



God is spirit, and those who
worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

John 4:24

On Worship

with Pastor Steve

Why do We Worship

I have been leading worship in small groups and corporate settings for many years. No one loves worship leading more than I. The rush that comes when the band starts playing and the audience begins to respond can only be described by those who have experienced it. While leading worship in small groups I have seen the floors of dens and living rooms covered with people on their faces in the presence of God. On many occasions I believe we could have sung *Mary had a Little Lamb* and God would have shown up.

In corporate settings I have seen people dance, shout and clap their hands while at the same time others knelt, bowed and wept. On some occasions people have been physically healed and some have come to salvation during worship (song) services. I have seen altars crowded with people repenting of sin, reconciling wrongs and being refreshed and filled with the Holy Spirit. (May I insert here that music and singing in and of itself does not save anyone; the gospel does (Romans 1:16).

As wonderful as these experiences have been I have come to understand that the experiences themselves are not the origin of worship; they are the overflow of worship. It is so easy to worship our praise and praise our worship. Because music is a universal language we can find ourselves worshipping the music instead of God. Because we enjoy seeing people being touched by God we can find ourselves worshipping the experiences that sometimes accompany God's presence.

The purpose of our worship, however, is not to experience the hand of God it is to see the face of God. Worship is for God! He is the giver and the receiver of worship. All true worship has God at its center. It's all about Him.

While enjoying breakfast with a long time friend who is a pastor, he asked if I would be interested in

working with the praise band at his church. He felt there were some hurdles keeping the praise team from reaching their full potential. I would be doing some teaching and working with the music.

We didn't get far into the conversation before I realized the reason he wanted me to come. "When the worship is good it opens people up to hear the word. I preach better when the worship is good," he said. When I suggested that worship was not to help him preach better he was visibly offended.

We are so wrapped up in what satisfies us that we miss the real reason for worship. First of all we are born with a nature with self in the center. We grow up in a society that tells us to better ourselves. Hollywood and the media are constantly at work to persuade us to pamper ourselves. We even choose the church we attend based on what it has to offer us rather than how we can serve its people.

I Corinthians 6:20 reads, *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.* Nothing in our lives has to do with us. Saint and sinner alike have been bought with the blood of Jesus and we are not our own. If our lives are not centered around us how much more our worship. Though we benefit greatly from worship and should receive pleasure from it, the main purpose of worship is not to make us feel better. It is to glorify God. Worship has one agenda; GOD.