

LIFE WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP



3. Worship in the Fellowship

We have been learning about fellowship and what the early believers did when they met together. One thing they did was to worship God. Let's see why worship is important.

A. Importance of Worship

Long before God created man, he made a great number of angels who worshipped, served and loved him. One of those angels was Lucifer. As time went on Lucifer rebelled against God and a third of the angels followed him. They were cast out of Heaven and Lucifer became filled with hatred towards God. We know Lucifer by the name Satan.

When God created the first man and woman, he wanted to have a relationship with them, but Satan was jealous and wanted them to worship him, rather than God. Satan tempted the first man and woman, who were called Adam and Eve, to go against what God had said to them. Sadly they fell to that temptation and became slaves to Satan, giving him the worship that rightfully belonged to God. Every person born since then, with the exception of Jesus Christ, has followed Satan. He even tried to tempt Jesus to worship him, but Jesus refused. Matthew 4:8-11

Jesus came into this world and died on the cross to take the punishment for our sin. When we receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour we are forgiven and set free from the power of Satan, and we become children of God. Now we are to worship God alone.

You have probably heard of the Ten Commandments. These were given by God to the Children of Israel, but these commandments are for everyone. The first command is, 'Worship no God but me.' Exodus 20:3. Jesus said that the Father was looking for people who will worship him in spirit and truth. John 4:23. Worship is important to God!

B. Reasons to Worship

Why should we worship God? We have already seen that the first commandment is to worship God alone. Let's look at other reasons why worship is important.

1. God is worthy of our worship

God is worthy of our praise and worship. He is God. He is the Creator of the universe. He alone is the true and living God. Not only that, God sent his only Son to die for us so we could be forgiven and our fellowship with him restored. We can certainly praise and thank him for what he has done for us, and worship him for who he is. He is a God who is good, kind, loving, holy, merciful and faithful. He deserves our worship.

2. Worship is a spiritual sacrifice

Have you ever wondered what you could do for God? What could you do to please him? One of the things that pleases him and gives him joy, is when we offer to him a sacrifice of praise and worship. This is called a spiritual sacrifice. 1 Peter 2:5

Now we belong to God, we are like priests. In the Old Testament the Jewish people had priests who would offer sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. We no longer need to bring animal sacrifices like they did at that time, as Jesus has given himself as a sacrifice for our sin. He is the Great High Priest. When we accept what Jesus has done for us, we become like priests, who offer to God our spiritual sacrifices.

One of these spiritual sacrifices is praise. Hebrews 13:15. It isn't always easy to praise God is it? If we face a difficult situation, sickness, or loss of some kind, we may not feel like praising God. However when we choose to do so, despite what is happening in our lives, we are offering a spiritual sacrifice that pleases him.

3. Worship brings us into God's Presence

There are spiritual powers over our towns and cities that seek to hinder the work of God. As we praise and worship God these evil powers are driven away. We see this in the story of King Saul in the Old Testament. He had disobeyed God and an evil spirit came to trouble him. His servants suggested they find a man who could play the harp, which was a musical instrument often used in those days. David was called to the palace, and as he played worship songs on his harp the evil spirit would leave. 1 Samuel 16:23

Praise is like a weapon that makes the enemy flee, and God's presence comes into our midst. In Psalm 100:4 it says, 'Enter his gates with thanksgiving in your heart, and into his courts with praise.' When we meet together as a church fellowship we are to worship God, and as we do this from our hearts, his presence will move among us.

The Bible says that we love God because he first loved us. When we have accepted Jesus' sacrifice for our sin, we are responding to the love God has shown towards us. In return, we love him, and we want to worship him. We have discovered he is worthy of our worship!

That doesn't mean it is always easy to worship God, but when we do, even in difficult times, it pleases him. Not only that, our worship pushes back the work of the enemy and welcomes God to move among us. As it says in Psalm 22:3, 'God dwells in the praises of his people.'