

Apostolic Distinctives
Lesson 3
How to Worship Him

1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

- I. Review/Introduction
 1. On February 27, we began our mini-series, "Apostolic Distinctives," in which we are covering four areas in which the Apostolic church is distinct. **[slide]** And not only distinct from the world, but also distinct from many churches.
 2. Lesson 1: How to get ready for heaven. We spoke about the new birth that Jesus described--being born of the water and Spirit. It was more fully described by what happened when the church began in Acts 2 where being born of water is parallel to being baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ, and being born of the Spirit is parallel to receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. Many churches do not emphasize Jesus' name baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues, so that is why this is an apostolic distinction.
 3. Lesson 2: There is Just One. We explored the background in the Old Testament that there is just one God and that God is one Lord, and that the early church acknowledged that Jesus was that one Lord. Then we looked at the development of teaching that began to arise and develop in later centuries that God was three persons rather than one, and eventually that became the official teaching of the Roman church after being adopted by later church ecumenical councils.
 4. Even so, the original view of one God in Jesus Christ is still an apostolic distinctive that affirms **[slide]** (1) the greatest commandment; (2) other scripture that declares there is none beside Him; (3) and the truth that there is just one Creator and just one Savior who is Jesus. That was not the majority view among early Christians or even among 4th century Christians of the 4th century, but since it was adopted by the official Roman church, it became the traditional view of God. how that **there is one creator** of all things and that there is one Savior of all mankind.
 5. Lesson 3: How to Worship Him. Having such a wonderful experience in the Holy Ghost, and knowing there is but one God who gave Himself for us, is cause to be an exuberant worshiper.
 6. Lesson 4: How to live Godly for Him. Since the word, "church," literally means "called-out ones," we will describe what it means to be called out from the world. As born-again worshipers of just one God, we are called to live holy lives unto Him. We are called to "come out from among them and be separate, touch not the unclean thing, cleanse ourselves from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." There are godly lifestyle choices that cover everything from how to treat our neighbor and our brother, to appropriate restrictions on conduct with the opposite sex, to how to dress modestly and gender appropriately, to avoiding things that defile our temple (body). And since the Bible's emphasis on personal holiness runs against modern culture and even against many churches that follow the culture, holiness has become another apostolic distinctive.
- II. The Basics of Worship
 - A. An apostolic distinctive

1. **[slide] Worship is not a performance by a select few with the rest waiting for it to happen and then watching it happen.**
 2. **The worship encounter is how each of us presses into God's presence.**
 3. And since Jesus is the God who rescued us from sin and hell through His atoning, substitutionary death and resurrection, Jesus **IS** the center of our worship, and it can be boisterous.
 4. As we will see, the scriptures show that raising the hands, shouting praises, dancing or leaping, or speaking in tongues is all part of it.
 5. Because many churches prefer a more quiet, traditional, liturgical formality in service and would consider those expressions of worship out of order, this subject of worship has become an **apostolic distinctive**.
 6. But when it comes to worship, we do not use a liturgical procedures manual. How to worship is addressed in the Bible.
 7. And I can testify that it was the lively and passionate worship of the church that captured my attention and heart and helped me decide to come out of the world, come out of religious tradition, and seek truth.
 8. But before we address the "how to" of worship, let us start with why we worship.
- B. Why worship? God is great
1. One great reason to worship God is simply because God is great!
*Psalm 104:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, **thou art very great**; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.*
 2. *Psalm 48:1 **Great [is] the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, [in] the mountain of his holiness.***
 3. To see God's greatness, consider just a few of His unique qualities.
 - a. God is omnipotent: Luke 1:37.
 - b. God is omnipresent: Proverbs 15:3.
 - c. God is omniscient: 1 John 3:20.
 - d. God is Creator: Genesis 1:1.
 - e. God is love: 1 John 4:8.
 - f. God is truth: John 14:6.
 - g. God is holy: Isaiah 6:3.
 4. But another important reason to worship God is because God is searching for spirited worshipers. Are you one of them?
John 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.
- C. **The standard** – the Bible
1. There are plenty of **worship expressions revealed in the Bible**, going back to the beginning of creation and looking ahead into eternity future.
 2. **Shortly after creation** singing and shouting for joy were present. God asked Job, where were you when I was creating all things...

Job 38:7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God [angels] shouted for joy?

3. And on the other bookend of time, the book of Revelation reveals that **eternity future** will be full of worship to Jesus:
Revelation 19:4-6
4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.
5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.
*6 And I heard as it were the voice of a **great multitude**, and as the voice of **many waters**, and as **the voice of mighty thunderings**, saying, **Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.***
4. The phrase, “new song” appears 9 times in scripture to show that our worship must **always be alive**, new, fresh, and from the heart every time:
*Ps 33:3 Sing unto him a **new song**; play skilfully with a loud noise.*
5. We will now discuss things to do with our bodies during worship because we are called to glorify God with our body.
*1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God **in your body**, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

III. Physical expressions of how to worship Him (**mouth, hands, feet, posture**)

A. The Mouth

1. The mouth is our greatest tool of worship because it reveals what is hidden in the heart, somewhat like a window:
*Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for **of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.***
2. Ways to use our mouths in worship are talking, shouting, singing, laughing, and speaking in tongues.
3. **Talking** is what we might do in a testimony:
Psalms 71:24 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.
4. **Shouting** is a more excited expression of praise that involves raising the voice, and is an appropriate expression of praise to God:
*Psalms 47:1 O clap your hands, all ye people; **shout unto God with the voice of triumph.***
*Luke 19:37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to **rejoice and praise God with a loud voice** for all the mighty works that they had seen;*
5. **Singing** to God in worship is another way to use our mouths in worship:
Psalms 47:6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.
Matthew 26:30 And when they had sung [Jesus sang!] an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.
6. Singing in worship is especially appropriate during bad times, like when Paul and Silas had been stripped, whipped, jailed, and bound:

Acts 16:25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

7. **Laughter** is also an appropriate response in worship:

Psalms 126:1-2

1 When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.

8. Those who have experienced Holy Ghost laughter or seen others experience it, realize that it is a high form of worship and not an irreverent disturbance.

9. **Speaking in tongues** is also a form of worshiping with our mouth that involves an utterance by the Spirit of God using our mouth to speak.

10. Speaking in tongues has a **[slide] three-fold purpose** in scripture:

a. The initial evidence of receiving the Holy Ghost,

b. When interpreted, it is a way that God communicates a message to the church, and

c. A form of private communication with God in prayer, such as:

*1 Corinthians 14:2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but **unto God**: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit **he speaketh mysteries.***

*1 Corinthians 14:14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, **my spirit prayeth**, but my understanding is unfruitful.*

d. An added benefit of speaking in tongues is how it edifies the one doing it:

*1 Corinthians 14:4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue **edifieth himself**; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.*

11. **[slide]** So with the mouth we worship by: talking, shouting, singing, laughing, speaking in tongues.

B. The hands

1. Lifting hands and clapping hands are biblical expressions of worship.

Psalms 134:2 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

1 Timothy 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

2. Clapping hands is a sign of approval. We applaud God who has performed well, plus we can join with the rhythm of a song.

Psalms 47:1 O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

3. One form of the priestly sacrifices, the wave offering, included waving the offering before the Lord. It is appropriate to give a wave offering to the Lord, waving a Bible, a handkerchief, or an open hand.

4. **[slide]** Hands: lifting, clapping, waving

C. The feet

1. Feet can be used in worship through standing, leaping, running and dancing.

2. We stand to show honor.

Ps 135:1-3

1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise him, O ye servants of the LORD.
2 Ye that **stand in the house of the LORD**, in the courts of the house of our God,
3 Praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant.

3. Shouting, running and leaping are also expressions of extreme joy and are used in worship. Like the women at the tomb **ran with joy** to proclaim they saw Jesus alive, and like a crippled man was healed, he “bubbled up” in praise:

Acts 3:8-9

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, **walking, and leaping** [spring up, bubble up], **and praising God**.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

4. Response for bad treatment:

*Luke 6:23 Rejoice ye in that day, and **leap for joy**: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.*

5. Running and leaping for joy are physical acts of worship, and are similar to **dancing**, which also expresses joy.

*Ps 149:3 Let them praise his name **in the dance**: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.*

*Ps 150:4 Praise him with the timbrel and **dance**: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.*

6. [slide] The word “dance” is used seven times in the Bible in relation to worshiping the Lord and includes: circle in joy, leap, play, dance, circle dancing.

7. In a Pentecostal church, it is not uncommon to have what we can be called “anointed dancing” [shouting] where the worshiper responds to a move of the Spirit of God by dancing. On the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, worshipers appeared drunk as they worshiped in this way.

8. King David “danced before the Lord”:

*2 Sam 6:14 And David **danced before the LORD with all his might**; and David was girded with a linen ephod.*

9. [slide] **Worship with our feet by: standing, walking, leaping, dancing**

10. Based on personal experience, I have found that when we begin offering physical expressions of praise to the Lord, like clapping, raising our hands, speaking praises to the Lord, leaping, or dancing, often, the Spirit blesses our obedience and takes us into deeper worship

D. Posture

1. In addition to those physical responses in worship, is also our posture, like bowing, kneeling, and even laying prostrate.

2. Bowing is a way to show respect to someone deserving of honor.

3. Kneeling is similar but expresses a more extreme level of respect and honor and involves total submission.

4. Bowing and kneeling are forms of expressive worship.

*Ps 95:6 O come, let us worship and **bow down: let us kneel** before the LORD our maker.*

*Gen 24:48 And I **bowed down my head**, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.*

5. Falling prostrate before the Lord is similar to bowing and kneeling, but it expresses a more extreme submission to God.

*Matt 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and **fell down, and worshipped him**: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.*

6. [slide] **Worship with our posture by bowing, kneeling, laying prostrate.**

IV. Conclusion

1. How to worship Him, an apostolic distinctive, reveals our desire to passionately worship God from a pure heart in ways described in the Bible.

2. But worship that was sick and lame God rejected:

Mal 1:8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

3. God doesn't want our lame offerings of half-hearted worship, but what comes out of a pure and passionate heart.

4. We must give worship according to scripture, not according to our personality or a learned tradition.

5. When we come before the Lord to worship, we need to keep in mind that worship is a verb describing our actions, not a noun describing an event on the schedule:

1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

6. Let us close with an illustration from a vision God gave to Ezekiel (Ezekiel 47:1-5).

7. In his vision, he saw waters that flowed out from the altar, the place where worship began.

8. An angel took him out 1,000 cubits going out the gate of the city and he arrived in waters that were to his ankles. Then he took him out another 1,000 cubits and the water was to his knees. He took him out another 1000 cubits and there the water was to his loins [waist deep]. But another 1000 cubits out and the water rose and became "waters to swim in."

9. When you dive into this kind of worship experience, you may feel the fear of deep waters and want to remain in ankle-deep waters because it is more comfortable to you and you can remain safely in control of the experience.

10. But as you move out deeper, the water will begin to have a stronger control on your movements, and you may have to "go with the flow."

11. And if you are unfamiliar with how the Spirit flows, it may be uncomfortable or scary at first. But the greatest delight you can experience on earth, is moving in the Spirit that flows out of worship.

12. Don't be content with the trickle at the altar. Keep moving out into the powerful river.

13. For Ezekiel went on to describe many trees full of fruit grew by the waters, there was healing in the waters, many fish will be caught there, and wherever the river flowed, it brought life.

14. Let us step out into the waters and give some lively, heartfelt worship right now?

Psalms 48:1 Great [is] the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, [in] the mountain of his holiness.

15. Let us be apostolic!