

REFOCUS

Refocus on Worship

Distinction Between Being "Here" and Being "Present" in Worship

Being "Here" in Worship

- Physical Presence
- Attendance *Without* Participation
- Routine or Habit
 - *"It's Sunday, I guess I'll go to church"*
- External Observance

2. Being Present in Worship

- Engaged Participation
- Wholehearted Involvement
- Intentionality
- Internal Connection
-

Recognizing Distractions in Worship

Matthew 15:8-9 (KJV) "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9 But in vain they do worship me, ..."

- Regaining our focus on worship starts by identifying and recognizing our distractions from worship
- Jesus confronts the Pharisees about their "external show" of worship without genuine internal devotion
- The danger of going through the motions in worship is that there is no true heart connection with God
- What's distracting us from worship?
- Our busy and stressful lives
 - Luke 10 - The story of Martha and Mary highlights the contrast between busyness and being present with Jesus.
 - External distractions or internal preoccupations can divert our attention during worship.
- Spiritual dryness
 - Sometimes may go through seasons where we don't feel the same level of connection to God in worship, there's a shift in your devotion to God
- Lack of self-examination in worship
 - During worship, the Holy Spirit ministers to you and often brings awareness of our spiritual condition
- Unresolved issues
 - Our personal struggles, emotional burdens and unresolved issues in life can create a barrier to meaningful worship

REFOCUS

Refocus on Worship

Repentance and Returning to True Worship

Revelation 2:4-5 (NLT) 4 “But I have this complaint against you. You don’t love me or each other as you did at first! 5 Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first. If you don’t repent, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place among the churches.

- Jesus' message to the church in Ephesus urges them to repent and return to their initial love for Him.
- In this passage, Jesus outlines the steps for *the church* (you and I) to refocus on worship:
- Remember and Repent:
 - Jesus encourages the believers to remember the love and passion they initially had for Him.
- Consider and Reflect:
 - We are urged to consider how far they have fallen from their initial state of love and enthusiasm.
- Return to First Works:
 - We are instructed to return to the practices and deeds we engaged in at the beginning of our faith journey
 - What was your spiritual life like when you first gave your life to Jesus?
 - God is calling us to rediscover our passion and joy in living for and worshipping **Psalm 51:10-12 (NLT) 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. 11 Do not banish me from your presence, and don’t take your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.**
- Warning and Consequence:
 - There is a warning of consequences if we do not repent and refocus on worship.
 - Jesus mentions the possibility of removing their *lampstand*, symbolizing the withdrawal of His presence and blessing.

Return to Authenticity in Worship

John 4:23-24 (NLT) 23 But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. 24 For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

- Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well emphasizes the importance of worshipping in *spirit and truth*.
- What does it mean to worship in spirit and in truth?
 1. Worship in Spirit
- Connection with God's Spirit: Worshipping in Spirit means engaging in a spiritual and heartfelt connection with God.

REFOCUS

Refocus on Worship

- Led by the Holy Spirit: True worship is guided by the Holy Spirit.
- 2. Worship in Truth
 - Authenticity and Sincerity: Worshipping in truth involves sincerity and authenticity in our relationship with God.
 - Alignment with God's Word: Truth in worship is also associated with aligning one's beliefs and actions with the teachings of God's Word.

Cultivating a Lifestyle of Continuous Worship

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (KJV) 16 Rejoice evermore. 17 Pray without ceasing. 18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you

- Paul exhorted the Thessalonians to emphasize a continuous attitude of worship in various life circumstances.
- Worship must extend beyond the worship service
- Worship in a corporate setting is important, but worship extends beyond a specific place or time
- Personal Devotion
 - Individual moments of prayer, meditation, and communion with God form an essential part of worship.
- Acts of Kindness and Service
 - Serving others selflessly and showing kindness to those in need are considered acts of worship.
- Living a Godly Life
 - Obedience to God's commands and living a life that honors Him is seen as a form of worship.
- Expressions of Gratitude
 - Gratitude and thanksgiving for God's blessings, provision, and grace are aspects of worship.
- Creative Arts:
 - Expressing creativity through music, art, dance, or other forms of artistic expression can be a way of worshiping God.
- Fellowship and Community Building:
 - Building meaningful relationships, fostering unity, and participating in community life can be seen as an expression of worship.
- Stewardship of Resources:
 - Responsible stewardship of resources, including time, talents, and treasure and testimony, is viewed as a way of honoring God. ***Proverbs 3:9-10 (KJV) 9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.***
- Seeking Justice and Advocacy:

REFOCUS

Refocus on Worship

- Engaging in activities that promote justice, mercy, and compassion aligns with the biblical call to love and seek justice.
- Gracious Speech and Encouragement:
 - Using words to uplift, encourage, and build others up is considered a form of worship.
- Enjoying God's Creation
 - Appreciating and enjoying the beauty of God's creation is a way of worshiping the Creator.
- Worshipping God Through Difficult Times
 - Regardless of what's happening to you or around you, maintain a spirit of worship **Acts 16:25-26 (KJV) 25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.**
 - Maintain a mindset of gratitude, prayer, and rejoicing as expressions of ongoing worship.