

The Fundamentals

Lesson 4 – Worshiping in God’s Word

John 4:21-24

Sit quiet for a minute, worship the Lord a bit and then pray that he will teach you something spectacular in today’s lesson. In your prayer acknowledge to God, “It’s more than a song,” and ask the Holy Spirit to speak, to teach and to guide you.

Now, open your Bible.

As you will recall, in the first lesson of this study we learned about the need to establish a **quiet time**. In the second lesson we focused on the first of three things we should do in our quiet time: **meditating on God's word**. In our last lesson we focused on **praying according to God's word** during our quiet time. In this lesson we will look at the third thing we should do in our quiet time: **worshiping in God's word**.

All three of these practices/disciplines are foundation-building. They send roots deep into the soil of our heart and cultivate a deep and personal relationship with the Lord. In addition, all three are massively transforming. Because they are so massive, there is no way we can address in this limited study anywhere near what needs to be taught on meditating, praying and worshiping on/in God's word.

As with the other lessons, we have to stick to a finite focus in our study of worshiping in God’s word. It would be great to study in detail worship in the general sense and corporate worship. However, this lesson is about us personally worshiping God. It’s about how we can sit down in the morning and enter into a deeper level of worship, or at least as deep a level of worship as when we worship with our congregation. In fact, if all of us could get to the place of worshiping God in our private time in our own life during the week *before* we gather corporately, then when we do get together with other Christians to worship, just think of the joyful noise that would be made! So, in this lesson we will confine our focus to our private time worship.

Before we get rolling, it must be understood that worship is more than a song; it is a lifestyle. It is best summarized by Romans 12:1. If you can't quote Romans 12:1, get to the place where you can. Study it, meditate on it, pray it, and put it on the refrigerator with a vegetable magnet. If you haven’t memorized Romans 12:1, start now by writing it out (if you know it by memory, don’t use your Bible).

John Stott, one of the great Bible commentators, says, “*True worship is the highest and noblest activity of which man, by the grace of God, is capable.*” And the cool thing is we can do it now! We can worship God in whatever circumstance or situation we are in. We can grasp the highest and noblest activity of which we are capable and enabled by the Holy Spirit right now as we live on earth.

Romans 12:1 is the summary of that highest and noblest activity of which we are capable.

What does this scripture tell us is our spiritual act of worship?

Offering our bodies as living sacrifices to God is holy and pleasing to God. This offering can come in all forms. Give some examples of ways you can offer your body as a sacrifice to God.

That is worship!

Let's try to define worship some more. It's a little hard because, honestly, we may think that worship is the part of the Sunday morning service when there is a band playing, people are singing and listening, raising hands and clapping. In our minds, we connect worship to a specific time period once a week. Some of us think of it as the “warm up” to the teaching. Something that really isn't necessary. If that is your opinion, this lesson will help transform your mind to value worship as something more than a song.

Worship is most literally “assigning God his true worth.” The word *worship* comes from the Old English word “worth-ship.” It means to give God the worth that he is due. Worship is acknowledging and praising God for who he is, for what he has done, and for what he is doing. Worship is us totally focused on, and in awe of, God's attributes, his glory, and his worth. It's praising him for who he is, for his attributes, and for his character. It's acknowledging that he is God and we are not. That's worship and it's critical. It's done far too little in our lives and in the church.

It probably isn't too far of a stretch to say that one of biggest reasons why we see so little genuine worship, both in the church and in personal Christians' lives, is because we are basically self-centered. Worship goes against our selfish nature. It is opposite of not only our sin nature, but what our culture has made us. Sadly, our culture has created us and has molded and shaped us into totally self-focused creatures. We are consumers and we are self-focused. We have a difficult time focusing on God because, by definition, to focus on God means that we can't focus on ourselves. What the culture has done to us

personally has permeated the church. If our whole culture is all about “what I can get, what I can receive, and what's in this for me,” we tend to come to church with this same attitude. We tend to shop churches to see, "What's in it for me? Do I like this better? Do they do more for me here? Where can I get the most of what I need?" That’s a sad truth of the human nature and the church in America right now.

What does God’s word say about self in Matthew 16:24?

In Ephesians 4:22, what are we suppose to do with our old self?

Read Ephesians 4:24, what are we to put on after we talk off that old self?

Let’s purpose ourselves to deny our selfish nature and not to live in our old nature so that when we come into our place of worship we aren’t demanding and expecting God or the church to satisfy our selfish nature or get our needs met. Rather let’s purpose ourselves to live in a transformed mind with a focus to deny our flesh, pick up our cross, put on the new self, so we can focus on, and worship an awesome and living God.

Not only has the church been permeated by the self-centered focus that our culture has played to, but there is this added thing that puts it over the top and makes worship in the church corporate setting almost impossible. There is an incredible ever present obstacle in our world that makes worshiping in church seem almost be insurmountable. It's the invention of television. Since the television was invented, our culture has moved to this place where we think we are supposed to be entertained at all times. There’s evidence of this everywhere. In almost every establishment you frequent, there is a big flat screen TV in front of you. Even doctor’s offices have TVs in their waiting rooms. In many of our homes there is a TV in every room and at least one of them is on at all times. Everywhere we go there is some sort of entertainment being presented to us in the form of television. By this constant barrage of TV, we have learned (have been conditioned to believe) that we deserve to always be entertained. And, sadly, we come to church like we go into our living room and sit in front of the TV and expect to be entertained. We sit in church and we look up at what’s before us and we say, "American Idol was a little more entertaining than this. I wonder if there's another church that looks a little more like American Idol where I would be more entertained.” We bring the entertainment sickness into church. Not only are we looking for how church will serve us, but we're looking for how church can entertain us. If we're struggling with those two things (wanting church to serve and

entertain us), it's almost impossible to truly worship God when we go to church. Ask God to transform you in this area if that is one of your struggles.

Bible teacher, R. Kent Hughes, says, "The unspoken but increasingly common assumption of today's Christendom is that worship is primarily for us – to meet our needs. Such worship services are entertainment focused and the worshipers are uncommitted spectators who are silently grading the performance."

Maybe that's okay to do on American Idol – to put folks before us and judge them, but it's not okay to do in church. It's not okay to say, "Aw, man. Why did I even wash my hair this morning? That wasn't any fun at all. It just didn't do anything for me at all. I didn't get anything out of that at all. I should have just stayed home." Obviously that type of mindset is unspiritual, un-Biblical, and un-Christian. Yet our churches are filled with people wanting to be served and entertained by church. The good news is that God wants to transform us out of that self-centered, entertainment focused culture. He wants to transform us into a genuine worshiper – someone whose heart is bursting with the adoration, the praise, and the honor of the Almighty God and who is walking around singing hymns. When we've been transformed into a non-self focused Christian but a Christ and others focused Christian, there is a song that gets put in our hearts because we are focused on God, not ourselves. We're glorifying God, not looking to meet our own needs.

Ephesians 5:19-20 gives us a way to shift from self focus to God focus. What is that way?

When we focus on Christ and others and have a mind set of thankfulness, we can't help but sing and make music to the Lord. Focusing our eyes on Jesus takes our eye off of self.

And check it out, when we are singing and making music for the Lord, the Lord inhabits the praises of his people. It's exciting. We've got to join together as individual worshipers worshiping corporately and God will do great things.

Here's a cool truth about worship: worship increases our total dependence on God. The more we worship God, the more we recognize who he is, his attributes, his character, his power, his leading, his guiding, and his sovereignty. The more we recognize those things, the more dependent we are on him and the less dependent we are on ourselves. The less dependent we are on ourselves the less focused we are on ourselves. As we learn to worship God and place our dependence on him, it puts Jesus on the throne and takes us off of it. If Jesus is there, he's leading and guiding for his namesake. If we are there, then he's not. He's not a throne-sharer. He's too big. There's no room on the throne for two. If you want to sit on the throne, then God is going to have to step down. That's not a good plan.

Let's see what the word of God tells us about worship. Read John 4:1-26.

This is the famous “worship in spirit and truth” scripture. It is one of the most critical texts in the New Testament about worship. In verse 5 of John 4, where is Jesus at this point in his earthly ministry?

Jesus is in the town of Sychar, in the region of Samaria. Interestingly Jesus chose to have this discussion on the topic of worship in Samaria, in enemy territory. It did not occur at the Temple where you would expect Jesus to teach on worship. The Temple, after all, was at the time the place where worship was occurring and where it was focused. Not only does one of the most critical texts on worship in the New Testament not occur at the Temple, it doesn't even occur in Jerusalem. Not only does this discussion on worship not occur in the Temple or in Jerusalem, but it occurs in an outsider's world – the Samaritans– who were despised by the Jews.

The Samaritans were so despised by the Jews that a real Jew would not even walk through Samaria, but rather they would go completely out of their way to avoid the region all together. Jesus not only walked through this despised area of Samaria, but he stops at Jacob's well and talks to the “unthinkable.” In verse 7, we see who comes to the well when Jesus is sitting there. Who does Jesus encounter that day?

Jesus, in the hated and dreaded area of Samaria, encounters a woman. Not only a woman, but as we read through this scripture we find out she's a harlot. Look at verse 4 again. Notice it said that he “had to go through Samaria.” He HAD to go there to meet with this woman. Jesus HAD to go a “despised” place to meet with a “despised” woman to bring peace and salvation to her, which resulted in a salvation avalanche in the town, and to teach us many incredible lessons. Take heart my beloved, Jesus won't take the long way around to avoid you. He knows where you've been and what you've done. He desires to meet with you.

Check out the parenthetical statement in John 4:8. What does it tell us about his disciples?

Jesus, in his sovereign wisdom, knew his disciples wouldn't be able to handle the encounter with this Samaritan harlot woman. So, prior to her arrival, he sent the disciples into town to get some cheeseburgers. They know he's tired and they want to serve him. What they don't realize is that Jesus is there for a very specific person and reason – to do his Father's business. So here in John 4, we see Jesus HAD to sit down in Samaria – not

in the Temple, not in Jerusalem, not even in Judea, but in Samaria. He HAD to be there because he's waiting for a harlot – a woman who was consumed in sin – to teach her about true worship. The setup says a lot.

What are Jesus' first words to the woman? _____

Jesus is tired and probably thirsty. Asking the woman for a drink was the ice breaker to get the conversation heading towards his purpose of being there. Interestingly, in verse 6 we are told it was about noon when this woman had come to the well to draw water. God's timing is perfect. However, we read in the scripture that the woman had come to the well at this particular hour with the assurance that none of women from the town would be there drawing water for it was common practice to draw water in the cool morning hours. The woman wanted to be at the well alone. She didn't want to be seen or exposed. But Jesus HAD to be there to meet with this woman.

In verses 10 through 15, the two of them engage in a conversation concerning water. Jesus hints at the fact that he is God and what he can offer her (eternal life). But the woman is blinded by the truth and only is thinking of her flesh and physical needs. How does the woman respond to Jesus telling her that the water he has to offer is a spring of water welling up to eternal life (verse 15)?

What is her motive for taking from Jesus what he has to offer?

The woman's heart is not pure. Her desire for what has been offered to her is to receive temporary satisfaction of a physical need. Her heart isn't towards Jesus but to self. She's still focused on the wrong thing and so she's unable to see Jesus for who he really is.

Jesus needs to do some work on her heart. He needs to uncover her sin. But he wants her to be the one to confess it. So he just prods her. He just cracks the door open by giving her a simple instruction (for the purpose of revealing her). In verse 16 what does he tell her to do?

Jesus, in his deity, never having met this woman before, knows her heart, her past and her sins. He gives her the opportunity to confess. What does she say in response to Jesus' request to go get her husband and bring him back (verse 17)?

Instead of taking the opportunity to come clean, the woman tells Jesus she has no husband. Why not bend the truth a bit? He's a total stranger. She doesn't know him more than he knows her. Or so she thinks. Look at verse 17. What's the bombshell Jesus drops on the woman?

Jesus is El Roi, the God who sees. He knows everything. Everything. Our past. Our present. And even our future. There is no need to try to hide anything from him. When he gives us that opportunity to confess and come clean, we need to take him up on it because he's not going to relent until we do confess.

But just like us, this woman is stubborn. Have you ever had that happen? You say, "I just wanted to talk to you about this thing in your life," and someone says, "Yeah, but what do you think about Iran and the nuclear bomb?" It happens a lot.

Jesus uncovers her sin of continued immorality and she immediately changes the subject. Instead of confessing, she quickly attempts to change the subject by flattering him. In verse 19, what does the woman call Jesus? _____

The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet." That's a great line because he is in fact God! Then she immediately switches the subject again. What is she trying to switch the topic of the conversation to (verse 20)?

Jesus hadn't been talking to this woman about worship. Jesus is talking about her life and the men in her life. He didn't sugar coat it or conceal it. He flat out told her that she had no husband that she had five of them and the man she's living with at the time is not even her husband. She knows she's guilty so she tries to dance around subject and switch the conversation to worship. She's bringing up this intellectual debate of where worship should occur. Have you ever had anybody to do that – switch to a debate in the middle of talking about truth? When you're in the middle of a conversation with someone and the topic is hitting close to home, people (maybe even we've done it ourselves) will say stuff like "I think the King James Bible is the only Bible." Instead of confessing and being honest about the sin that is in our life, we'd rather talk about Bible versions. It's the same kind of thing the woman is doing here in John 4. She's trying to bring up a relatively insignificant debate.

So Jesus decides to dance with her a bit and says in verse 20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."

Jesus is going to seize what this woman says at the well and he's going to teach us a thing or two about where worship is to occur. It's a very important subject matter and we should be grateful that he takes this opportunity to teach us something about worship. Jesus is talking about what we might call a dispensation – a new age. He's talking about the Church age which we're still in and will be in until Jesus returns to take us home.

In John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father." Jesus is talking about him completing the Father's work – the coming of the Holy Spirit – which begins the Church age. He's opening up to her, and to us, about how this is going to change everything about worship. Everything about worship is about to be changed when Jesus finishes the sacrifice (his death on the cross) and when the Holy Spirit comes in Acts 2.

He tells her and us that (once his sacrifice is complete and the Holy Spirit has come) no longer will the place be important. The mountain doesn't matter. Jerusalem doesn't matter. It's not about the place. It's the same today as it was in 30 A.D. It's not just about a place. Worship is not about a place or a certain time of the week or who or what you're looking at.

John Piper says, "Worship is not merely an external act that you can accomplish by going to a place." If we say, "I have to go to church to worship," we put ourselves right in the same place spiritually as the woman at the well in John 4.

The Bible tells us there is only ONE place where we are to worship God. Look up these scriptures and write down where we are told to worship God.

Psalm 95:6

Psalm 99:5

Psalm 100:2

What place do we go to worship? Before him and at his footstool. Not to a mountain. Not to a temple. Not to a church. Simply we go into his presence to worship him.

Jesus tells the woman (and us) that it's not about the place. When we say, "I have to go to church to worship," we have to realize it's just not about a place. We can't worship by just being in a certain place. We know that we can go to church for ten years straight and

never worship the Lord once. Far too often, we fool ourselves into thinking that if we get to this physical place we call church or go through certain motions we've worshiped God. If you're in that place, be careful you've not deceived yourself into think you've been worshipping God.

Write out the warning found in Matthew 15:8.

If we're thinking that going to a certain place or going through certain motions or doing a certain thing automatically equals worship, Jesus says, "in vain do they worship me." He's saying that our actions, in and of themselves, don't equal worship. The place, in and of itself, doesn't equal worship. Worship is something more than that. God wants your heart. He wants your heart more than he wants you in church. He wants your heart. He wants the very core of who you are. Until he has your heart, going through the motions won't make up for it.

Write out these scriptures and commit to seek the Lord and give him your whole heart.

Psalm 119:2

Jeremiah 29:13

Mark 12:30

Let's make something clear. Meeting together to worship with the saints is critically important. Hebrews 10:25 gives us strong warning to not forsake the gathering together of the saints. It's critical that we come together. It's critical that we worship together. We edify and support, build up, strengthen, and carry one another's burdens as we come together and worship. However, just being there physically doesn't automatically equal

worship. We need to be in corporate worship but we need to realize that merely by just being physically present during corporate worship doesn't necessary mean we must have worshiped God. We need to not only be in church, but we need to understand what true worship is, and we need to practice it. Again, this study is not all inclusive on the topic of worship, so if you need more knowledge of what it means to worship God, please search the scriptures and get together with another believer whose walk you admire and who you see is a true worshiper.

Now, let's go back to John 4. Next Jesus tells the woman at the well that salvation, and thereby worship, really does come from the Jews. This is a very narrow-minded statement from Jesus. In verse 22, Jesus says to the Samaritan woman, "you worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."

Our culture tells us: "Do whatever you want; worship whatever you want; worship however you want; worship wherever you want; worship any way you want." It sounds really good until you pick up a Bible and realize that since the days of Cain and Abel, God has prescribed an acceptable way of worship. Especially when Israel reached Mount Sinai and Moses got the law and God came down on the mountain – from that point forward, we understand what worship looks like. We understand that God has prescribed a specific way to worship. Why? Because he's narrow-minded? No, because there's only one way to God. There's only one way that we can come to God and that's through the finished work of Jesus Christ. If we'll look at how God has prescribed worship since the earliest days of Genesis, we will find out that Jesus Christ – through and through – is the focus, the way, and the source of us worshipping God. We don't have time to go through it here, but if you're a go-getter, read Exodus 25 and following and you'll see how every item of worship and every step of worship in the Tabernacle was a perfect picture of Jesus Christ and the requirements of Jesus Christ to get us into the presence of God.

God has prescribed the way to worship. He has brought it through the nation of Israel, fulfilling it in Jesus Christ and enabling it by the Holy Spirit. God has prescribed worship through the nation of Israel and his law. He has fulfilled that process in Jesus Christ and he has enabled us to join in that process by the filling of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. When Jesus says "Salvation comes from the Jews," he is saying that this is the only way that we can worship God.

The crux of the message in John 4:23-24. "But the hour is coming, and is now here, (referring to the beginning of the Church age and his finished work and the coming of the Holy Spirit) when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

Okay, if it's not come to church, what is it? If it's not standing up and singing along when the band is playing and singing, then what is it? Jesus gives us the answer in John 4:24

when he reveals the kind of worshipers the Lord is seeking. What does Jesus reveal to the woman about how God's worshiper must worship?

God is seeking worshiper who will worship him in spirit and in truth. Read Psalm 29 and you'll see worship in action – ascribing God the honor and the glory that he is due. Worship is being in awe of, praising and glorifying God's attributes, his character, his person, and his actions. Jesus says in John 4:23-24 that God is seeking those who will ascribe the honor and glory due his name in spirit and in truth. That's what God is looking for.

Let's deal with the words “spirit and truth.”

First “*spirit*.” As a tangent, here's little exegetical (related) comment. A lot of people teach this verse and just assume or presume that when Jesus says, “in spirit,” he's talking about the Holy Spirit. Two things must be said about that. First, we absolutely cannot worship God without the Holy Spirit – there's just no way. We can be religious; we can be Pharisees. We can do whatever we want in religion, but we cannot worship God without being filled with the Holy Spirit. We don't have it in us. The Holy Spirit enables us to worship God. Second, there is no definite article in the Greek in John 4. In neither of these verses (23 or 24) is there what we say in English “the referring to a person”. Hopefully your Bible version uses a lower case “s” in the word spirit. There is no definite article here; so very probably Jesus is not talking about the Holy Spirit as a person. He's talking about our spirit. That's just the truth of how the Greek is written. God could have put the definite article in there – “by the Holy Spirit” – and it would have been clear that it was the Holy Spirit. However, it's not there.

In John 3, Jesus is explaining how to be born again. We see in John 3:6 Jesus make this mandatory connection between the Holy Spirit and our spirit. It is so important to see this. Jesus says, in his conversation with Nicodemus about being born again, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh (in other words, flesh bears flesh), and that which is born of the Spirit (with the definite article, meaning the Holy Spirit – capital S) is spirit (referring to our spirit – lower case s)." Jesus says the flesh births those who are born of the flesh. Those who are born of the Holy Spirit are birthed (have new life) in their spirit. Our being born again is a work through the work of Jesus Christ, but it is a work of the Holy Spirit lighting alive our spirit within us. When we're born again, it's the Holy Spirit's job to give our spirit new life. We can't worship God without that spirit. Jesus says, "When you're born again, my Holy Spirit is going to give you new life in your spirit," because worship must be in spirit.

Worship is not merely an action, though it comes out in action. Worship is not in a particular place, though it occurs in a particular place. Worship is in spirit and in truth, ascribing the greatness and the wonder and the awesomeness of God – but it's done in our

spirit, lit alive by the Holy Spirit in communion with the Spirit of God. Worship is a spiritual thing. Worship is not necessarily an action or going through a process or motions or being in a building. Worship is in spirit. If you want to worship God, it involves your spirit being lit alive by the Holy Spirit and communing with the Spirit of God.

Genuine worship is your spirit connecting to God's Spirit. What is worship, then, if worship is not watching the band and trying to sing along? Worship is our spirit connecting with the Spirit of God – enabled by the Holy Spirit living in us, accomplished by the full work of Jesus Christ to fulfill the law of God that was required for us to worship since Genesis. When we worship today, when our spirit is connected to God today, we are living in the response of that entire process that allows us to worship God.

William Barclay says, "True and genuine worship is when man, through his spirit attains to friendship and intimacy with God. It is not to come to a certain place or go through a certain ritual or even to bring certain gifts. True worship is when the spirit, the immortal and invisible part of man, speaks to and meets with God, who is immortal and invisible."

The next time you are in a “place” of worship, ask yourself, "Did my spirit commune with God during worship today? Was I connected spiritually to God today? Was the Holy Spirit connecting my spirit to the Spirit of God today?" And if it wasn't, be disappointed and commit yourself to make sure that happens the next time you are in a “place” of worship because it’s great place to be! It's the highest and most noble calling of man. It’s a big deal.

Now let’s deal with the word “*truth*.” Jesus says in John 4:24 that we must not only worship in spirit, but we must also worship in truth. With the help of James Montgomery Boice, this means that we must worship God truthfully – meaning honestly. If our spirit (the deepest part of our lives) is going to connect with God, then we can’t be hiding something from him. Can we really be putting on a sham? We can’t be wearing a hypocrite mask and have our spirit being connected with God. It's not possible. We have to be open and honest.

What does Hebrews 4:13 about us being honest before the Lord?

Worshiping God in truth means we are to be naked and exposed before God. We might as well do it now because one day we must give account. We have to say, "Lord, I'm a sinner. My sin is as scarlet, but I know, Lord, as I come into your presence with confidence to find mercy and grace to help in my time of need, you'll cleanse me. I know that I can come before you in the work of Jesus Christ and worship you." We can come

honestly before the Lord, no matter what. We can come honestly before God because he knows anyway. Be open and say, "Lord, just as I am I come before you. Just as I am." Truly, being truthful and honest before the Lord is one of the most freeing, liberating and joyful things we can do.

We must worship God in Christ as truth. Jesus Christ is our source and the center of our worship. In John 14:6, Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." When we are worshiping God the Father, it has to be Christ-centered. We have to come to worship in the righteousness of Christ – clothed with Christ. We have to come to worship Christ as the center of our worship. We have to worship in Christ and Christ alone. Not man. Not self. Not things. Not circumstances. Nothing but Jesus Christ for he alone is worthy of all our praises. We can't say, "I worship God, but that whole Jesus thing is a little narrow-minded for me." No, we worship in Christ – in his righteousness, because of his work, because of his forgiveness. We must worship in Christ. If we're going to worship in truth, we're going to worship in Christ.

The other important thing about worship we have to realize is that we must worship God based on Biblical truth. We cannot come up with our own way to worship God because we will mess it up. We don't have the ability to say, "This is how I think God should be worshiped." That's just making us God anyway. God wrote a Book. He wrote the instruction manual on worship. In John 17:17, Jesus says in his prayer to the Father, "Sanctify them (set them apart) in the truth; your word is truth." So if we want to worship God, we've got to worship him in truth. We've got to use the Bible to get there.

Let's don't be fooled by our culture and television. Church isn't entertainment and it's not for us or about us. It's for God and about God. Worship must be in spirit, which means it must connect the deepest part of who we are to God's spirit. It has to be done in truth – honestly, in Jesus Christ, and according to his word. We've got to worship in spirit and in truth. We need to learn how to do that in God's word. Everything we need to learn on how to worship is found in the word of God.

If God's word is the core of all worship, then we have to open up our Bibles to encounter him. We have to say, "Lord, I want to meet you. I want to see you face to face. I want to experience you. I want to hear your voice. I want to see your attributes. I want to know your character." These things happen through an open Bible. It's the word of God that causes us to worship him. We have to start in God's word. When we go to God's word purposely for worship, we should look for God's character. We don't go to God's word looking for what he can do for us. Our heart should be bent towards God and we should be looking for who he is and his attributes. We are not to look at the scriptures for the purpose of receiving something from him. Rather, we should be looking at the scriptures for the purpose of acknowledging his attributes. We're to focus on who God is, not what we want. We're to focus on what God is doing, and not what we wish he would do. We

open up our Bible to worship him by focusing on the person of God – the attributes, the character, the majesty, the awe, the wonder, the awesomeness, of God.

We can do that on any page of the Bible. It's all about him. We can do it on any page of the Bible as long as we're focused on God and not on self. As long as we say, "God, today, I want to worship you. I want to see you and your word. I want to lift you high. I want to assign to you the value, the worth that is yours." The easiest place to start that in the Bible would be Psalms. The word Psalms means "praises." So if you're looking to praise God, he's written a whole book in order for you to do it. It's the hymnal of the Bible.

If you're not a regular reader of the Psalms, start to make it a practice. It's important to know that God allowed the psalmists to express every possible emotion in the Psalms because we're going to experience them. We're going to experience the same emotions that the psalmists experienced, so God allowed them to put that in there. What we need to see in the Psalms is that no matter what the psalmist was experiencing, in the end he is worshiping God. In the end, he's turning everything back to God and he's trusting God and he's acknowledging who God is. No matter which psalmist is writing, it always goes back to who God is and his majesty and his greatness.

Journaling is great way to meditate, pray and worship using God's word. You can't meditate on God's word and pray accordingly and worship in God's word by dedicating an entire 20-30 minutes every day. You might not have time to do all three every day in one setting. So you can devote one day to worshiping by opening up the Bible and spending 30 minutes telling God how great he is. Reminding God, in his hearing, how wonderful, awesome, overwhelming, incredible, loving, merciful, and graceful he is. Immerse yourself in the character and the attributes of God.

If you've never just recited the characteristics of God in your quiet time, you've missed out. It's a powerful thing to do and highly recommended. Use the Psalms to do this. Take a Psalm; meditate on it a little bit. Chew on it, mutter it, and slowly read over and over it. Turn it into a prayer and begin to pray that Psalm. Then in the end, just worship God. That means ascribing to God his incredible worth. Say things like "God, you are great. You are awesome and mighty and powerful and able to do all things. You're my peace. You're my song. You're my hope. You're my joy. You're my provision. You're all that I need."

The more you practice it, the easier it just starts to come out. It's the Holy Spirit in you. He'll take over. Grab a Psalm and start ascribing worth to God and telling him how great he is, and it will bring you to a place of worship. Here are a few suggested Psalms for mediating and praying God word that will lead to worship. Psalms 23, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 46, 47, 48, 57, 61, 63, 66, 76, 91. Fall in love with the Psalms. Use them in your quiet time to meet with God and learn to worship.

Warren Wiersbe says, "Among other things, true worship must involve wonder." Be amazed at God. Be astonished. Admire him. Be in awe. Be fascinated with God. Develop your ability to worship in spirit and truth. Do it privately. Do it in God's word. Do it in spirit and truth and God will transform your life.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism says this: "What is the chief end of man?" The answer to the question is, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." That is the chief end. The reason we were created was to glorify God and enjoy him forever. We can do that every morning, every afternoon, every evening. We can do it all day long! We might as well practice now while on earth because we'll be doing it for eternity when we're in heaven.

Let's pray.

Jesus, you are the person I was created to worship. You are Spirit and you are Truth. I adore you for your holiness and beauty and love and grace. So many things about you Jesus are worthy to be praised. Create in me the ability to worship you, Lord. Give me a heart of confession and humility. Change me from the mindset that it's about a song and a place, to the mindset that it is about you and what you've done. Holy Spirit enable me to worship you. Remove from me anything that would hinder me from entering into your presence. Change my heart. Make me a worshiper who worships you in spirit and truth. I ascribe all the glory and honor due your name, the name above all names. Amen.