

### Session Three Worship is a Response

**The Purpose:** To understand that worship is entered into in response to either who God is, or what God has done for us. A true worship response happens when we come face to face with the wonder and majesty of God.

During the last session, we learned why we worship. Our God, His work is utterly amazing and He alone is worthy of the descriptor AWESOME! When faced with this—there is only one true response and that is worship. Our God further magnifies His greatness by wading right into our messy and broken lives. He is not a deistic God who set the clock and stood back—He desires a relationship with us. But it makes you wonder, with so many different people with different personalities and different circumstances how can we all truly worship God at all times? If we are worshiping the onetru God, will that mean all of our worship should look the same?

Even in just my lifetime, I find myself in different circumstances where my response to God, my worship of God, looks and feels different. There were moments in my life where I am jubilant, like during our Worship Night—when Brandon said “This is what we are created for!” There are other times where I’m imprisoned in despair only mindlessly repeating verses from my youth. Can I worship at all times? Can we worship in unity and be so different? Let’s look to the Bible starting with Isaiah 6:1-8.

Isaiah was a prophet of God during a tumultuous time during the reign of four kings where the geopolitical landscape was unstable and fluctuating.

#### Isaiah 6:1-8 Isaiah’s Commission

*6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another:*

*“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”*

*4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.*

*5 “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.” 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, “*

*See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.” 8 Then I heard the voice of the*

Lord

*saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”*

As we step into Isaiah’s shoes can you imagine, he is face to face with God. He counseled kings, the mouthpiece of God, yet he finds himself lacking, ruined when faced with his Maker. I am ruined, for I have seen the Glory of the Lord Almighty. Our man-made worth is wrecked in the surpassing light of God.

Yet God does not leave Isaiah in this state of despair—no, He himself cleansed his lips, guilt taken away, sins atoned, into a new man—His man. From the pit of despair, to the apple of God’s eye. What a foreshadow of God’s work through Christ, for us!

How does Isaiah respond? How should we respond? Lord, send me! Not because I am constrained to do it, or because my parents told me to do it, or the ever-nebulous right thing to do for the kids. It is an overflow of my heart, my response, to who God is and what he has done.

Let's explore different scriptures that look further at our response.

Break into pairs or individually and divide up these selected passages and read them and answer the corresponding questions. Then have each pair go around and share the worship responses they discovered.

### **Nehemiah 12:27-30,40-43–Temple Wall and Jerusalem Restored**

What do the people see/experience from God?

How do the people respond?

We see God's providence initiated through the broken heart of Nehemiah who then organizes and motivates a movement in a people who were afraid and broken to renew the walls of Jerusalem. In 52 days time, we see the people response to God's provision, protection.

### **Psalms 51–Psalm of Confession Nathan Confronts David**

What does David see/experience from God?

How does David respond?

Caught! Here we have a powerful man as vulnerable as he can be. David submits. David sees God's mercy. David sees God's ability to blot out his sin. David sees God's ability to transform and create a new heart. David's response is not simply a dutiful action but a broken and repentant heart. He sees God's mercy and responds in repentance and submission.

### **Psalms 8–Psalm of Adoration**

What does David see/experience from God?

How does David respond?

David wonders—simply wonders. David responds in adoration and praise to the God his Maker.

### **Mark 5:1–20 The Healing of the Demonic**

What did Jesus do for the demoniac?

How does he respond? vv. 18-20

Wow, we see a man transformed, literally plagued by demons. He experienced grace, he felt love, he felt freedom. His heart was filled and overflowed with love, one that he shared with his hometown. Later in Mark 7, we see that the demoniac obeyed Jesus as there are now crowds surrounding Jesus.

### **Habakkuk 3:17-19 Habakkuk in view of trouble**

From where does Habakkuk find comfort?

How does Habakkuk flip the culture's means of comfort?

This is an excerpt from a prayer sung by the prophet Habakkuk. He sees a time of great despair, yet his circumstance is always secondary to the one who can create the circumstance. Habakkuk responds in submission and obedience to the Sovereignty of his God.

After our brief exploration through the Bible we see that there are a variety of ways to respond to God and all that He has done. Despite the variety, I want to point out some of the commonalities that are critical to authentic worship:

- A proper understanding of who God is.
- A proper understanding of who we are.

- An authenticity when we come to God.
- A submission to God.

Each of these are critical in our worship of God. Without knowing Him and letting Him fill us, we have created worship to be a human endeavor. Without an understanding of our true selves and our God shaped need, we will usurp the role of God and rule in His stead in our kingdom. When we are inauthentic, we live in a shade of truth that clouds the light of His Glory. When we do not submit, our worship becomes self-centered and circumstance driven.

Authentic worship creates unity out of this variety. We see people pumping their fists. We see people caught. We see people in despair. Yet, in each of these moments, and truly in all of life, we can worship. Not only that, worship unifies us. Men, women, old, young, it doesn't matter.

As you see, worship is incredibly complex, it would take volumes to heaven and back to fully describe worship. Yet our brief Bible exploration has brought us to a working definition of true worship that we will unpack further: **Our God glorifying response to who God is and what he has done.**