

## The Discipleship Project-Winter 2018–2019

### Series 2: The Heart of Worship

*A series by Carl McLaughlin, Ron Trimmer, and Jonathan McClintock*

**Series Big Idea:** Because God is always worthy of praise, our hearts must be set to worship Him in all things and at all times.

### Lesson 2.2: The Expression of Worship

**Lesson Big Idea:** Because God is always worthy of worship, we must choose to express our worship to Him.

#### FOUNDATION

**Scripture Focus:** II Samuel 6:16–23 (PPT)

The main character of this lesson was what many would call a warrior king. He had vanquished all his foes, not selfishly, but for a cause greater than himself. To see him in that moment was to see the role and title long before seeing the man who wore them. It is the richest of stories, a rise from humble beginnings to the ultimate position in all the land. But to truly understand his story, we must understand how it all started.

The young man stood resolute against the fading light as the sounds of the night began to come alive with the approaching darkness. With the setting of the sun, he knew that danger would be near and his responsibility was to ensure the safety of those in his care. While this commission was perhaps the lowest of all family duties, he took it seriously. Suddenly from the twilight came the roar of a lion. Immediately the hair on his neck stood up and his body began to tingle with the anticipation of a fight. From deep within, there was a growing boldness to meet the danger with the confidence that victory was within his grasp. Ultimately prevailing, David returned to his watch point and continued to seek protection for the flock of sheep in his charge.

One day a runner—a servant from his father’s house—hastily approached. As the young shepherd, David, watched the figure approach from the distance, his mind began to formulate the possible reasons for this unbidden appearance. With heaving chest and in brief snippets, the runner shared the command for David to return home to his father. As the young man began the walk home, we can be sure he was trying to ascertain exactly why his father had summoned him, not knowing what awaited him at home.

As his home came into view, David noticed a small gathering of people, including his father, brothers, some men from the city, and the prophet Samuel. David immediately knew this was going to be more than a father-son talk. The presence of the prophet signified God’s business was on the agenda.

As David approached, the prophet beckoned him closer and told him to kneel. As young David fell to his knees, the prophet began to pour oil over his head. In that moment, David felt the same power he felt when he had fought the lion. He felt the same presence he had felt many times in the field while in worship and praise unto God. But

this time it was different. This time he was not alone. This time, for the first time, others witnessed what David had witnessed many times before—the power of God come upon his life. David knew this was something that would forever change his life.

- **What was a defining moment in your life when you felt God’s presence come over you? Explain.**
- **Why do you think it is important to remind ourselves of those types of moments we have experienced?**

## FRAME

From the beginning of mankind’s time on earth, one thing has never changed: **God desires the worship of His creation. (PDG, PPT)** In fact, when the Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke His disciples for their worship of Him in Luke 19:39–40, Jesus’ response was very succinct, “I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out” (KJV).

- **Do you think we should take what Jesus said as literal? Would stones start to worship? Explain.**
- **If you believe that is so, why? If not, what do you think He may have been meaning?**

As we learned in our previous lesson, attitude in worship is important because God is always worthy of worship. Regardless of how we feel or what is going on in life, He is worthy of worship. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16). We need no additional reason to worship Him. And then to realize that God Himself chose you and me specifically from many different walks of life to deliver us from a myriad of addictions, sinful behaviors, and captivity only serves to heighten the need for us to worship Him. When we hold up our life today side by side with our former life, we will see Jesus Christ standing in sharp contrast against the backdrop of sin and worldly influence.

**Each day that we wake up free from that former life of bondage, we ought to thank Him and offer praise and worship. (PPT)** From deep within us, we should express thankfulness that we no longer walk after the flesh. What is inside of us should be evidenced on the outside. Those around us should see and comprehend who we are worshiping.

Many people on earth worship many things, and this is evident by what they wear, what they talk about, and what their priorities are. If they are wearing a jersey of a particular sport’s team, we would immediately assume they are fans of that team. **The outward evidence is simply an expression of what is inside of them. (PDG, PPT)** We, as the called and chosen of Jesus Christ, can and should do no less. Merriam-Webster.com defines expression as

1. “an act, process, or instance of representing in a medium (such as words);

something that manifests, embodies, or symbolizes something else; a significant word or phrase;

2. “a mode, means, or use of significant representation or symbolism; especially: felicitous or vivid indication or depiction of mood or sentiment.”

Should we ever be able to avoid the “vivid indication or depiction of mood or sentiment” when we begin to worship God? What a dull worship that would be for those who have been set free from alcohol, drugs, and so much more!

- **What do you feel is the craziest expression of worship you have ever offered to God?**
- **Why do some make fun of other people’s worship?**

**David did not feel any reluctance about worshiping God. (PPT)** Deep down he knew that the same God who gave him peace in the fields with a flock of sheep was the same God who elevated him to King over all Israel. Underneath the cloak of a king still beat the heart of a shepherd boy. No one around him knew all that God had done for him, but David knew.

In our Scripture Focus, David was bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. Unfortunately his first attempt was not according to the Law and a man ended up dying. After a time of frustration, David discovered the proper way and followed the God-designed plan for carrying the Ark. Together they brought the greatest physical symbol they had of God back to Jerusalem. And during that journey, **David became expressive in his worship and danced before the Lord. (PDG, PPT)**

*And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. (II Samuel 6:14–15, KJV) (PPT)*

Along with the children of Israel carrying the visible expression of God’s covenant, David provided a visible demonstration of worship that accompanied the Ark of the Covenant. His worship, which derived from an understanding of who God was and what God had done, also served as a model for the people of how to worship. **David’s worship was an outward expression of the jubilation he felt on the inside (PPT)** as he accompanied the presence of the Almighty to the capital city of Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, not all people feel the same way about God. It may be that they do not fully understand God, or perhaps they have not had the same experience with God. In II Samuel 6:16, we see that Michal, Saul’s daughter and David’s wife, despised David for his worship. Being raised in a king’s household, no doubt she saw David’s worship as beneath the dignity of a king. However, she did not know God the same way David did. She did not have the same experiences with God’s delivering power. She had never stood on the battlefield facing a giant warrior.

- **Do you think people who were raised in church can have trouble**

**understanding the worship of a new convert? Why or why not?**

- **When it comes to worship, what impact should new converts have on seasoned saints and what impact should seasoned saints have on new converts?**

It has been said, “A man with an argument is no match for a man with an experience.” We would never try to dissuade someone from thanking the doctor who saved his life, but neither should we disdain someone for an expression of worship to God.

Even more important to remember is that God is still worthy of praise and worship, regardless of what He has done for us. It is incumbent upon us to express this worship in a visible manner—to demonstrate on the outside what is working on the inside.

David’s expression of worship involved him dancing and shouting before the Ark. Every individual may not respond in quite the same way, but what should be the same is that there is a visible, outward expression of worship to God. **Such expressions of worship also are an example to others who are still learning on this Christian journey. (PDG, PPT)**

Worship must always be done in proper context. For example, dancing in the world’s context is self-centered and focused on what makes the individual feel good; worshipping God keeps Him as the focus and is a selfless expression of the joy felt on the inside. It is wholly appropriate to raise our hands, to leap, and even to dance as we worship in a church service. More importantly, our facial expressions should reflect the joy that resides in us.

- **Are facial expressions usually purposeful or reactionary? Explain.**
- **Why do you think our facial expressions are important as a witness to others?**

Worship is “first and foremost a verb, an action. It is motivated by a desire to honor another” (*Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*). If we are truly worshipping, it will be visible to others in our physical mannerisms and facial expressions.

**David’s dancing before the Ark certainly qualifies as worship, but it challenged Michal’s perception of him, both as her husband and her king. (PDG, PPT)** She could not resolve the roles that David held and the worship that he portrayed, and the conflict led her to challenge David’s worship.

*And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul’s daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart. And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even*

*among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house. Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD. And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour. Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death. (II Samuel 6:16–23, KJV) (PPT)*

**Michal’s challenge to David (PPT)** could have been made for many reasons, but upon David’s return to his home after blessing everyone else, her welcome could not have been more shocking to David. The accusations leveled at him would have stung because she was correlating his worship with a selfish desire to be the center of attention.

David’s response was clear. He stated, **“It was before the LORD.” (PPT)** He immediately dispelled the notion that it was in any way selfish. Instead he placed the priority where it should be, on God. He then went on to tell Michal that he would be even more “base.” In Hebrew this word is shaphal and according to *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon* means “low, humble a) low (in height) b) low (in station), humble (used of condition or spirit) c) humiliated and d) lowly (as a substantive).”

The heart of the shepherd boy was telling Michal that he viewed himself as low in station when compared to God. It did not matter to David that he was now a king. No matter the role he was called to fulfill, he was going to worship God because when compared to the Almighty, David saw himself as low indeed. That heartbeat is what penned these words:

*I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High. (Psalm 9:1–2, KJV) (PPT)*

*For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone. Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name. I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore. For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell. (Psalm 86:10–13, KJV) (PPT)*

David knew that no matter what role he may hold here on earth, he was still indebted to the Creator and as such his worship should reflect his position in the relationship. Much like David, we must always keep our alignment with God in the forefront of our minds. From this perspective it is easy to worship in a visible outward expression.

- **Do you normally feel at liberty to visibly express your worship? Why or why**

**not?**

- **How can we become more expressive with our worship?**

## **FINISH**

A young father held his baby girl in his arms. All he could think of was the worst-case scenario and the possible outcomes the doctors had explained to him and his wife. The diagnosis was cancer and in someone so young, the treatment options were very limited. The only option he had was to pray for God to touch her. They needed God to heal her.

A few weeks later, they received the report on the biopsy from the doctor. There was no more cancer. For the young family, it was incredible news. As the young father sat and wept over his baby girl and the miracle that God had given them, all he could think of was how helpless he was and how powerful God is.

There was nothing left for him to do but to praise and worship the King of kings and Lord of lords. So he began to jump and shout, praising God. It did not matter who was around him, or that he was not at church, or that there was no music. All that mattered was that God was still all powerful and had healed his baby girl. His outward, visible worship was both a testimony of what God had done and a witness to everyone around him.

We can do no less than to worship God for who He is in an outward expression that is visible to all.