"When I worship, I would rather my heart be without words than my words be without heart."
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WEAPONS OF WARFARE: WORSHIP

Testimony plants seed into harden hearts, take root and breaks fallow ground. Prayer opens and closes doors and can change the course of history. Praise invites the Presence of Jesus, and He brings fullness of joy. Giving blesses both the giver and the receiver. Deliverance sets the captive free. All of these activities and others are very important and should be a daily part of the normal Christian life. But I believe the greatest activity of the New Testament believer is worship as we acknowledge the LIVING GOD, not for what He has done, but for who He is.

Other than the Book of Psalms, perhaps no book in the Bible emphasizes worship like the book of Revelation. In Revelation 19:10, the Apostle John has an interesting encounter as he is caught up into heaven: *And I* [John the Revelator and Apostle] *fell at his feet* [the messenger, who was apparently a redeemed man and prophet when he lived on earth or an angel in heaven-I lean toward the former] *to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus* [in other words, he was a genuine

Christian believer]. *WORSHIP GOD! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

This verse of scripture tells us much about worship. First, worship is going on in heaven, and the worship is not directed to spiritual superstars, (who often walk in a desire to be somebody exalted of men-this desire for exaltation is an iniquity drive in many ministers today). We also are not to worship angels or Biblical men and women, such as Peter and Paul, who were giants in the faith. Worship is reserved for the only One who is worthy.

Secondly, this phrase at the end of this verse is perhaps purposefully ambiguous. Is the messenger saying that the prophet spirit that a believer is walking in, ultimately always testify about Jesus, or is he saying that no one can speak prophetically to others without first listening to God and only then speaking to men? Having double meanings was a feature of the Greek language, and so perhaps both meanings are meant.

At any rate, this last sentence is preceded by the simple but emphasized phrase, "Worship God!" The sentence is an imperative sentence in English meaning that it is a command or strong request. The speaker is not asking John to do something. He is telling him to do it. That something is *worship God*.

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Apostle Rick Dodd, senior pastor of The Worship Ministries, International, of Gardena, California, defines worship this way: *To revere and give homage to God, serving Him through profound adoration, intense love and desire, intimately turning towards Him (as if to kiss the hand),*

exposing our essential in-most selves in complete honesty and surrender. Worship is our individual and corporate response to God's revelation of Himself within the context of a covenant relationship. Dodd goes on to say that worship has an object (the LORD), involves an expression (our response-whether singing, bowing down, speaking words of adoration, praying in tongues or our native language, and even corporate prayer and fasting, etc.-to Him), expresses a hierarchy of dependence (we are created ones acknowledging our dependence on our Creator), and has a context (the context is the personal relationship initiated by the Holy Spirit that we have with the Lord).

Anyone who is a true believer, passionately in love with Jesus, has a heart for worship. I have felt for years now that we will see the Lord move in unbelievable ways in our midst when we finally come to the point when we see that the purpose of our life, the foundation of our ministries, and our deepest heartcry is to worship Him who is worthy. I believe the Baptism of the Holy Spirit stirs our hearts to worship in a more intense way than we have, before the experience. Worship requires that we center our whole being on Jesus, the Crucified One. We will find Him only in our worship, and He will be so preeminent when we truly worship, that the things of earth will become dim.

WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR WORSHIP?

1. **The Spirit of God:** *For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh* (Philippians 3:3). It is my belief that most of our music and singing

never gets to the depth of genuine worship because we are worshiping out of our soul rather than spirit. I will address this more in #5.

2. **Gladness and joy:** *Worship the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful songs* (Psalm 100:2).
3. **Clean hands and a pure heart:** *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully* (Psalm 24:3-4).
4. **Holiness:** *Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!* (Psalm 96:9a).
5. **Our own spirit man recognizing the truth of God's Word:** ***"But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshipers 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). To worship in truth is to worship as the Word of God directs us. Again, going back to number 1 of "What is necessary for Worship?", to worship in spirit is to worship from the heart with the proper motive of honoring God with reverence. Real worship must take place on a spirit level. We cannot worship in a soulish way and enter into real worship. Worship is much deeper than our mind, will and emotions. Praise, I believe, can be on a soulish level, but not worship. Because it is so easy to engage our mind, will, and emotions instead of our spirit man, we rarely enter into real worship. But we can always recognize when we are worshiping in spirit and in truth because there is a

single-minded focus on Jesus and an intensity that is not there otherwise.

MAIN BIBLICAL WORDS FOR WORSHIP

SHACHAD (Hebrew): prostate (especially in homage to royalty or to God, bow (self) down, crouch, fall down flat, humbly beseech, do obeisance, do reverence, make to stoop, worship.

PROSKUNEO (Greek): to kiss like a dog licking his master's hand, to crouch to, prostrate oneself in homage, do reverence to, adore, worship.

WHY DO WE WORSHIP?

1. **The Word commands our worship and the Lord looks for worshipers. John 4:23:** ***But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.*** **Psalm 95:6-7:** *Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. For He is God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.*

2. **When we worship, we minister to the Lord. Ezekiel 44:15-16:** *But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood, say the LORD GOD. They shall enter My sanctuary, and they shall come near My table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge.*

3. **When we worship, we draw nearer to God, and He draws nearer to us. James 4:8a:** *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you….*

4. **True worship is a personal interaction with the Lord, and this interaction allows His nature to envelope us and change us to reflect His nature in a greater way. 2nd Corinthians 3:16-18:** *Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

<u>DIFFERENT SCRIPTURAL RESPONSES TO WORSHIP</u>

MATTHEW 2:11: *And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down and worshiped Him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.* **Falling prostate before Him**

Matthew 8:1-2: *When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him, and, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."* **Esteeming Him as the Healer**

Matthew 9:18: *While He spoke these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay Thy hands upon her, and she shall live."* **Revering Him as a miracle worker and life giver**

Matthew 14:25-33: *And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea, and when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost," and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spoke unto them, saying,* ***"Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid."*** *And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. And He said,* ***"Come."*** *And when Peter was come down out of the boat, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, "Lord, save me." And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him and said unto him,* ***"O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?"*** *And when they were come into the boat, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Of a truth, thou art the Son of God."* **Acknowledging Him as the Son of God**

Matthew 28:6-9: *He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and behold, He goeth before you into Galilee. There shall ye see Him; lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy and did run to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying,* ***"All hail."*** *And they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him.* **Bowing down with adoration and love**

SOME VERSES ON WORSHIP

The first mention of worship in the Word of God is when Abraham took his son Isaac to offer him up as a sacrifice. This is a powerful picture of the love of the Father and the obedience unto death of a Son. Isaac, a type of Christ, was obedient unto death (Philippians 2:5-8). Abraham, a type of the Father, who "*spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all"* (Romans 8:32 and John 3:16). Genesis 22:5: *And Abraham said to the young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."* The word *shachad* is used.

Exodus 34:14: *For you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God…*

1st Chronicles 16:29: *Give to the LORD the glory due His name; bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!* (Also, see Psalm 29:2 and Psalm 96:9)

Psalm 86:9: *All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O LORD; they will bring glory to your name.*

Psalm 95:6: *Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.*

Psalm 99:5: *Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at His footstool-He is holy.*

Isaiah 29:13: *These people come near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far*

from Me. Their worship of Me is made up only of rules taught by men.

Isaiah 66:23: "*And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD.*

Jeremiah 7:2: *"Stand in the gate of the LORD's house and proclaim there this word, and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD!'"*

Philippians 3:3: *For we are the circumcision, who worship God in Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh…*

John 9:31: *"Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him."*

Colossians 2:18: *Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.*

Matthew 15:8: ***"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."***

Luke 19:40: *But He answered and said to them,* ***"I tell you that if these* [the disciples] *should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."***

Revelation 4:6-11

One of the most powerful examples of worship in the entire Bible is found, as one would expect, before the throne of God in Revelation 4:6-11:

Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying: "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You have created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

J. Vernon McGee tells us that this sea represents the holiness and righteousness of God and is placid, denoting the position of rest to which the Church has come, no longer striving against the storms of life. The eyes of the creatures represent

that they are totally alert and aware and know fully what is going on. Many, including McGee, believe the living creatures represent the Gospels. The lion and the first Gospel, Matthew, represent Jesus as the King. The second creature is a calf (or ox). This is the beast of burden, and this beast and the second Gospel, Mark, represent Christ as the Servant. The third creature, with a face of the man, and the Gospel of Luke, represent Jesus as the Son of Man. The fourth creature, the flying eagle, and the book of John, represent the deity of Christ.

McGee further notes that some believe these four creatures also represent the animal world: the lion represents wild beast; the calf represents domesticated beasts; the eagle represents birds, and man represents the head of all creation. These is no mention of fish in the new heaven and earth, meaning there will be no sea, and there are no reptiles, such as the serpent, since the serpent represents satan, who will not be there to introduce sin.

The four creatures constantly, day and night, worship before the throne by saying over and over: *"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is and is to come."* Jesus is the One who *was and is and is to come*! This is the first great worship scene we see in heaven. Worship is the main activity of heaven.

In heaven the faithful will be rewarded with crowns. Salvation itself is a gift of God, not of works (Ephesians 2:8-9: *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*). However, believers do labor on earth for His rewards (Matthew 16:27: **"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then**

He will reward each according to his works." These rewards include the following:

1. CROWN OF LIFE: James 1:12: *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."*
2. THE CROWN INCORRUPTIBLE: 1st Corinthians 9:24-25: *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*
3. THE CROWN OF REJOICING: 1ST Thessalonians 2:19-20: *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.*
4. THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: 2ND Timothy 4:6-8: *For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*
5. THE CROWN OF GLORY: 1st Peter 5:2-4: *Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the*

flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away."

McGee says this about those crowns: "The crowns of the church are laid at Jesus' feet as an act of submission and worship. Many people talk of their being a crown for them over there. Frankly, if we get a crown at all, I think that after we wear it for awhile and the newness wears off, we are going to feel embarrassed. What in the world are we doing wearing a crown? The only One worthy up there is the Lord Jesus. Therefore, we are going to lay our crown at His feet."

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Worship is giving God the best that He has given you. Be careful what you do with the best you have. Whenever you get a blessing from God, give it back to Him as a love gift. Take time to meditate before God and offer the blessing back to Him in a deliberate act of worship. If you hoard a thing for yourself, it will turn into spiritual dry rot, as the manna did when it was hoarded. God will never let you hold a spiritual thing for yourself; it has to be given back to Him that He may make it a blessing to others. **Oswald Chambers**

If your heart takes more pleasure in reading novels, or watching TV, or going to the movies, or talking to friends, rather than just sitting alone with God and embracing Him, sharing His cares and His burdens, weeping and rejoicing with Him, then how are you going to handle forever and ever in His presence? You'd be bored to tears in heaven, if you're not ecstatic about God now!

Keith Green

"Worship changes the worshiper into the image of the One worshiped"
Jack Hayford

It is in the process of being worshipped that God communicates His presence to men.
C.S.LEWIS

"When God's people begin to praise and worship Him using the Biblical methods He gives, the Power of His presence comes among His people in an even greater measure."
Graham Truscott

Visitation of God's presence is a byproduct of worship. However, we don't worship in order to gain His presence. He is worthy to be worshipped whether or not He chooses to show up.
John Wimber