

Living a Life of True Worship



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4minute
BIBLE STUDIES

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PRECEPT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL



WATERBROOK
P R E S S

LIVING A LIFE OF TRUE WORSHIP
PUBLISHED BY WATERBROOK PRESS
12265 Oracle Boulevard, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80921

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ISBN 978-0-307-45766-0

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Published in the United States by WaterBrook Multnomah, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House Inc., New York.

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Printed in the United States of America
2009

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This small-group study is for people who are interested in learning more about what the Bible says, but who have only limited time to meet together. It's ideal, for example, for a lunch group at work, an early morning men's group, a young mother's group meeting in a home, or a smaller Sunday-school class. (It's also ideal for small groups that typically have longer meeting times—such as evening groups or Saturday morning groups—but want to devote only a portion of their time together to actual study, while reserving the rest for prayer, fellowship, or other activities.)

This book is designed so that all the group's participants will complete each lesson's study activities *at the same time, while you're together*.

However, you'll need a facilitator to lead the group—someone to keep the discussion moving. (This person's function is *not* that of a lecturer or teacher. However, when this book is used in a Sunday-school class or similar setting, the teacher should feel free to lead more directly and to bring in other insights in addition to those provided in each week's lesson.)

If *you* are your group's facilitator, the leader, here are some helpful points for making your job easier:

- Go through the lesson and mark the text before you lead the group. This will give you increased familiarity with the material and will enable you to facilitate the group with greater ease. It may be easier for you to lead the group through the instructions for marking if you as a leader choose a specific color for each symbol you mark.
- As you lead the group, start at the beginning of the text and simply read it aloud in the order it appears in the lesson,

including the “insight boxes,” which may appear either before or after the instructions or in the midst of your observations or discussion. Work through the lesson together, observing and discussing what you learn. As you read the Scripture verses, have the group say aloud the word they are marking in the text.

- The discussion questions are there simply to help you cover the material. As the class moves into the discussion, many times you will find that they will cover the questions on their own. Remember the discussion questions are there to guide the group through the topic, not to squelch discussion.
- Remember how important it is for people to verbalize their answers and discoveries. This greatly strengthens their personal understanding of each week’s lesson. Try to ensure that everyone has plenty of opportunity to contribute to each week’s discussions.
- Keep the discussion moving. This may mean spending more time on some parts of the study than on others. If necessary, you should feel free to spread out a lesson over more than one session. However, remember that you don’t want to slow the pace too much. It’s much better to leave everyone “wanting more” than to have people dropping out because of declining interest.
- If the validity or accuracy of some of the answers seems questionable, you can gently and cheerfully remind the group to stay focused on the truth of the Scriptures. Your object is to learn what the Bible says, not to engage in human philosophy. Really *read* the Scriptures, asking God to show everyone His answers.

LIVING A LIFE OF TRUE WORSHIP

There's a hunger, a quest for the spiritual. Man was made for worship. But worship of whom—or what? Or does it matter as long as a person finds what works for him? Is there a way to worship that is right—and another that is false? Is there a way that will help us develop a genuine, intimate relationship with God?

These are the questions we want to answer as we search out what the Bible has to say about the subject of worship. We are going to take an inductive approach, which means that you will observe the Word of God for yourself. Then, discovering what it says and means, you can determine if you want to order your life according to its truth.

WEEK ONE

OBSERVE

The first place the word *worship* is mentioned in the English Bible is in Genesis 22. Although the word appears only once in that chapter, you can learn some foundational truths about true worship by studying this passage.

Leader: Read aloud Genesis 22:1-10, which you see printed in the sidebar. Have the group say “God” aloud every time He is mentioned. Also have the group...

- draw a triangle around each occurrence of the word **God** (plus all pronouns that refer to Him).
- mark the word **worship** with a big **W**.

INSIGHT

Worship is the Hebrew word *shachah* (“a” as in “father” and “ch” as in “Christ”). It means to prostrate oneself or to bow down. In the Old Testament, it is the common term used for coming before God in worship to honor Him. The English word means to look at someone’s “worth-ship.” To worship God is to respect and honor Him for who He is.

GENESIS 22:1-10

1 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

2 He said, “Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.”

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

⁴ On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance.

⁵ Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you.”

OBSERVE

When Abraham was seventy-five years old and childless, God told him that He would make of him a great nation through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Isaac, the son God had promised, was born when Abraham was one hundred years old. It was through Isaac that God would give Abraham a land, a nation, and a seed, which according to Galatians 3:16 would be Jesus Christ.

DISCUSS

- What do you learn from marking the references to God?
- What did God instruct Abraham to do?

OBSERVE


Leader: Read Genesis 22:1-10 again. This time have the group say **Abraham’s name** aloud and underline it every time you read his name or a pronoun that refers to him.

DISCUSS

Look at the references to Abraham that you marked and discuss what you observe about this man from the text.

- What does Abraham do?
- How does he respond to God's command?
- What's his relationship with God? with his son?
- Does anything surprise you about what you read?

OBSERVE

*Leader: Read aloud Genesis 22:1-10 once again. Have the group read aloud with you and mark the phrase **burnt offering** like this:* 

DISCUSS

- What do you learn from these verses about the burnt offering and how it relates to the act of worship?

⁶ Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together.

⁷ Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

⁸ Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

¹⁰ Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

GENESIS 22:11-19

¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

¹² He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for

INSIGHT

The *burnt offering* is described in Leviticus 1. A burnt offering was a voluntary offering, an offering by fire that was a soothing aroma to the Lord. The entire sacrifice (except for the skin) was to be placed on the altar. Nothing was to be held back. When the person offering the sacrifice laid his hand on the head of the sacrifice, it was accepted to make atonement on his behalf.

OBSERVE

Leader: Read 22:11-19 aloud and once again mark...

- every reference to **God**, including any pronouns or synonyms.
- every reference to **the angel of the Lord** with a box, like this: Do not bother to mark synonyms or pronouns for the angel of the Lord.

DISCUSS

- What did the Angel of the Lord stop Abraham from doing in verses 11 and 12?
- Why did the Angel of the Lord stop Abraham?
- How does this relate to Genesis 22:1 and to what God was doing to Abraham?
- Read the Insight Box on fear and discuss how Abraham showed his fear of God.

INSIGHT

In verse 12, the word *fear* is the Hebrew word *yare* (yaw-ray). In this context it means to have reverence toward God, to trust Him, to respect Him. It does not mean to be afraid of Him. God is revered when a person respects Him for who He is. A believer's fear of God is seen when he or she walks in His ways and loves and serves Him in absolute obedience.

now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

¹³ Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.

¹⁴ Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.”

15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven,

16 and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,

17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

18 “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

- In verses 15-18, what did the Angel of the Lord tell Abraham that God would do as a result of his obedience? (This is the first time *obey* is used in the Word of God).

Leader: *Have the group put a number (1,2,3) with a circle around it to mark each of God's promises to Abraham. See example in verse 17.*

OBSERVE

Leader: *Read Genesis 22:11-19 again. Once again, have the group mark...*

- every reference to **Abraham**. Remember to also mark any pronouns.
- any reference to the **burnt offering** as you did before.

DISCUSS

- What did Abraham offer to God as a burnt offering?
- According to what you read in verse 14, where did this offering come from?

- What does Abraham learn about God from verse 14?
 - Suppose this incident is a picture of God's love for us. Genesis 22:2 is the first time *love* is used in the Bible, and it's used in connection with a father offering his only son as a burnt offering. We were supposed to die for our sins, but Jesus died in our place. Who provides the ram that dies in Isaac's place? What does this picture for you?
 - How does fearing God relate to worship?
- ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived at Beersheba.

WRAP IT UP

If you are going to be a true worshiper of God according to the example of Abraham, what would you need to do? What do you learn about worship from this chapter?

- Using Abraham's life as a pattern, how should you respond to God?
- How does the way you live (or "walk," as the Scripture says) relate to your worship?
- What effect would this have on the way you worship?

If you desire to understand how a sinful person can come into the presence of the Holy God that he or she might have intimacy with Him as never before, then you are going to be so blessed in the weeks ahead as you discover the awesome pattern of worship given to Moses by God.