

It's All About Worship Preparing for Worship

This month, the Worship Committee commences its examination of the major components of the worship service as observed in the Presbyterian Church.. Presbyterians believe that the worship service is based on the word of God as revealed through



Scripture. According to our constitution, a traditional worship service is made up of five major actions relating to the word of God:

- Gathering around the Word
- Proclaiming the Word
- Responding to the Word
- Sealing of the Word
- Bearing and following the Word into the world

But before we examine each of these activities within the worship, let us consider how we should prepare ourselves for worship.

The activities involved in the worship service are typically routine; that is, they typically follow the same format, although the music and scripture vary. It may become so routine for us as worshippers that we tend to overlook the significance of these actions. Many Sunday mornings we are rushing around trying to get ourselves and our families ready for church that we as worshipers seldom prepare for worship with the same kind of forethought and anticipation as, for instance, our worship leaders do. What can we do as worshipers to prepare to be as involved in the actions and in tune with the meaning of worship as we assume our leaders are? Of course, worship is not a task; it is a gift of God, a gift that comes not through arduous effort but through unexpected grace, not when we complete a series of new steps but when we find new meaning in our present actions.

According to an article by *SingleVISION Ministries*, worship, by its very definition, requires a heart of submission and service. If you come, willing to submit to God and serve Him in your worship, He promises to achieve His purpose in you. As you learn to prepare for worship each week, use these four checkpoints to help you in your worship preparation:



1. The Checkpoint of Serenity

We are to draw near “with a sincere heart.” This speaks of a genuine heart, devoted to pursuing God. It is hypocritical to be worshiping God when you are really apathetic or preoccupied with self. Draw near to God with your whole heart.

2. The Checkpoint of Fidelity

We are to draw near “in full assurance of faith.” You too are to be fully assured that God accepts your worship, not because of what you do, but because of what Jesus did in providing atonement for you.

3. The Checkpoint of Humility

We are to draw near to God “having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.” We come to God with the knowledge that we are unworthy to be in His presence. The only reason anyone can come to Him is the blood of Christ, which was shed on the cross as a cleansing for sin.

4. The Checkpoint of Purity

We are to draw near having “our bodies washed with pure water.” That refers to the daily cleansing by the Word of God. Before you worship, confess the sins that God uncovered through His Word so you can draw near in purity.

In addition to the checkpoints, each time you worship, whether corporately or privately, you can also try preparing yourself by asking these questions:

- Am I seeing God anew in the Word through discovery and meditation so I am compelled to draw near to Him?
- Am I being sincere? Is my heart fixed on Him and undivided?
- Am I fully assured that only faith in Christ can bring me to God’s throne?
- Am I coming humbly, realizing I can draw near only because of what Christ has done for me?
- Is there any sin in my life I haven’t dealt with?

We hope that this information will help you to draw nearer to God in worship, and sense His nearness—even in your own private devotions and prayers. God has redeemed us so we can worship Him. It is the purpose for which we were created. Continue living in the light of the wonders you discover about God in His Word, and ask Him to teach you more and more by experience what it is to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The Worship Committee