

“This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you.”

(2 Timothy 1:6, NLT)

You and I are called to constantly “*stir up*” (NKJV) the embers and fuel the fire so we will remain a blazing inferno for Jesus

The fact is that when the fuel of any sort is depleted, fire will eventually go out

The biblical pattern of the book of Acts also reveals that we are going to see the results the early Church in the book of Acts experienced we must be...

People of the Word

Steadfast in Prayer

Embrace the Movement of the Holy Spirit

We Must Burn for Souls

When we as believers do our part to take the Gospel to those who are lost, the Spirit’s flame is ignited continually releasing the power of God

- The power of God goes hand in hand with the proclamation of the Gospel
- This supernatural presence is God’s witness that the message is heaven sent

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” (Romans 1:16, NKJV)

Burning with Praise and Worship

When a person or congregation intentionally focuses on glorifying God in the presence of His Word and an atmosphere of praise and worship, His manifest presence is released to transform lives

When you study both the Old and New Testaments you will see that when believers have had a strong passion for worship, there was always a strong manifestation of God's supernatural presence

“and the Levites who were the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets—indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: “For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,” that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.”

(2 Chronicles 5:12–14, NKJV)

Intricate details in the building, furnishings, oversight to animal sacrifice, as well as musicians, singers, and instruments

- Solomon was serious about worship
- Worship was well-planned and organized
- God shows up!

We see this strong presence of God throughout the Old Testament during times of worship

Worship was also important during the time of the New Testament

- Mary worshipped the Lord for choosing her above all other women to be the one that would give birth to the long-awaited Messiah – **Luke 1:46-56**
- When Jesus was born we see an angelic choir appearing, declaring glorious praise to God – **Luke 2:13, 14**

From the very beginning to the end of the book of Revelation we see that worship is an integral part of God’s plan for His people

“I can safely say, on the authority of all that is revealed in the Word of God, that any man or woman on this earth who is bored and turned off by worship is not ready for heaven.”

– A.W. Towzer

- What an appropriate statement!
- The Bible shows us, we will worship God for all of eternity

Most of the westernized church, including the leaders, doesn’t understand what worship is

“For most...worship is to satisfy or please them, not to honor or please God. Amazingly, few worship-service regulars argue that worship is something they do primarily for God; a substantially larger percentage of attendees claim that attending worship services is something that they do for personal benefit and pleasure.” – Thew Barna Group

What is Worship?

Something happens when Christians are worshipful in their attitude and approach to God

- Humbly and intimately adoring Him from their hearts
- Because we represent Jesus we should be excellent and organized in everything we do
- Preparation only will not constitute the kind of worship that charges an atmosphere with the powerful presence of God

True intimate worship causes believers to enter the realm of the Spirit and literally become channels, or conduits, through which the Spirit of God enters their atmosphere

- When His presence manifests, everything is open to being changed supernaturally

*“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true **worshippers** will **worship** the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to **worship** Him. God is Spirit, and those who **worship** Him must **worship** in spirit and truth.”*

(John 4:23–24, NKJV)

- Five times Jesus used the word worship

Worship – *“To fall on the ground toward someone and to kiss”*
– *“To prostrate oneself, either outwardly or inwardly, bowing in his heart before God and worshiping Him with kisses in intimate adoration”*

- Also, depicts one who uses all available methods necessary to adore and worship God
- Singing, playing, dancing, or other movements, gestures, or words to convey adoration – including all art forms

You see, in authentic worship, there is an intellectual dimension, a physical dimension, and a spiritual dimension

15 Then what am I to do? I will pray with the ^[a]spirit [by the Holy Spirit that is within me] and I will pray with the mind [using words I understand]; I will sing with the spirit [by the Holy Spirit that is within me] and I will sing with the mind [using words I understand]. (1 Corinthians 14:15 AMP)

- True worship involves the spirit and the mind
- Every part of our beings are to be involved in worship
- Spirit, soul, and body – **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

We do not need to find a physical building to worship God
We are the temple of the Holy Spirit – **1 Corinthians 6:19**

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?” (1 Corinthians 6:19, NKJV)

- Temple – “Highly decorated shrine”

To the Greeks and Romans, they would have pictured cathedral with tall, vaulted ceilings, marble columns, granite floors, hand-carved woodwork overlaid with gold and silver, precious gems, and burning incense billowing into the air around the front of the altar

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10, NKJV)

- We are in a position to launch into worship at any time, any place, anywhere!

Even though we are free to worship anytime, anyplace, anywhere, there is nothing like the atmosphere when believers corporately worship together

- It is truly unlike any other experience

Worship is not merely about music, talent, or performance

- Worship is about God!

When we gather together and humbly bow before God, focusing on Him, directing our expressions of love and our songs and melodies of praise and thanksgiving, our worship ascends to Him like loving, intimate, kisses upon His face

This type of worship touches God deeply

- He chooses to enter right into it
- He becomes part of what's happening
- The atmosphere is divinely charged with the power to transform the worshippers

“But You are holy, Enthroned (inhabits, KJV) in the praises of Israel.” (Psalm 22:3, NKJV)

“So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.” (Psalm 63:2)

“One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.”

“Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!”

(Psalm 27:4, 14 NKJV)

“So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:46–47, NKJV)

- The early church sang praises to God
- They learned it from Jesus – **Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26**
- Paul and Silas – **Acts 16**

Worship Songs in the New Testament

There are actual words of hymns and songs recorded in the pages of the New Testament

- Some scholars say as many as 30 songs
- Paul would often quote these songs in his letters

As if to say, *“How can I make my point clear? Oh, I know, I’ll quote that song that they sing in their church. That will help them get the point.”*

“Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.”” (Ephesians 5:14, NKJV)

- This verse represents a song that was well known to the believers in Ephesus

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

(Colossians 1:15–20, NKJV)

These verses are considered among scholars to be the most important scriptures establishing the supremacy and deity of Christ

- They were lyrics to a song sung in the first century

“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,”

(Philippians 2:9–10, NKJV)

Paul incorporated the lyrics to a familiar song that the believers sang, which described Christ’s sacrifice on the cross and His exaltation

“This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.” **(2 Timothy 2:11–13, NKJV)**

This shows us that early believers weren’t just singing songs that made them feel good, but they were singing songs that called for consecration and commitment

The songs of the early church mirrored the messages that were being preached

- Messages that encouraged them to stay committed regardless of their circumstances

Although many people forget the words of a sermon soon after it's preached, they are more prone to remember a message that has been set to music

- The songwriters of the New Testament knew the power of singing the Word of God
- They would set to music what the Church leaders were preaching

Those early Christians were literally singing many of the teachings they were hearing

They were singing divine revelation that would help them build a solid foundation for their lives

“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Ephesians 5:19–20, NKJV)

Psalms – *A Song of praise*

Spiritual Songs – *Songs in the Spirit, singing in the Spirit, or singing in tongues*

Singing – *Expressive vocal singing, To sing with the voice*

Melody – *To pluck the strings of a harp or bow; a heartfelt expression of music*

We are to be continually speaking songs of praise, hymns, and sacred compositions designed to give glory to God

This includes singing in the Spirit or singing in tongues, along with heartfelt expressions in songs that are plucked from the strings of your heart

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

Since this is commanded in Scripture, we must make it our aim to include every one of these forms of worship in our private and corporate adoration of God

What Happens Spiritually When We Enter Into Times of Worship?

“But You are holy, Enthroned (inhabits) in the praises of Israel.” (Psalm 22:3, NKJV)

God is sitting or resting on top of a person or an entire congregation when that individual or body of believers is truly worshiping Him from the heart

Those expressions of intimate love and adoration create an atmosphere that literally attracts God’s supernatural presence and makes Him feel welcome

The throne upon which He rests is our praise and worship

It's as if He is saying, *“I want to come down and be a part of what they are doing.”*

That's what happened to Paul and Silas – **Acts 16:26**

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”
(Hebrews 13:15, NKJV)

In Solomon's day, the glory of the Lord would come and fill the Temple – **2 Chronicles 5:12-14**

- Glory – *“Very weighty or heavy”*
- When His presence came it was filled with everything good – treasures, gifts, and power
- His presence was so thick the priests couldn't even stand up under the weight
- Have you ever felt the weight of the Lord during worship?

New Testament – *Glory* – still describes something heavy or weighty, but changes slightly

- *“Discernment, judgment, and splendor”*

When we combine the two we see the glorious presence of God becomes heavy with everything that is needed – *His* goodness, *His* miracles, and *His* deliverance

- It is heavy with the gifts of the Holy spirit
- It is heavy with the power to change and transform those who are present

When the glory is present, it hovers in the atmosphere, heavy with all of the goodness of God

- And His Holy Spirit discerns what each person needs
- The glory of God then begins to meet those needs

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” (James 1:17, NKJV)

When believers are in the manifest, tangible presence of the glory of God, amazing things happen

- It is truly supernatural
- Worship brings us to a place where our hearts are open to the Holy Spirit
- He can then reveal what we would otherwise have a hard time seeing or hearing
- He also can ignite our hearts with fresh fire so we can carry His presence with us through every aspect of our daily lives

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.”

(Psalm 133:1–3, NKJV)

- *“Precious ointment”* represents the manifest presence of God

For us in the N.T., this symbolizes the presence and power of God’s Spirit upon us as we come into times of corporate unity

Dew is the manifestation of moisture that is always in the air, although most of the time it is invisible

There is always moisture in the air but you can't always see it
When the atmospheric conditions are right, moisture suddenly becomes visible

- Yes, indeed, God's presence is always with us even if it is not visible
- However, there is a point when His presence suddenly manifests
- It's when we come together in *unity* and *humility*

This is what happened when Moses, Aaron, and the Levites dedicated the tabernacle in the wilderness

- This is what precisely happened when the priests dedicated the temple
- This is what happened when the disciples gathered, in unity, in the upper room – “*one accord*”

Likewise, if we come into a place of united praise and worship and spend more time worshipping the Lord, we will begin to see His glory more regularly manifest among us, and a greater display of the miraculous take place

The worship of the new testament church most likely included musical elements from the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman cultures

- Styles and expressions would have varied slightly from group to group, culture to culture
- Styles and sounds change, yet the essential ingredient must be a humble heart focused on the Lord

“Let all things be done decently and in order.”

(1 Corinthians 14:40, NKJV)

- This means different things to different groups and denominations
- Most people assume that their way is the correct way
- Regardless of convictions or preferences, you could find scripture to support what you believe
- However, we see one basic rule given here for worship in the New Testament Church
- Decent – *“do something honestly or to walk honestly”*
 - It has to do more with intent than outward action
- Order – *“something done in a fitting way or something done according to order”*

It gives us the thought that our worship should be respectful, courteous, accommodating, well-mannered, and polite

- Worship can be quiet, loud, soft, or bold
- Should not be thrown together at the last minute
- We are worshiping the King of kings and Lord of lords

However, we must leave space for the Holy Spirit to change things up and be spontaneous

What is important is that we are worshiping God from a pure heart

“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” **(1 Corinthians 14:33, NKJV)**