

FOLLOWING JESUS
A Disciple's Handbook

Lesson 7:
“Following Jesus in Worshiping and Working”

Worshiping and Working Introduction

Read Romans 12:1-2

Everything a disciple says and does is to be an offering of worship to God. No one modeled this better than Jesus Christ. His every word and work were an offering of wholehearted worship to the Father. Through Moses, God gave the Law (the first five books of the Bible), to show people what was righteous and to provide a way for people to worship and to commune with God through various sacrifices. (Read Deuteronomy 10:12-15.) Through the writers of the Psalms and the Prophets, worship was shown to be an ongoing offering of love and devotion to God. (Read 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 40:6-7; Hosea 6:6.) Through Jesus, all righteousness was fulfilled as He became the perfect sacrifice to open the way to intimate spiritual and daily worship to the Father. In Christ Jesus worship was revealed as one's life laid down in sacrifice and surrender to a worthy and trustworthy God.

Worshiping and working was the primary purpose for which the Savior rose each morning. Christ's work on earth was always an act of worship through a surrendered heart and life unto God. Every word spoken from His mouth and deed done with His hands was an offering of excellence and extravagance unto God. No one could mistake the One whom Jesus lived to worship. And, as followers of Jesus, no one should mistake the One whom we worship as well. A disciple of Jesus follows His example of making every attitude of the heart, thought of the mind, word of the mouth, and deed with the hands an offering of worship to the Father. In this, worshiping and working become a holy habit of making everything said and done a suitable sacrifice unto God.

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Worshiping and Working Defined

The primary word for *worship* in the New Testament has to do with kneeling or lying face-down to show respect and honor for someone. It also has to do with showing deep affection and allegiance to the authority of another. It is making oneself low to make someone else high. It is

the laying down of one for the lifting up of another. Throughout history, people viewed worship as a specific action at a particular time in a distinct place. When Jesus came, He clarified the intent, content and extent of worship. He said that the intent was to honor God for who He truly was. He said that the content was to be spiritually vital, genuine and authentic. And, He said that the extent was to be about everyone and everything at all times. (☐ Read John 4:21-24.)

In the Scriptures, one's *work* is seen as an act of worship. Rather than the idea of simply having a strong work-ethic – working hard and attempting to do all things by one's own hand – the New Testament teaches us to have a passionate *worship-ethic* – to do all things by God's grace as an offering of worship unto the Lord. (☐ Read Hebrews 13:15-16.) After the Apostle Paul explains how God has saved us through Christ, he offers his readers the only possible reasonable response: live a life of sacrificial worshiping and working. (☐ Read Romans 12:1-2.) He explains that attempting the will of God is accomplished through a life of wholehearted, fully integrated worship. Through a surrendered life and a transformed mind, worshiping and working become complimentary concepts for fulfilling one's divine purpose in life. (☐ Read Colossians 3:17.) As our hearts are offered in worship and our minds are transformed by truth, our works can show the world God's perfect will.

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Worshiping and Working in the Life of Jesus

According to the writer of Hebrews, Jesus fulfilled King David's words that what God ultimately desired was a willing life laid down as a worthy sacrifice. (☐ Read Psalm 40:6-8; Hebrews 10:5-10.) Nothing Jesus said or did was merely an outward religious ritual, but rather an inward dedication and devotion. The words of His mouth and the meditation of His heart were always well-pleasing to the Father. (☐ Read Psalm 19:14.) When Jesus came up from the waters of baptism, and was later transfigured on the mountain, God the Father thundered words of love and pleasure for and in the Son. (☐ Read Matthew 3:17; 17:5.) Jesus lived a life of well-pleasing worship and work to the Father. When Paul called on the Ephesians to be imitators of God, he appealed to the ultimate example of worshiping and working in the life of the Son. (☐ Read Ephesians 5:1-2.) From beginning to end, and everywhere in between, Jesus' words and work were worship.

Jesus was diligent in seeing His work as worship. Daily, Christ entered into the work of His Father. (☐ Read John 5:17-19.) The Lord went so far as to say that His necessary food and fulfillment were to finish the work given Him by the Father. (☐ Read John 4:34.) As was stated

before, there was no mistaking the One for whom Jesus lived. The honor and true worship of the Father was Christ's highest priority. His steps of worship-working became His passionate pathway that all true disciples should follow.

Jesus lived a life of well-pleasing worship and work to the Father.

Worshiping and Working in the Lives of Jesus' Followers

The early disciples of Jesus would not tolerate any worship that was false or work that was of the flesh. The worship of anything or anyone other than the Father and the Son was forbidden. Trying to do the works of God other than by the power of the Holy Spirit was also forbidden. Holding all things in common, prayer, doctrine, preaching the Gospel, signs and wonders, care for widows, and stewardship of resources were all forms of worship-working for the early church. (☐ Read Acts 2:42-47; 3:19-20; 4:32-37; 6:1-7.)

The Apostle Paul taught the churches to lead lives of worshiping and working. (☐ Read 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1.) The writer of Hebrews helped his audience understand that worship was no longer about the rituals of the Law but the lifestyle of Christ. (☐ Read Hebrews 2:10-3:1; 7:20-28.) The Apostle Peter explained that believers are a holy priesthood – a spiritual temple of living stones – who offer up acceptable worship to the Father and the Son. (☐ Read 1 Peter 2:4-5.)

Worshiping and Working in Our Lives

Today, it can be easy to believe that worship is solely about singing songs when the saints are gathered. Singing with the people of God is certainly an expression of worship. But singing is just one expression of worship, not the only expression of worship. Worship is about the attitudes of our hearts, the thoughts of our minds, the words of our mouths, and the deeds of our hands. Prayer is worship. Studying the Word of God is worship. Preaching the Gospel is worship. Serving our families is worship. Our occupational work is worship. Serving our local church is worship. Stewarding the resources God entrusts to us is worship. Worship is about being wholly devoted and dedicated to God the Father and Jesus the Son through the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures refer to us as the temple of the Holy Spirit. (☐ Read 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18.) As the temple of the Holy Spirit, disciples and followers of Jesus now become walking, talking, working worshipers. Even our work for those in authority over us should be considered worship to the Lord. (☐ Read Colossians 3:23-24.) As we have seen, Jesus lived a life of wholehearted, fully integrated worshiping and working, and we must do the same.

Worship is about the attitudes of our hearts, the thoughts of our minds, the words of our mouths, and the deeds of our hands.

MEMORIZE: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1)*

Use the following lines to write out the scripture to help you commit it to memory.

KEY TRUTH: Worship is about the attitudes of our hearts, the thoughts of our minds, the words of our mouths, and the deeds of our hands.

YOUR RESPONSE:

This is how you can respond in loving obedience to Jesus as you apply the truths from this lesson to your life.

- Take time each day in the secret place to freshly present your life as an offering of worship to God.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to identify any attitudes, thoughts, words, or deeds that do not bring the Father and the Son pure worship. Repent and remove these things. Commit to a life of worshiping and working.
- Prayerfully commit every situation of your day to worshiping the Father and the Son.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to worship God with excellence in every area of life.

WRITTEN RESPONSE: Lesson Review

Review each section from the lesson on the previous pages to fill in each blank below. This review will help to reinforce the truths from this lesson in your life.

1. _____ and _____ was the _____ purpose for which the _____ rose _____ morning.

2. As our _____ are offered in _____ and our _____ are transformed by _____, our _____ can show the world God's perfect _____.
3. The honor and true _____ of the Father was Christ's _____ priority. His steps of _____ - _____ became His passionate _____ that all true _____ should _____.
4. The Apostle Peter explained that _____ are a holy _____ – a spiritual _____ of living _____ – who offer up acceptable _____ to the Father and the Son.
5. Worship is about the attitudes of our _____, the thoughts of our _____, the words of our _____, and the deeds of our _____.

WRITTEN RESPONSE: Life Reflection

Using the journaling section on the pages at the end of this lesson, write in your own words your responses to the following questions.

1. What have you learned and what has impacted you personally from this lesson?
2. In reading the scripture references in this lesson, what are you sensing and seeing the Holy Spirit highlighting and revealing to you that will enable you to better follow Jesus?
3. As a disciple and follower of Jesus, what steps of loving obedience do you need to take to see what you have learned in this lesson become ongoing practices and patterns in your life?