or hear-

<sup>1</sup> Habakkuk 2:14 NAS

<sup>2</sup> John 4:22 NAS

ing about divine ingredients is not the same as tasting their supernatural flavor for ourselves.

This study takes a candid look at reality. It's a scorecard for life with the answer key for two important questions:

Do you know who you are?                      Yes     No

Do you know the truth about God?            Yes     No

**Helpful Hint:**    *"If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know."* (1 Corinthians 8:2 NIV)

The Bible describes worshipers in heaven and on earth. It details why, where, when, and how they worshiped. Compiling this data, based on Hebrew and Greek words for worship, reveals a compelling biblical precedent. It implores us to lay aside preconceived notions about God and false assumptions about worship.

After examining the evidence for yourself, consider whether you worship according to the biblical precedent—in heaven and earth. Do you underestimate God's attributes, undervalue His accomplishments, or trivialize His promises? Have you offered the kind of response that God alone evokes and deserves—one that angels, demons, saints, and sinners offered Him in the Bible? Have you grown casual, indifferent, or disillusioned with your spiritual life? Experiencing the truth about God should occasionally sweep you off your feet.

When individuals or groups encountered God's presence in the Bible, they responded with radical reverence. They literally fell on their face to venerate Him—especially while in heaven before His throne. From our vantage point however, we usually sing a few songs, say a few prayers, toss in a little money, offer some service, or participate in a liturgy. Though ensconced in our vocabulary, bowing rarely shows up in our body language. Yet, worshipers in the Bible consistently fell facedown. Their fully engaged kinesthetic response begs the question: why don't we fall on our face to venerate our Heavenly Father with the reverence that He deserves?



Jesus pursues us with immense passion. He deserves more than a token of religious devotion in response. True worshipers know who they are, they recognize the truth about God, and they respond accordingly by worshiping Him in spirit and truth. As the truth about God becomes more apparent, the importance of worshiping Him will become more obvious.

## So What?

Worship matters because it conveys how well we know God intellectually and experientially. A tepid response doused in watered down religion reflects a wishy-washy estimate of His glory. When we encounter the majesty of Christ Jesus, He sweeps us off our feet and deposits us where life abounds with meaning, purpose, and hope. According to Jesus, our Heavenly Father seeks worshipers—that alone makes it important.<sup>3</sup>

Are you connecting with your Heavenly Father, engaged with Jesus, and communing with the Holy Spirit? Or are you paying lip service to an inferior impostor—a caricature of divine reality? When the truth about God comes into focus, words, lyrics, and music are insufficient to express an appropriate response.

### The Take Away Message

1. Take a closer look at God until you recognize Him for all He's worth.
2. Reconsider your response based on the biblical precedent for worship both in heaven and on earth.

### Action Points

1. Appraise God for all He's worth—  
Add conviction to your appraisal based on accurate information and authentic encounters.
2. Make His Praise Glorious—  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with enlightened lyrics.  
Exalt Him with extravagant artistry and articulate oratory.
3. Worship God with integrity—  
Express an informed response consistent with God's worth.  
Avoid perfunctory routine performed to appease a routine ceremony.
4. Confront the risks and embrace the benefits of authentic worship—  
Thoroughly prepare for end-time worship ultimatums.  
Connect with God for a strong finish.

Next Chapter: Worship is a Big Word

Home

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5. Worship Reference

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<sup>3</sup> John 4:23