

# Some “Why-Nots” of Worship

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The worship of Almighty God is both an exalted privilege and an immense responsibility. Failure to grasp these factors plunged the likes of Cain (Gen. 4), Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10), and King Saul (1 Sam. 13) into terrible calamities. Our Lord chastised His contemporaries because they worshiped according to the teachings of men, rather than to those of God (Mat. 15:9). Worshipers of God “**must** worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24, emph. DM). Some Christians do not enjoy worshiping God because they mistake its purpose.

- **Worship is not to please ourselves, but God.** The Old Testament characters mentioned above pleased themselves rather than God. It was so with the vain worshipers Jesus rebuked. Since then, all sorts of worship practices have been adopted by professed believers in God, including the counting of beads, Mariolatry, employing instruments of music, and in a few cases (believe it or not), performances by “exotic” dancers. These and a thousand other things are done because men **like** them, regardless of what God’s Word says. Regrettably, even some members of the Lord’s church now care more for what pleases them than what pleases God. However, if we don’t worship as God decrees, our worship is vain (1 Sam. 15:22; Mat. 15:9).
- **Worship is not to arouse, but to express, spirituality.** *Worship* means “to bow down,” “to esteem,” “to pay reverence,” and like expressions. All these terms relate to man’s expression of love, devotion, and willingness to serve and glorify God. However, men often are sorely disappointed unless there is something entertaining, “different,” or emotionally “exciting” in their religious meetings. Now when we truly express our love and adoration for God as He directs, our spirits will be stimulated and our love for God will be intensified. Howbeit, these are the natural **by-products** that flow from true worship; they are not the **purpose** of worship.
- **Worship is not to receive, but to give.** We should come to our worship assemblies ready to “offer up a sacrifice of praise” (Heb. 13:15). In the very avenues of God-ordained worship we come together to **give** our praise, devotion, and money because we love Him and His Son. Those who drone concerning Scriptural worship, “I don’t get anything out of worship,” reveal their own selfishness; they come only to get rather than to give. True worshipers always **receive** many blessings, but again, these are wonderful by-products of **giving** ourselves in praise and service to God and His Anointed.
- **In worship, we are not the audience, but God is.** Failure to understand this fact turns those in the pews into hypercritics of preachers and prayer and song leaders. God observes the hearer in the pew as much as He does the preacher in the pulpit. He cares as much about the condition of the hearts of those who are singing and praying in the pew as He does about the ones charged with leading us in our worship.

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