



STUDIES IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

WORSHIP

STUDENT EDITION

Edited by Scott Aniol

Contributors:

Scott Aniol
Tom Ascol
Voddie Baucham
Josh Buice
Costi Hinn
Phil Johnson
Steven Lawson
John MacArthur
Laramie Minga
Matthew Sikes
Paul Washer
James White

Worship: Studies in Practical Theology

Copyright © 2021 by G3 Ministries

Published by G3 Ministries

www.g3min.org

Permission is granted to print this material unaltered for non-profit purposes.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*[®]. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



STUDENT HANDOUT

LESSON 1: THE REFORMATION OF WORSHIP

Josh Buice

MAIN POINT: The deformation of worship necessitates a bold reformation.

MAIN PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 3:14–16

MEMORY: “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim 3:16–17)

Think About It

1. In what ways do you see the culture around us negatively affecting the church?
2. In what ways do you see modern evangelical churches failing in their public worship?
3. How would you define worship?

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

REFORMING WORSHIP THROUGH PASTORAL OVERSIGHT (1 Tim 3:14)

REFORMING WORSHIP BY THE WORD (1 Tim 3:15a)

Think About It

- 1.** What do you think is mostly impacting how churches worship today?
- 2.** Why do you think Christians do not believe that the Bible is enough to regulate how we worship God?
- 3.** If you committed to worshipping only as God has explicitly prescribed in the New Testament, what elements would you have to eliminate from your services?

REFORMING OUR PERSPECTIVE OF THE CHURCH (1 Tim 3:15b)

HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD

PILLAR AND BUTTRESS OF THE TRUTH

Think About It

- 1.** What does the phrase “household of God” indicate about the nature of the church and our worship?
- 2.** What does the phrase “church of the living God” indicate about the nature of the church and our worship?
- 3.** What does the phrase “pillar and buttress of the truth” indicate about the nature of the church and our worship?

REFORMING OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH

(1 Tim 3:16)

THE DEFORMATION OF WORSHIP REQUIRES A BOLD REFORMATION

Think About It

- 1.** In what ways do you notice truth under attack in our day?
- 2.** How has attack on truth contributed to the deformation of the worship of evangelical churches today?
- 3.** In what ways can a return to the truth of God's Word serve to reform the church's worship?



STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 2: THE FOUNDATION OF
WORSHIP

Paul Washer

MAIN POINT: We must build our worship on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

MAIN PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 3:9–17

MEMORY: “For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 3:11)

STEWARDS UNDER AUTHORITY (1 Cor 3:9)

Think About It

1. In what ways do church leaders sometimes reveal that they think they are co-owners of God’s church?
2. What do the metaphors of God’s field and God’s building emphasize about the nature of the church and its worship?
3. What are implications of the reality that church leaders are stewards of God’s possession?

LAYING THE FOUNDATION (1 Cor 9:10–11)

A FOUNDATION OF GRACE, WISDOM, AND POWER

A FOUNDATION OF CHRIST

Think About It

- 1.** What are some man-made foundations upon which some churches are built?
- 2.** What are some results of building churches on our own foundation?
- 3.** If the foundation of our churches is truly Christ, his gospel, and his Word, how will that affect our worship?

BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION

(1 Cor 3:12–15)

Think About It

1. What are some examples of enduring building materials?
2. What are some examples of insufficient building materials churches use today?
3. In what ways will proper building of Christ's church result in true worship?

DESTROYING GOD'S TEMPLE (1 Cor 3:16–17)

Think About It

1. How is building the church upon the foundation of Christ and his Word related to true worship?
2. What implications does the warning in 1 Corinthians 3:17 have for those who lead the church's worship?
3. What are some ways you haven't trusted in the sufficiency of God's Word for your church and its worship?



STUDENT HANDOUT
**LESSON 3: WORSHIPPING A THRICE-
HOLY GOD**

James White

MAIN POINT: Worshipping a thrice-holy God compels faithful proclamation of God's message of judgment and salvation.

MAIN PASSAGE: Isaiah 6

MEMORY: "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here I am! Send me.'" (Isa 6:8)

THE HOLY LORD IS ON HIS THRONE
(Isa 6:1–2)

Think About It

1. What are some parallels between our present age and Israel during Isaiah's day?
2. How would seeing God high on his throne have given Isaiah comfort? How can this recognition give us comfort?
3. If God created seraphim to worship the Lord, how much more is it our purpose to worship God?

|| THE LORD IS THRICE HOLY (Isa 6:3–7)

| WORSHIP OF THE THRICE-HOLY GOD LEADS TO CONVICTION

| GOD MAKES PROVISION

Think About It

- 1.** Why should God's holiness lead to our confession of sin?
- 2.** How might the necessity of confession impact corporate worship?
- 3.** Why do you think many Christians today do not think they need to confess sin any longer?

WORSHIPING A THRICE-HOLY GOD COMPELS FAITHFUL PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S MESSAGE (Isa 6:8–13)

A MESSAGE OF PURE JUDGMENT

A MESSAGE OF HOPE

Think About It

- 1.** Why must the message of the gospel always include an announcement of judgment upon sin?
- 2.** How can gospel-infused worship compel us to proclaim the gospel to those who do not believe?
- 3.** How can the promise of a believing remnant compel us to proclaim the gospel?

WORSHIP OF THE THRICE-HOLY GOD IS WORSHIP OF JESUS

JESUS IS GOD

JESUS IS WORTHY OF OUR WORSHIP

JESUS IS THE ONLY MEANS TO ENTER GOD'S PRESENCE

Think About It

1. Why is it important to recognize that the one whom Isaiah saw was Jesus Christ, the second person of the godhead?
2. How does this recognition compel us to worship Christ?
3. How does this recognition impact our proclamation of Christ?



STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 4: TRUE WORSHIP

John MacArthur

MAIN POINT: True worship is any expression of obedience, praise, honor, adoration, and gratitude offered to the true God by a regenerate soul who knows the truth about God and loves him.

MAIN PASSAGE: John 4:19–24

MEMORY: “But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.” (Jn 4:23)

WORSHIP BASED ON GOD’S COMMANDS

Think About It

1. Based on God's commandments regarding worship in the Old Testament, what would render worship vain?
2. How important are external acts of worship in rendering worship either true or false? Name some examples in the Old Testament and today.
3. How important are internal aspects of worship in rendering worship either true or false? Name some examples in the Old Testament and today.

VAIN WORSHIP

Think About It

4. What are some ways churches in the past have taken the Lord's name in vain in their worship?
5. What are some ways that contemporary churches may take the Lord's name in vain in their worship?
6. In what ways have you personally taken the Lord's name in vain in how you have approached him in worship?

|| TRUE WORSHIP

| THE SOURCE OF TRUE WORSHIP

| THE OBJECT OF TRUE WORSHIP

THE LOCATION OF TRUE WORSHIP

THE NATURE OF TRUE WORSHIP

Think About It

1. How would recognizing that God the Father is the source and object of true worship affect how we worship?
2. Does the fact that worship is not limited to a geographical location minimize the importance of physically gathering for worship? Why or why not?
3. What aspects of our worship facilitate worship in truth? What aspects facilitate worship in spirit?



STUDENT HANDOUT LESSON 5: DRAWING NEAR TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST

Scott Aniol

MAIN POINT: Worship is drawing near to communion with God through Christ by faith.

MAIN PASSAGES: Hebrews 10:19–25, 12:18–24

MEMORY: “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” (Heb 10:22)

THE CALL TO DRAW NEAR IN WORSHIP
(Heb 10:22)

DRAWING NEAR TO GOD IN WORSHIP

Think About It

1. What would this idea of “drawing near” to God mean for our understanding of what it means to worship God?
2. If the essence of worship is that God has called us to draw near to him, who initiates worship?
3. If God is holy, who can draw near to him?

WE CANNOT DRAW NEAR BECAUSE OF SIN

Think About It

1. Discuss the incident of Uzzah and the ark from 1 Chronicles 13. What did David fail to do in his attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem? Why was Uzzah killed?
2. Discuss the incident of King Uzziah from 2 Chronicles 26. What was Uzziah’s core problem?
3. Read Isaiah 6:1–13. Notice the relationship between Isaiah’s vision and King Uzziah. What implications for worship can be drawn from this passage?

THE BASIS FOR DRAWING NEAR IN WORSHIP (Heb 10:19–21)

WE HAVE ACCESS INTO THE HOLY PLACE

WE HAVE A GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Think About It

- 1.** Discuss what was necessary for an Old Testament Jew to draw near to the presence of God in the temple.
- 2.** Read Leviticus 16. What can the work of the high priest on the Day of Atonement teach us about the nature of the gospel and worship?
- 3.** Consider the popular title of “worship leader.” Based on what we have seen in Hebrews 10, who is the only true worship leader?

THE MEANS OF DRAWING NEAR IN WORSHIP (Heb 10:22)

Think About It

- 1.** Why is faith necessary for Christian worship?
- 2.** Discuss reasons you should worship even if you don't "feel" like it.
- 3.** Discuss implications for corporate worship that come from the wonderful truth that when we worship through Christ, we are joining in with the true worship of heaven.



STUDENT HANDOUT LESSON 6: WORSHIPING GOD REVERENTLY

Tom Ascol

MAIN POINT: God expects people created in his image to come before him reverently.

MAIN PASSAGE: Ecclesiastes 5:1–7

MEMORY: “Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil.” (Ecc 5:1)

**BE CAREFUL HOW YOU ENTER INTO
WORSHIP** (Ecc 5:1)

WE ARE ENTERING GOD’S PRESENCE

WE COME TO HEAR WHAT GOD HAS TO SAY

WE MUST PREPARE TO MEET GOD

Think About It

- 1.** What are some implications of the fact that the New Testament calls the gathered church “God’s temple” and “God’s household”?
- 2.** What are some practical ways we can come to hear what God has to say when we gather for worship?
- 3.** In what ways have you come to worship thoughtlessly? What can you do to better prepare to meet with God?

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY IN WORSHIP (Ecc 5:2–3)

Think About It

1. In what ways do we sometimes speak rashly in worship?
2. What does Leviticus 10:1 mean when it says that Nadab and Abihu offered “unauthorized fire” before the Lord?
3. What are some measures we can take to guard what we say in worship?

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU VOW IN WORSHIP
(Ecc 5:4–6)

BE CAREFUL TO FEAR GOD IN WORSHIP

(Ecc 5:7)

Think About It

- 1.** What are some ways that we make vows to God when we worship him?
- 2.** What are some songs you regularly sing that include promises to God?
- 3.** As you sing those promises, what are some prayers you can offer that ensure you are singing with humility and dependence upon God to keep those vows?



STUDENT HANDOUT LESSON 7: SPIRIT-LED WORSHIP IN A SELF-CENTERED AGE

Costi Hinn

MAIN POINT: Spirit-led worship focuses on the glory of Christ.

MAIN PASSAGE: John 16:4–15

MEMORY: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. (Jn 16:13–14)

**SPIRIT-LED WORSHIP IS CONTROLLED BY
THE HOLY SPIRIT (Jn 16:4–7)**

Think About It

1. What do you typically think of when you hear “Spirit-led worship”?
2. What are fundamental differences between Spirit-led worship and pagan worship?
3. How should an understanding of the essential relationship between Word and Spirit affect how we worship?

SPIRIT-LED WORSHIP FOCUSES ON THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Think About It

- 1.** Do you think Christians today regularly acknowledge the holiness of God? Why do you think this is the case?
- 2.** Are your prayers and praise more often about what God can do for you or who he is? Why do you think this is the case?
- 3.** How should a deep recognition of God's holiness affect our worship?

SPIRIT-LED WORSHIP ADMITS THE SINNER THAT YOU ARE (Jn 16:8–11)

Think About It

1. How often is confession of sin a regular part of corporate worship today?
2. How might intentional recognition of our sinfulness toward God lead to a deeper appreciation of his grace and mercy in Christ?
3. Have you ever noticed how many psalms are acknowledgement of the psalmist's sinfulness and a cry to the Lord for mercy?

SPIRIT-LED WORSHIP PRIORITIZES TRUTH

(Jn 16:12–13)

Think About It

1. How important is it to recognize the biblical connection between the Spirit and the Word?
2. What is an example of a worship song that is emotionally engaging but devoid of truth?
3. If biblical truth is the primary criterion we use for every aspect of our worship, how would that change our worship services?

SPIRIT-LED WORSHIP DECLARES THE GLORY OF CHRIST (Jn 16:14)

Think About It

- 1.** How would recognizing that the Holy Spirit does not even draw attention to himself affect our worship?
- 2.** In what ways does the Holy Spirit direct our attention to Jesus Christ?
- 3.** In what ways should Spirit-led corporate worship draw attention to the glory of Christ?



STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 8: WORSHIP AS BELOVED CHILDREN

Voddie Baucham

MAIN POINT: Worship that is rooted in our adoption in Christ will produce conformity to Christ.

MAIN PASSAGE: Ephesians 5:1–25

MEMORY: “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” (Eph 5:1–2)

WORSHIP IS ROOTED IN OUR ADOPTION IN CHRIST (Eph 5:1–14)

Think About It

1. What are the implications of the fact that Christ’s sacrifice is the pleasant offering that God accepts?
2. Why is it important to remember that we are both justified *and* adopted?
3. How does our adoption as God’s beloved children affect our understanding of the nature of true worship?

WORSHIP PRODUCES CONFORMITY TO CHRIST (Eph 5:15–20)

WISDOM

UNDERSTANDING

SPIRIT-FILLING

Think About It

- 1.** Why does our adoption by God in Christ necessarily produce conformity to Christ?
- 2.** Why is a life of conformity to Christ better evidence of true worship than passionate singing or emotional experience in a church service?
- 3.** What are some biblical characteristics of truly Spirit-filled worship?

WORSHIP IS SUBMISSION TO CHRIST

(Eph 5:21–6:9)

Think About It

- 1.** What are some practical ways we will manifest communion with God through submission to God-given authorities in our lives?
- 2.** Why are we often tempted to define worship by emotional experiences?
- 3.** What would you say to someone who has passionate experiences on Sunday but who lives in rebellion to God the rest of the week?



STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 9: SINGING THE WORD

Laramie Minga

MAIN POINT: The Word of God impels the believer to sing the Word out of joyful obedience, in response to who God is and what he has done, and in the sure hope of spiritual formation.

MAIN PASSAGE: Ephesians 5:18–20, Colossians 3:16–17

MEMORY: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Col 3:16)

WHY WE SING (Eph 5:19)

GOD HAS COMMANDED US IN HIS WORD TO SING.

SINGING ALLOWS US TO EXPRESS OUR AFFECTIONS TO GOD FOR WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE HAS ACCOMPLISHED.

SINGING DEMONSTRATES THE COMMUNITY WE ENJOY AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

SINGING AIDS THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF BELIEVERS.

Think About It

- 1.** What are some common reasons people might give for why we sing in worship that do not necessarily come from Scripture?
- 2.** What does singing accomplish that cannot be accomplished in any other way?
- 3.** What are some ways music is performed in churches that can actually hinder the biblical purposes for singing?

WHAT WE SING (Col 3:16)

WE SHOULD SING PSALMS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS.

WE SHOULD SING THE WORD.

WE SHOULD SING THE GOSPEL.

WE SHOULD SING OUR HEARTS' AFFECTIONS AND THE CAUSE OF THOSE AFFECTIONS.

WE SHOULD SING A NEW SONG.

Think About It

- 1.** How important is it to sing psalms in corporate worship?
- 2.** In what ways could music actually hinder the Word of Christ dwelling richly in us?
- 3.** Why is it important to sing both in expression of our affections and the reasons for our affections?

HOW WE SING (Eph 5:20, Col 3:17)

WE SHOULD SING WITH OUR AFFECTIONS.

WE SHOULD BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT AS WE SING.

WE SHOULD SING SKILLFULLY.

Think About It

- 1.** Why is it important to recognize that music does not fill us with the Spirit, but rather that singing is the result of the Spirit filling us with the Word?
- 2.** What will characterize “skillful” singing in corporate worship?
- 3.** How has your understanding of singing in worship changed as a result of this lesson?



STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 10: THE BLESSEDNESS OF
WORSHIP

Phil Johnson

MAIN POINT: Lifting heartfelt and holy worship to the Lord is a blessing to the worshiper.

MAIN PASSAGE: Psalm 134

MEMORY: “May the LORD bless you from Zion, he who made heaven and earth!” (Ps 134:3)

A CALL TO HEARTFELT WORSHIP (Ps 134:1)

WORSHIP WITH THE WHOLE HEART

BLESS THE LORD

Think About It

- 1.** In what ways do you sometimes find yourself heartlessly engaged in the regular routines of worship?
- 2.** What are some practical ways you can ensure that you are worshiping with your whole heart?
- 3.** In what ways can we bless the Lord in our worship?

A HUMBLE DOXOLOGY (Ps 134:2)

Think About It

1. What are some different ways you might obey the spirit of the command to “lift up your hands” in blessing the Lord?
2. Why is there an emphasis upon holiness when we approach God in prayer?
3. In what ways might we approach God in worship without a proper focus on holiness?

|| A CONFIDENT BENEDICTION (Ps 134:3)

Think About It

1. What is the difference between praying for personal spiritual blessing and praying for material blessing?
2. Why does the fact that God made heaven and earth bring encouragement to worshipers?
3. What are some practical ways this simple worship order can impact your approach to worship?



STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 11: GOSPEL-ORDERED
WORSHIP

Matthew Sikes

MAIN POINT: Scripture-regulated, gospel-ordered worship will build up Christ's body to glorify him.

MAIN PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 14

MEMORY: "But all things should be done decently and in order."
(1 Cor 14:40)

INTELLIGIBILITY IN WORSHIP IS
NECESSARY FOR EDIFICATION (1 Cor 14:1–25)

EDIFICATION IS THE GOAL OF CORPORATE WORSHIP (vv. 1–5)

CORPORATE WORSHIP MUST BE INTELLIGIBLE (vv. 6–25)

Think About It

- 1.** In what ways does Paul emphasize the importance of edification in corporate worship?
- 2.** Why is it important to recognize that the central purpose of corporate worship is edification of the body?
- 3.** What are some ways corporate worship today often hinders edification?

**CORPORATE WORSHIP MUST BE
INTENTIONALLY ORDERED AROUND GOD'S
WORD** (1 Cor 14:26–40)

THE ESSENCE OF WORSHIP

THE ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

THE SHAPE OF WORSHIP

Think About It

- 1.** Why is it important that God's Word regulates the essence, elements, and shape of our worship?
- 2.** What elements do churches today commonly include in their worship that have not be prescribed by Scripture?
- 3.** How would a gospel-shaped worship order impact the way we approach corporate worship?



STUDENT HANDOUT
LESSON 12: THE WORSHIP OF HEAVEN

Steven Lawson

MAIN POINT: Heavenly worship is the model for our earthly worship.

MAIN PASSAGE: Revelation 5

MEMORY: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”
(Rev 5:12)

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD (Rev 5:1)

Think About It

1. Why is it important that our worship begin with a recognition of the sovereignty of God?
2. What is revealed when our worship focuses primarily on our needs and desires?
3. How might a focus on God’s sovereignty impact the way we approach worship?

|| **THE INABILITY OF MAN** (Rev 5:2–4)

Think About It

- 1.** How does recognizing the supreme sovereignty of God naturally lead us to recognize our own inability?
- 2.** Why is it important that we regularly recognize our own inability when we worship?
- 3.** How can this recognition of human inability impact what we do in worship?

|| **THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST** (Rev 5:5–7)

| **CROSS**

RESURRECTION

Think About It

4. Why must a focus on the supremacy of Christ in our worship be preceded by a focus on the sovereignty of God and the inability of man?
5. How can we make the death and resurrection of Christ central in our worship?
6. Why is a focus on Christ's atonement still necessary for Christians?

THE HUMILITY OF THE WORSHIPERS (Rev 5:8)

Think About It

1. What are some ways we sometimes come to worship presumptuously?
2. Name a few realities about Christ that should humble us in worship.
3. What are some practical ways we can make sure we are coming to worship in an appropriate humility and submission to the Lordship of Christ?

|| **THE FERVENCY OF PRAISE** (Rev 5:9–14)

Think About It

- 1.** Why is praise more glorious when it is preceded by a focus on God's sovereignty, man's inability, and the supremacy of Christ?
- 2.** How can we make sure that praise is truly directed toward God and not simply emotionalism?
- 3.** In what ways should heavenly worship set the standard for our earthly worship?

