

How to Worship at Home

What?

Worship is ascribing value and honor to something or someone above all else.

Everyone worships. Not just the religious. Some people worship money, others status, or grandkids or a sports team, but be sure: they all worship. We have an intrinsic need to worship! God made us this way. Here in this short life, we find our joy and purpose when we choose to worship God instead of all the earthly things that clamor for our love and adoration.

Worship is really the entire pursuit of Jesus in the life of a disciple, however for simplicity, we'll focus on three distinct aspects of worship we see in scripture: acknowledgement, song and posture.

Why?

"The only eternal happiness for man, eternal and full happiness of man is a happiness focused on the glory of God in the face of Christ."

~John Piper, *The God of Worship (Worship God Conference, 2009)*

Bible Reference:

¹⁻² Sing GOD a brand-new song!
Earth and everyone in it, sing!
Sing to GOD—*worship* GOD!
²⁻³ Shout the news of his victory
from sea to sea,
Take the news of his glory to the lost,
News of his wonders to one and all!
⁴⁻⁵ For GOD is great, and worth
a thousand Hallelujahs.
His terrible beauty makes
the gods look cheap;
Pagan gods are mere tatters and rags.

⁵⁻⁶ GOD made the heavens—
Royal splendor radiates from him,
A powerful beauty sets him apart.
⁷ Bravo, GOD, Bravo!
Everyone join in the great shout:
Encore!
In awe before the beauty, in awe
before the might.
⁸⁻⁹ Bring gifts and celebrate,
Bow before the beauty of GOD,
Then to your knees—everyone
worship!

-Psalm 96:1-9 (MSG)



A Focused Introduction to Worship

We're going to focus on 3 specific, applicable aspects of worship: acknowledgement, song and posture. These can be incorporated as structured rhythms or in the moment rhythms

Acknowledgement: This is the subtle but powerful turn of the heart. Think about your day. How often would you say you were consciously aware of his presence? Often times, you'll find long periods of time where the "iris of your mind" is narrow and unaware moments. (Hint: it's simple but powerful!)

Song: This is what we often associate with worship, and for good reason! Song and melody is one of God's greatest gifts to us! Television, with shows like "The Voice" or "American Idol" has ruined our sense for singing in our home. We've relegated singing to the "professionals."

Please hear this: *God desires your song; your voice.* Would you criticize your child for pitch, timing, or tone if they sang you a song? I would hope not! You'd feel so connected to them. The vulnerability of that moment, the gift of melody and lyric, time and attention can't be underestimated! Our Father in heaven loves our songs at least as much as we love our children's songs.

Posture: Did you know that almost every word in Psalms that is translated as "worship" or "Praise" is actually a posture or action? Lifting hands, bowing low, dancing (yes, dancing), shouting (yes, shouting!), singing...I could go on. The point is: worship isn't primarily internal. It's a full body, engaging activity. Ever lift your hands? How'd you feel? Fun fact: Hallelujah is a combination of "Halal" and "Yaweh" in the original language. Halal means to shine forth; act clamorously foolish before God! Yaweh is God's name. The word "Hallelujah" could literally be translated: act clamorously foolish celebrating God! Our kids, that often times we exclude from worship, can be the best worshippers in the room when it's time to celebrate!

Do It: Ways to Worship at Home

We'll focus on several ideas for you and your family to try. Try one or all of them to see how you can incorporate worship into your life as a spiritual practice.

Use a time of driving or walking to worship:

1. Make a playlist for yourself with songs that you know stir your heart toward God.
2. Take a moment to direct your heart's affection toward God. This is an internal move shift or redirection. Remember that God is near, even now. In your car,



back yard, waking trail, living room, etc. Take at least 30-60 seconds to do this. We are busy-minded people and it often takes a moment to redirect our hearts and minds.

3. Turn on the music you want to worship with. As you listen to the music, move from listening to engaging. Depending on your location or familiarity with the song, begin to sing along, agreeing in your heart to the truths you're hearing.
4. As you go along, lift a hand in a posture of praise (this is the word *yadah* in the psalms). Likely this will feel uncomfortable at first. Lean in, there is real power here. If you aren't emotional while doing this, don't be discouraged. Worship isn't always emotional. Remember, this is about who God is.
 - *NOTE: if you feel silly or wonder if you're actually singing to a real God, you're not alone! This practice will press on your beliefs in powerful ways. God will meet you in the stretching.*
5. As you sing to God, pay attention to moments when lyrics are highlighted, or a person/thing comes to mind.. *Ex: You think of a friend struggling with addiction as you hear the lyrics "You split the sea so I could walk right through it, my fears were drowned in perfect love."* Don't dismiss this thought as a distraction but use it as a prompting: sing these lyrics to God with that friend at the front of your mind. This can be done in church settings as well. Sometimes it will be another person or situation and sometimes it will be a situation you are in currently.

Have a praise dance party with your kids:

1. Put some high energy praise music on your TV or speakers at home. There are some great resources out there, but try to make it something your kids are already familiar with (songs from church/radio/etc). Also I'd encourage you to make sure it's true. Kids learn so much about who God is from the lyrics of songs.
2. Find some basic instruments: tambourine, shakers, maracas, microphone, karaoke machine, etc. As the music plays, let your kids use these instruments. Yes, it'll be madness, but the kids are delighted by it. It's important that we begin to associate God the Father with love and delight, not rules and regulation. Remember, Psalm 16 says that at God's right hand is joy and pleasure. This is a great way to intrinsically teach this to your kids.
3. Repeat this anywhere/anytime that you can make it happen. You'll connect with your heavenly father AND with your little ones. Win! Win!



A time of remembrance with your spouse:

1. "Worship" with your significant other might seem intimidating, but this activity is a great way to wade into more intimate times of song and prayer.
2. Start by setting aside at least 30 minutes together.
3. Start with prayer or a song that you listen to together. As you acknowledge God's presence and faithfulness, use your posture to drive this home: kneel or lift your hands.
4. As the song(s) fade out, take time to recall when God has been faithful in your lives (both before you came together and in your life together now). It might be helpful for someone to write these things down and even put them in a place of prominence in your home.
5. As you begin to wrap up this time of worship and remembrance, end in a prayer of thanksgiving with lifted hands (maybe even hold the list in your hand). You could say something like: *"Oh God! You have done these things. We have been confused and afraid before and you did these things. You are faithful. We have suffered from lack before and God, You taught us to be more like Jesus during those times. You turn all things for your Glory and our good!.....etc"*

**You could make the entire time of remembrance a conscious prayer as well.*

Starting your day in a posture of surrender:

1. When you awake, before you go about your routine, kneel or lay beside your bed with your face down on the floor. (This is the posture of "*Barak*" translated as *worship in the Psalms*). While in this position pray a simple prayer of submission, adoration and love to God. Ask the Spirit to help you keep your heart in this posture throughout the day.
2. Move your body out of this posture and begin your day, with an intent to remain inwardly in this posture of worship and awareness throughout your day.

Books on Worship

- The Unquenchable Worshipper – Matt Redman
- Worship Matter – Bob Kauflin
- Unceasing Worship – Harold Best

