

WORSHIP

LIST THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR ORDER OF PRIORITY:

EVANGELISM
PRAYER
WORSHIP
WITNESSING
SOCIAL ACTION

Some see 'praise' and 'worship' as synonymous terms but Selwyn Hughes says the following:

Praise is appreciating God for what he does.
Worship is adoring Him for who He is.

CS Lewis put it like this:

'I learned how a thing can be revered, not for what it can do to us, but for what it is in itself.' - it was then, he said, that he understood the difference between praise and worship.

READING: MATTHEW 4: 8-10 - our Lord was offered all the kingdoms of the world if He would bow down and worship Satan. The Saviour's answer is clear and unequivocal : God is the only one to be worshipped.

Selwyn Hughes says that the first responsibility of every Christian is to worship God. He believes that to worship God is *the first law of the soul*. When we violate that law we put our souls in peril. From Genesis to Revelation the emphasis cannot be missed - God commands us to worship him. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is more important than this.

The first reference to worship in the Bible is found in Genesis 22:5

The last reference to worship in the Bible is found in Revelations 22:9

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WORSHIP GOD IN A PERSONAL AND INDIVIDUAL SENSE?

Selwyn Hughes says that in the heart of everyone is a desire to worship God because in the beginning God designed us for worship. He says that one of the failures of modern day Christians is to put work before worship. We take our converts and immediately set about making workers of them. God never meant it to be so. God meant that every convert should learn first how to worship Him and only after that become a worker. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE LATTER STATEMENTS?

Selwyn Hughes says that God is not primarily in the business of recruiting labourers for his harvest field. His chief aim is to restore fallen men and women to the condition where they can offer Him true worship. He made this point clear to the Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar:

READING: JOHN 4:23 & 24 - *Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth.*

READING: LUKE 10: 40-42 - this verse illustrates that our work for God is important, but not so important as our worship of Him. It is tragic when we become more interested in the work of God than in God himself, more taken up with the cause of Christ than with the Christ whose cause we represent.

A great danger is the one that Martha illustrates for us- allowing the urgent to crowd out the important. After all, is it not God who loads us with the tasks that bend and break us. These come from our inner compulsions, coupled with the pressure of circumstances.

Our work for God can be an act of worship. Paul reminds us in Romans 12:1:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.

Clearly then we can worship God with our bodies. When we teach a class of children, sing in the choir, play an instrument, give out books, steward and see people to their seats, drive someone to church, take a hot meal to an old person or visit the sick - we can make all these deeds acts of worship if they are done as unto the Lord but Selwyn Hughes makes the point that one should develop a holy sense of awe that one lives and moves and has one's being in God. He says that unless there is in the soul the atmosphere of devotion, then our work, however spiritual it might appear, is not an act of worship.

*WE ARE CALLED TO BE NOTHING LESS THAN WORSHIPPERS,
WORKERS AND WITNESSES TO HIS GRACE, BUT WORSHIPPERS FIRST.*