

How to Worship God

(When Israel Attended A Baptist Church)

“They remained standing in place for three hours while the Book of the Law of the Lord their God was read aloud to them. Then for three more hours they confessed their sins and worshiped the Lord their God.” Nehemiah 9:3 NLT



When we look at Israel’s worship experience in Nehemiah 8-9, you would think it was a worship service at a Southern Baptist Church (or any other evangelical protestant church). The similarities are interesting. In this time in Israel’s history, this was revival. This was a worship encounter with God.

What is Worship?

In the New Testament, the word “worship” comes from a Greek word, *proskuneo*, (pros-ku-ne-ō) made from two words: *pros* meaning “towards” and *kuneo* (ku-ne-ō) meaning “to kiss.” Together they mean “to kiss towards.” In ancient cultures it was common to kiss another person on the cheek to show respect and affection. People in Europe still practice kissing another’s cheek even today. Worship is giving God a kiss, expressing to Him our love and reverence.

Central Lesson

True worship is “**GIVING**” not “**GETTING**.” It is “giving” to God our love, adoration, and ourselves.

The key to true biblical worship is the word “give.” Worship is not getting, but giving to God our love, praise, heart, and life. John MacArthur explains this in his book, *The Ultimate Priority*,

“When we talk about worship, we are talking about something we **give** to God. Modern Christianity seems committed instead to the idea that God should be giving to us. God **does** give to us abundantly, but we need to understand the balance of that truth—we are to render honor and adoration to God. That consuming, selfless desire to give to God is the essence and the heart of worship. It begins with the giving first of ourselves, and then of our attitudes, and then of our possessions—until worship is a way of life.”

Too many people go to church to “get something.” Some time they are heard saying, “I didn’t get any thing out of church, today.” Usually they mean a feeling or some exhilarating emotion. But we must understand that the essence of worship is not “getting” but “giving.” Understanding this can transform a person’s involvement and understanding of true worship

	TYPICAL VIEWPOINT	BIBLICAL VIEWPOINT
Worship Leader →	Performers	Guide/Director
Congregation →	Audience	Performers
God →	Guide/Director	Audience

Ways of Expressing Worship

The book of Psalms shows us ways to express worship to God:

1. **SING** to God—Psalm 66:4; 9:2; 100:2; 96:1-3
2. Expressing **THANKS** to the Lord—Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31; 100:4
3. Focusing on God’s attributes and His **DEEDS**—Psalm 139:1-18; 103:2-12; 99:5; 89:1-2, 14
4. Self examination, reflection, and rededication—Psalm 139:23-24
5. Giving God our **OFFERINGS**—Psalm 96:8
6. **PRAYER**—Psalm 141:2
7. **Kneeling and bowing down**—Psalm 95:6
8. **Lifting up our hands**—Psalm 63:4; 134:2; 141:2
9. **CLAPPING** our hands—Psalm 47:1
10. **Dancing**—Psalm 149:3, 150:4
11. **Musical instruments**—Psalm 150:3-5; 98:4-6
12. **Living in obedience to God and His Word**—Psalm 119:33-34, 57-62

Similarities to A Modern Day Worship Service in Nehemiah 8-9

1. Bible **READING** (8:1-3, 18)
2. Cooperate worship (8:4-6)
3. **Expository Bible STUDY** (8:7-8). Read the text, clearly explain the meaning, helping people **understand** each passage.
4. **Sacred Day**—a day set aside for worship & the Word (8:9).
5. **Fellowship DINNER** (8:10-12).
6. **PRAYER** for Worship & Revival (9:1-3, 5)

Elements of Their Prayer in Nehemiah 9

- **Praise** (9:5-6)
- **Remembering & Retelling of God’s Past Blessings** (9:7-15)
Notice the repeated word “You...” (9:7, 9-15), 17b, 19-25, 27, 30-31).
- **Confession of sin** (9:16-18, 26, 28-29, 33-35)
- **Request** (9:32, 36-37).
- **Dedication** (9:38).

Central Lesson

True worship is “giving” not “getting.” It is “giving” to God our love, adoration, and ourselves.

► Accept Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday’s study. ► Attend a small group. ► Read the Bible & journal meaningful verses. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus.