

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Worship is a word that many Christians and non-believers do not understand. Many people believe that when they get up on Sundays and drive to the church, that they are about to enter into worship. Some people believe that the song portion of the Sunday morning program is worship. Others believe that only certain songs such as, "Shout to the Lord" and "Heart of Worship" are worship. Worship is not only for Sundays and Wednesdays, but rather it could happen every moment. Worship is giving our praise and adoration to God in everything that we do. When we are playing a sport, taking a test, spending time with our friends, or reading our Bible, we can be worshipping Christ.

Worship is something that each and every Christian should take part in. Many times during church services, we, as the congregation, do not actively participate in worship. Our song leader is our lead worshipper, but we each are needed and should take part in worshipping our Lord. Each of us has been given a gift, and all of those gifts are to be used to edify the Body of Christ and build up the church. We need to quit taking a passive role during the service and truly worship our King. Each and every song that we sing is a song to God. Do we sing as if we are worshipping and singing directly to our King? God deserves our best and corporate worship is a time for the Body of Christ to lift up their voices in one voice and sing praise to the King. In 1st Corinthians, Paul spoke of a problem that they were having during services. Many people felt as if certain spiritual gifts were more important than others and were trying to "get" those gifts. Paul wanted them to realize that all gifts are necessary for the edification of the Body of Christ and no gift is of more importance than another.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:1-12, 26-33

PURSUE LOVE

Despite all the importance Paul had placed on spiritual gifts, he constantly stressed that the one thing we should pursue the most is love. Without love, all of our spiritual gifts are useless and we will not use them in the proper facility. Many people have spiritual gifts, but lack the love to use them to glorify Christ. Love should be the one thing we want most in our lives. Without love, we are nothing. Love allows us to see beyond ourselves and focus on a higher cause and the needs of others. Love is the most important calling for all Christians and we should constantly desire to have more of Christ's love within us. At least one spiritual gift is given to us on the day of our salvation, but if we do not have Christ's love in our hearts, we will not use the gifts to honor and edify the Body of Christ. Every day we should ask God to put a little more of His love in our hearts so that we might give it away to others.

USE GIFTS TO EDIFY CHURCH, NOT SELF

Many people in Corinth desired to have the "flashy" spiritual gifts in order to draw more attention to themselves. One of the gifts that people desired to have was

speaking in tongues. People viewed the gift of speaking in tongues as something super spiritual. Many Christians desired to have that gift, not to help build up the Body of Christ, but rather to help build up their own pride and ego. God has gifted each and every one of us according to the gift He knew we needed. He took into account every detail of our life and gave us the specific gift that He felt we needed to use. Each Christian has at least one gift and they are to use it to build up the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ for us locally is the church we attend on a regular basis. We are to use our gifts to help build up our local church. No one has all the gifts or they could take care of the church on their own. God wanted us to work together, with Agape love, and use all our gifts in order to build up the Body. Whatever our gift may be, we cannot become prideful or use it to draw attention to ourselves. We must use our gift only so that God gets all the glory and praise for what we have done.

USE GIFTS FOR WORSHIP

Paul went on to explain to the Corinthians that our gifts should be used in worship. Once again, some people use their gift during worship only to gain attention to themselves. We should never use our gifts to draw attention to ourselves, but all the praise and honor should go to God. When we use our gifts in the spirit of God's love, we will not be doing it to get honor toward ourselves, but to Him. Paul wanted them to also realize that all gifts are important and vital for building the church. Some gifts will place people out in front of the congregation, but not all have been called to do that. God knew which gift was a perfect fit for us and He gave us that gift so we could use it to bring glory to Him.

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