

## PREPARE TO WORSHIP

by Rick Founds

### Why worship?

The answer to that question can be illuminated with the help of one of our highly respected predecessors of worship, A.W. Tozer. In his numerous writings on topics concerning the worship of our Lord, he speaks of the intervention of God in the lives of mankind in order that "...He might restore us again to the place of worship that man knew when we were first created".

We were created to worship. It is not an option. If it is not the Lord of Heaven, then it is someone, or something else, but we all worship. It is something that is built into the nature of every created being. The glimpses of heaven that we receive from scripture show us this fact. In the book of Isaiah, we see the Lord high and lifted up, and hear those in His Presence saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts!". In the fourth chapter of the book of Revelation, God opens Heaven and we see them there worshipping God the Father. Again in the fifth chapter we see them worshipping God the Son.

Knowing then, that we were created to worship God, what can we consider about our relationship to Him that will help us to worship Him more effectively?

First: Recognize that God is our "boundless confidence" (to use Tozers' words). He is the One we trust with our lives. He is the One who provides us with our every breath. You cannot worship someone you cannot trust. Confidence is required for respect, and respect is necessary for worship to occur. The depth of our worship of God is directly proportionate to the attitude we take towards Him.

Secondly: Take a few moments to think about God. What does scripture tell us about Him? Where does He live? What does He look like? (someday we'll know, for scripture tells us that we shall see Him as He is!) How powerful He must be, to create and maintain an infinite universe. When pondering these attributes for even a few moments, we can't help but be struck with a true fascination with Him, and a desire to get as close to Him as possible.

Thirdly: As we dwell on these points, and think about what He has done for us, in forsaking His greatness and becoming the most humble and despised of all beings for us, then we cannot help but adore Him.

Having thought about why we are to worship our Lord God, let us now think about some practical aspects of preparing to worship Him, especially in a corporate situation, such as church service or home Bible study. There are several factors we should keep in mind, the most vital being the content and thematic flow of the words that come from our lips as we sing.

Remember that worship is a journey. An adventure into the presence of the Living God. It is not haphazard. We begin at a starting point, and end up before the Throne of God, taking in the sights and sounds of heaven, responding with praise and adoration to our Lord.

As a model for worship, we can reflect on the fourth and fifth chapters of the book of Revelation. In looking at these passages, we see first, a call to worship, where the worshipper is invited to set aside present activities, and approach the presence of the Almighty. We begin to observe the excitement of Heaven's activity. There are various expressions. Testimonies of what God has done, followed by an awareness of unworthiness. There is also praise of God which is being directed to others, telling of His great attributes, and His marvelous works on man's behalf. At this point in our worship, we become aware of the need to confess our sin, and request of Him forgiveness, salvation, or some other provision of God, to make our relationship with Him unhindered. Soon all of the Universe, His handiwork, is caught up in worship and adoration, singing directly to the Lord, the Mighty God!

As we seek to worship our Lord, let us actively think about what we are doing. I believe that as we do, our depth of relationship with Him will be greatly enhanced.