

Beliefs Matter

Discovery Starters

Worship

We are called to **praise and worship God alone**

[Exo 20:2-3](#); [Deu 6:4-5](#); [2Ki 17:35-39](#); [1Ch 16:28-30](#); [Neh 8:2-10](#);
[Mar 12:29-30](#); [Rom 15:5-13](#); [Jud 24-25](#); [Rev 5:6-14](#); [Rev 19:5-8](#)

Belief #1 – Worship: Worship Only God

Biblical Foundation:

For the LORD had made a covenant with the descendants of Jacob and commanded them: "Do not worship any other gods or bow before them or serve them or offer sacrifices to them. But worship only the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt with great strength and a powerful arm. Bow down to him alone, and offer sacrifices only to him. Be careful at all times to obey the decrees, regulations, instructions, and commands that he wrote for you. You must not worship other gods. Do not forget the covenant I made with you, and do not worship other gods. You must worship only the LORD your God. He is the one who will rescue you from all your enemies" (2Ki 17:35-39).

Discovery Starter:

Hebrew is a very concrete language. Its verb-centric vocabulary results in a very action-oriented, tactile, experiential form of communication. The word *shachah* (Strong's #7812) which is translated as "worship" literally means "to bow down" or "to prostrate oneself." The word creates a visual picture of intense desire and total devotion. It embodies the act of surrender and service, of alignment and allegiance, of honor and esteem. Not only can you imagine the respectful obedience of a subject who bows in homage before a king; you can also envision the passionate love of a young man who kneels down on one knee to ask his beloved for her hand in marriage.

We are all worshipers. We all give allegiance to someone. We all desire something. Every one of us. The question is not whether or not we will worship. The question is whom or what will we worship. Will we worship the living God or will we long after some substitute pleasure, some alternate goal? The answer we give will focus our attitudes and our actions. Worship drives us. It sets the course of our life. It determines the direction of our existence. We live for what we treasure, for what we worship.

As worship gives expression to our deepest desires, it also shapes our destiny. It is a powerful factor in discipleship. We are told in the Scriptures that those who pursue ungodly passions are shaped by their misaligned, idolatrous devotion. People become like the gods they worship. So, "those who make idols are just like them" (Psa 115:4-8; 135:16-18) – deaf, mute, powerless, lifeless. But the good news is that those who worship the living God "in Spirit and in truth" (Joh 4:23) will be transformed in their character to be more and more like him. John writes, "Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure" (1Jn 3:2-3).

Keep Going:

Pick a psalm or two. Read them out loud. Meditate on the character qualities of God highlighted in what you have read. Turn your reflections on the Word into a response of worship. You may want to bow down – literally, physically – as you speak out the words of your devotion to God.

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