

WELCOME TO THE PLANET:

Wk 2: You Were Planned for God's Pleasure

How would you describe what worship is. Not just singing like we do in church but how would you describe what worship is in a more broad sense. One way to say it is worship equals what "VALUE." What is that worth to me?

There's another word that we can use is the word "IDOLIZE." There's a lot in the Bible about having false idols. Most people might not have those but we do tend to do that in our country. We like celebrities. We like sports heroes. You might make an idol out of a boyfriend or a girlfriend because you idolize that person, is what you say. Maybe TV. It could be anything.

Here's a third word that we can use. It's the word "HONOR." Showing honor, giving honor to someone. When we honor God, we worship God.

But here's the question for today. How do you know if you're worshipping God or you're worshipping someone else?

Three ways you can know who or what you worship.

• TIME

First would be the issue of your TIME. How much time do you spend on stuff? Let me explain this just a little bit. There are some parts of your day that you don't have any say so over. You've got to go to school. You've got to do homework. Some of you are athletes – you've got to go to practice. You've got to go to ball games. There are parts of your time you just have to put in. That's not what I'm talking about.

When you have free time what do you do with it? That's what I'm talking about. We want to spend time in those areas that matter to us, that have value to us, maybe that we idolize. Certainly that is one way that we show honor.

• MONEY

Here's another area: MONEY. I know you don't have a lot of money. Many of you have a job, or maybe you do a side project for family, or you get some kind of allowance. Some of your money has to go on stuff that you don't have any say so about it. Maybe your parents make you buy some of your clothes or gas or something like that. However you do have a little free money, what do you want to do with that? If you have a boyfriend or girlfriend you think, "I'm going to spend a little money on her/him." Why? Because that's what you value. If you show me how you spend your money I'll tell you what's important to you.

Do you know Jesus even said this? There's a verse in the Bible that tells us this.

Matthew 6:21 - For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

If you can identify where you're putting your treasure, then you know where your heart is. That shows what you value. That shows what you honor.

• THOUGHTS

Here's third test: Your THOUGHTS. This might be the most important test of all. A lot of people can tell you how to spend your time and a lot of people can tell you how to spend your money. But nobody can control your thoughts. You're sitting in school, maybe you're studying math. Your mind doesn't stay there that whole time. So where do your thoughts go? What's the last thing you're thinking about before you go to sleep at night? Who's the first person you think of when you wake up in the morning? Where do your thoughts go? The answer will tell you what matters to you. It'll tell you what you honor or what you value.

What is Worship?

• Giving God WORTH

Worship is giving worth to God. It's saying, "God, You matter to me." Nothing else is worth your worship. God's the only one worthy of your worship. You watch people who idolize or they chase after or they follow other things, just watch where their life goes.

Think about people who chase after money? That's where they put their value. That's where they worship. "I just want to make more and more money." Imagine this person gets laid off from their job. If money was the center of their universe what just happened? The heart of their world just got ripped out. The rug underneath their feet just got pulled out if they're counting on money.

But what if they said something like this? "You know this is hard news, but we're going to survive because God has met our needs in the past and I believe God's going to meet our needs this time. We are not about money." It would be clear that God is where they are putting their worth, not their job or money.

Think about this, when God was giving the ten commandments what did He choose to be the first?

Exodus 20:3

You shall have no other gods before Me.

• Giving God FOCUS

How many of you have been in a car and heard someone say to the driver, whether it was you or someone else, "Keep your eyes on the road!" We say that because we drive where we look. That's just the truth. If you're looking off to the side, before long the wheel just goes that way. If you're looking over at the kids in the back seat that are with you, you start going that way. Wherever you look that's where you'll go.

That's also true in other areas of life. Everybody has a group or certain people you look up to. You keep your eyes on them. You see what they wear. You see how they act. Soon you start dressing like them, acting like them because you go where you look. It's a matter of your focus. Every fashion trend or slang term that has ever existed becomes popular because the right people endorsed or started it.

The same is true with God. If we give God our attention, if we focus on Him, we start moving towards Him and we start living life like Him.

Why honor God?

• To Experience His LOVE

I think the most important reason to worship God is that you get to experience God personally. It's important to get to know God. Because the more you get to know about God, the more you'll learn about His love for you.

I don't know how many of you have ever believed you're in love. If you have been then you know that moment when you build up the courage to be the first person to say that you love them. You want them to say back to you, "I love you, too." You're so scared that they're not going to say it. Your palms are sweating, you're sick at your stomach. You hope they'll say, "I love you too" instead of something like "Thanks..."

It's a big risk to say I love you. To be the first one to do it. However, let me tell you something about God and your relationship with Him. God said, I love you, first. He took the risk away.

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

There is nothing that you can do to ever make God love you more than He loves you right now. And there's nothing you can do that will ever make God love you less. Some of you need to know that. No, I don't know everything you have done, but I know that God knows it and He still sent Jesus to die for you. He still raised Jesus from the dead to prove He has the power to help you in your life. He still says to you, I love you. And nothing can change that.

We don't honor God to get His love. People think, "I've got to come to church, I've got to read my Bible, I've got to do all this stuff. And I'm earning these points so that God will love me more." No, that's not why you do that stuff. You honor God, **you worship God because He gave you His love. Not in order to get His love.**

- **To Have Your Heart CHANGED**

When you show love to God your heart will change. Here's how you'll know. You will move from "I *HAVE* to do these things for God," to "I *WANT* to do these things for God." You can do all kinds of stuff and not really love God. You say, "I'm here at church, that proves I love God." That doesn't prove you love God. You could be here because a guy or girl you like is here, or your parents made you, or you really like basketball. There could be a dozen reasons you're here that has nothing to do with loving God.

God is not as interested in what you do as He is in why you do it. The Bible says God's not looking on the outside. God's looking on the inside. He knows what you're thinking. He knows what you feel. He wants to know that your worship is really coming out of your heart.

1 Samuel 16:7

For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

How to honor God?

There are a lot of methods we talk about: you sing, and you pray, and you do good service to the poor, and you sacrificially give so you help out others. But those are all methods. Again, you can do that without a real heart of worship.

- **Give God Your LOVE (Love is spelled- T.I.M.E.)**

Let me tell you how to spell "love" – TIME. How many of you say "I love to surf!" but you never go surfing. You don't love it because you're not putting any time out. "I love..." whatever. Are you spending any time there?

Let me suggest this amount of time. How about giving God the first two minutes of your day. Start your day with God. Have a post-it note like on the bathroom mirror or tape it on the wall beside your bed. The first two minutes with God. You start your day by saying, "God, I don't know what I'm going to face today but I want to face it with you. I don't know what I'm going to be tempted to do today, but I want you to help me. I don't know who you're going to ask me to be nice to but I'm going to try to listen. God, I want this day to be your day. So let's start the day together." Maybe that's a good way to give God some time.

Love equals time. If you give God your time then over time your love for Him will grow.

- **Give God Your PRAISE (Admiration and thankfulness)**

That's a church word – praise. What does that mean? That means admiration and gratitude. That's how you praise God. You say, "God, thank You. I admire you more than anybody else because of what You've done for my life."

Luke 17:11-18

11 Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance 13 and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

14 When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16 He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

17 Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18 Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?"

Why would that guy do that? I would say that he was wanting to show give some time and show praise and admiration and thankfulness to Jesus publicly.

Why does your faith need to be a public faith? When you honor Him you don't keep your love a secret. You don't keep your thankfulness a secret. You don't hide it from your friends, from your family. You don't hide it at school. If it comes up in a conversation you're out there with it.

- **Give God Your DEVOTION (that's loyalty)**

You give God loyalty.

I once heard a story about Alexander the Great. He had conquered all of the known world by the age of 33. One of the worst things you could do if you were in Alexander the Great's army was leave the field of battle – to run away as a coward. If you did that you were arrested. You weren't brought before one of the generals or officers, they were brought to Alexander the Great himself. Even if it was like in India, they would bring them back to wherever Alexander the Great was and they had to stand in front of him. Then every time if you'd been a coward, if you weren't loyal to the cause, you died.

One teenage boy who had been conscripted into the army, had run in the face of battle. He'd been a coward. He knew what was going to happen. He was dying. He's brought in before Alexander. There's something about Alexander the Great and that kid that connected -- something. In this particular case he asked the kid, "What's your name?" The kid said, "My name is Alexander." Alexander the Great just erupted. "You carry my name. Change your name or change your conduct." And he let him live.

If you're here as a Christian you carry the name of Christ. It's almost as if you're standing before Him every time you worship and He says, "Have you been loyal to me? Are you showing people that you love me, that you're thankful for what I've done in your life? And giving me your devotion? And if not, then why are you carrying the name? What are you so afraid of?"

If you're going to be a worshiper of God it has to show up in our lives.

Discussion Questions:

- In your own words, what does it look like to show honor, or worship, God?
- Is it possible to worship or show honor something or someone other than God? What does that look like?
- Is it *ALWAYS* bad to show honor to things other than God? If not, how do we know the difference?
- Why do you think God made that the first commandment about worshipping Him?
- Why is important to make God our number 1 focus?
- Would it be wrong to put God in our top 5 instead of number 1? Why or why not?
- How does worshipping God help you learn more about God?
- Do you think if you truly worship God your love for God would grow? How would you know your heart for God has grown?
- What are some practical ways to show God our love?
- What would you say is the most important thing we can do to show God our love for him?
- Think about how you spend your free time, what does that say about the things you care about?
- Why is it important to worship God publicly? Why can't we just worship God secretly?