

Please refer to your Beacon Church Vision and Values Course Notes too

What is worship?

Romans 12:1 Worship is about presenting ourselves to God.

All we are, do, think, choose, our attitude, in fact everything about our life – it is all for Him as a total sacrifice. Because of God's desire to have a relationship with us and His great love for us, He chose to make the ultimate sacrifice in giving His Son Jesus to die in our place for our sin. The Bible shows us that from the very beginning of time God wanted a relationship with us and that we have a desire to worship built into our very nature.

Knowingly or otherwise we are all worshipping something or someone. We can worship our careers, money, retirement, sport, food, music, shopping, cars, gadgets and probably the most subtle of all, we can worship ourselves.

Something within us longs to be satisfied. Worshipping and chasing these things is a counterfeit to God's best.

However, Jesus is our great example - see Philippians 2: 5 – 11

In Genesis 22 we find an astonishing story where God tests Abram and tells him to take his son to a mountain and sacrifice Him. Abram tells his servant who is travelling with them to wait at the bottom of the mountain saying; "I and the lad will go yonder, and we will worship and we will return to you" Genesis 22:5

Abram was going to worship and he knew it would cost him everything,

Throughout the book of Revelation a man called John was given extraordinary glimpses of Jesus and amazing heavenly activity by an angel.

He was so completely overwhelmed by what he experienced that he twice fell at the angel's feet to worship him Rev 19:10, 22:9. The angel quickly corrected him and said, "Do not do that....worship God".

If you have been a Christian for a long time then sometimes the Holy Spirit seeks to nudge us back on course because we can unwittingly slip away from worshipping God to worshipping other Christian peripherals. We can worship a TV Bible teacher, an over zealous passion for healing or even Israel.

Good musical worship or a passion for Israel in themselves are fine but just run a plumb line of God's Word alongside your Christian activities and passions. First and foremost is it all about Jesus? If so, great. If not, allow Jesus to get you back on track. Remember; worship God, not the messenger.

There is so much more to worship. It is a battleground and an area that the enemy seeks to use to distract mankind from God.

However, simply put, worship is about presenting myself wholly to God 24/7 until the day I die.

Communion

Known as the breaking of bread, the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist. It is the sharing of bread and wine together which was instituted by Jesus on the night He was betrayed and just before He was executed on the cross.

'Communion gives us a panoramic view of our salvation and an ongoing means of grace' – Steve Dunn (See V&V notes)

When we share communion we are;

- Looking back; remembering with thanks the death and victory of our Lord Jesus – it links in with worship. Thankfulness, gratitude, drawing close to God in appreciation of Him.
- Looking inward; by faith we 'feed on Christ', who is the bread of life. Namely as we commune with Him by the Holy Spirit He feeds and refreshes us.

"Often when we partake of the Lords Supper we're wallowing in the mire of remembering ourselves and our sins when Jesus said 'Remember Me'!
Burk Parsons

- Looking up; enjoying communion in the Spirit with our risen and ascended Lord. Therefore lift up your heads. Jesus always raises people up He does not cast them down.
- Looking around; renewing our covenant commitment of love and loyalty to Jesus and to one another. Remember John Way speaking about 'being added' as well as being saved. We are naturally born into a physical family and we are born again into God's family. Be joined! The Bible never endorses individual Christianity. You are saved as an individual but also saved into Gods family. To enjoy the full benefits of your Christian walk including communion then be part of the body. It is part of God's way of honing down our rough edges! Communion can be a wonderful time to pray for one another. Healing is in the Body.
- Looking forward; as we partake of communion we recognise that Jesus is alive, triumphant and that one day He will return. (1Corinthians 11:26)

(See Steve Dunns Online notes about Communion on the Canterbury City Church website for more details)

Cell Questions/Activities

- Before Cell read through pages 7 and 8 of the Vision & Values Booklet.
- What does my life say about who or what I worship?
- What could I potentially be drawn to worship above God?
- Did I sense God highlight anything specific to me last Sunday?
- During communion what do I think about and where do I look?
- **Share Communion in Cell** and try 'looking' somewhere different (if you normally 'look inward' – try 'looking outward')!