

I WILL WORSHIP

Worship, more than anything else, is about responding to God. Much like our response when we hear a beautiful piece of music or watch a gifted athlete perform an amazing feat... we recognize the greatness before us and celebrate our opportunity to be part of it. This week we look at worship in a way that you may not have done so before. Reflect on or imagine attending a concert, event, or performance by someone you consider extremely talented or gifted. As we compare worshiping God to attending an event like this, there will be aspects that don't translate. God is not performing for us and our being entertained isn't the purpose. The idea of acknowledging and celebrating greatness can be discovered in both arenas. The focus of the concert is the star on stage, the artist. The focus of our worship is the King of Creation, our God.

Day 1

READ Luke 19:37-40. There's something in all of us that not only wants to celebrate greatness, but wants to celebrate it with others. As we experience or witness something awe-inspiring, we naturally desire to share and affirm it with others. A simple nod and smile can communicate, "Isn't this amazing?" "We're both experiencing this greatness!" When we come together as followers of Christ, our spirits unite in worship as we connect with the Spirit of God. Worship is something we enter into fully. It invites the participation of our soul -- mind, feelings, body, will. We may express joys and praise for many different forms of greatness, but none will fully satisfy unless it's in response to our God. We're simply **compelled** to worship our Creator.

Day 2

READ 1 Chronicles 15:25-28 and 16:1-3. These verses describe the worship celebration led by King David when, after several years of being held in captivity, the ark of the covenant was brought back home to the people of Israel. Keep in mind that at this time the ark represented the very presence of God. **How did the people of Israel participate in the worship? What words might describe the atmosphere?**

Imagine attending the concert or event of a lifetime. Crowds of people stream in long before it begins. You locate your seat and squeeze in, shoulder to shoulder, among complete strangers. Glancing around, you see hundreds or thousands of people, who, like yourself, are excited with anticipation of what's to come.

The steady buzz of voices surround you - people talking, people laughing, people standing scouring over the crowd for familiar faces, others sitting quietly while intently pouring over the program. The lights dim, the crowd cheers, then as the performers take the stage, a hush falls over the crowd and it begins.

THINK about the event described here and the worship scene described in 1 Chronicles. **How are they similar? Did it take planning and**

preparation for both? What about the anticipation and energy among the people? Can you relate to that type of excitement and anticipation? Have you ever approached worship like either of these scenes?

Day 3

There's a difference between attending an event simply to be entertained and attending an event expecting to experience something great. Worship is our response, acknowledgement, recognition, and appreciation for our God. We're drawn into the greatness of God and while ascribing Him worth, we're moved, inspired, changed. **IMAGINE** having a backstage pass in which you could meet the artist/performer and actually talk to him/her. **What would you say?** I'm guessing if this person significantly impacted your life you'd gush all over yourself and declare your love of everything about him/her! You might recount the first time you heard a specific song and how you connected to it. Or how you were discouraged or struggling, but watching him/her encouraged you or made you smile.

READ 1 Chronicles 16:8-36. These are the words the people of Israel spoke to God when they were given a *backstage pass*.

Day 4

As we engage in personal worship throughout the week, we remember who God is, what He's done and how great He is. **READ** Psalms 104:31-35 and 105:1-5. **What positive qualities stand out to you about God's character in these passages? What do you think it means to "glory" in God's name? What does it mean to "seek His face always?" If we began remembering the greatness of God throughout our day, what difference could that make? What kind of difference would it make to periodically whisper a word of praise to God over the course of the day? While living out the demands of our day, what could being filled with inward worship and adoration do for personal worship?**

We work, play, eat and sleep, yet we're listening to our Rabbi.

We're remembering His greatness.

As you lie in bed before falling asleep or upon waking, whisper aloud "May my meditation be pleasing to you Lord. I remember your wonders."

Day 5

In Day 2, we read the words of worship and praise the people of Israel spoke to God. (1 Chronicles 16:8-36) **READ** Psalm 66. **WRITE** your own words of worship and praise to God. You may want to use particular phrases from the psalm and personalize them. **NAME** something God has accomplished in your life. How has God been faithful in your life or in your family? **WRITE** about the greatness of His love for you. Once you've finished, **READ** your words of worship and praise to God.