

## Worship - A Key to Overcoming Temptation

- *Worship is a central theme in the Bible from the very beginning to the very end.*
- *The study of worship is so profound and covers many different areas, but we are going to look at only one aspect of worship – how worship will help us overcome temptation and sin.*

### Matthew 2:1–3 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,  
<sup>2</sup>saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

<sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

- *The New Testament begins with the theme of worship.*
- *“we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” - The wise men from the east, travelled a great distance, and came for one sole purpose— to worship the King of the Jews—Jesus.*
- *We see through the efforts of the wise men the immense importance of worship.*
- *“When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.” - Herod was trouble because he wanted to be king and to be the central focus of the people— he wanted to be worshipped.*
- *The object or the person being worshipped is the one who reigns and rules in an individual’s life and in a nation.*
- *Whatever or whoever one worships becomes the lord of that person’s life.*

### Revelation 13:15 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup>He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

- *In Revelation we see that the Antichrist's sinister desire is that all the inhabitants of the earth would worship him making him king and lord over the entire world.*

**Matthew 4:8–10 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

<sup>9</sup>And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”

<sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”

- *One of the three temptations Jesus encountered at the end of forty days in the wilderness was to worship Satan. All the kingdoms of the world and their glory would be His without sacrificing Himself at the cross.*
- *However, in reality, the worship of Satan would have brought Jesus under the authority and control of Satan.*
- *Jesus response was, “You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.”*
- *Notice the relationship between the one we worship and the one we serve—they are the same!*

**Genesis 3:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup>For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

- *In the garden, what was the temptation Adam and Eve faced?*
- *“you will be like God” – the worship of self.*
- *Selfishness is one of the great roots of the worship of self.*
- *“Every self-made man worships his creator – himself.”*
- *Egotism, selfishness, self-centeredness, conceit, vanity, pride, and narcissism all are expressions of the worship of self.*

- *Flattery appeals to the worship of self.*

**Deuteronomy 4:28 (NKJV)**

<sup>28</sup>And there you will serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell.

- *Tied closely to the worship of self is the worship of our achievements—the things we accomplish.*

**Genesis 11:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup>And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”

- *“come, let us build ... a tower whose top is in the heavens: let us make a name for ourselves.” – They wanted to accomplish something great in their self-effort to exalt themselves and have a great name. The Tower of Babel was an idol.*
- *Sometimes it may appear that we are serving and worshipping God, but we are in fact worshipping ourselves and the works of our hands.*

**Genesis 4:2–5 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup>Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

<sup>3</sup>And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,

<sup>5</sup>but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

- *God accepted or respected Abel’s sacrifice, while Cain’s sacrifice was unacceptable.*
- *We can see a number of reasons why Abel’s sacrifice was acceptable and Cain’s was not.*
- *Abel’s sacrifice was a blood sacrifice while Cain’s was a product of his own self-effort.*

- *Abel’s sacrifice was from the best of his first fruits, while Cain’s offering was merely from his increase.*
- *“And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.” – A significant indicator that something was amiss with Cain was how he reacted to the rejection of his sacrifice.*
- *Cain’s heart motivation was not to worship God, but to exalt himself.*
- *The rejection of his sacrifice revealed that he was worshipping self and not God.*
- *Cain’s reaction was not, “What must I change to please God?” He was angry because his idols of self and his achievements had been debased.*
- *The end result was that he murdered his brother from envy as a sacrifice to his idol of selfishness.*
- *Man has been created to worship; it is in our very nature.*
- *The question regarding worship is not if we should worship, but what or who we will worship.*
- *Who or what we worship will rule over us.*
- *When temptation is tugging at us, we must ask, “What am I worshipping besides Christ?”*

### **1 John 2:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup>For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

- *There are three areas of temptation in which we are attacked:*
- *The lust of the flesh*
- *The lust of the eyes*
- *The pride of life.*
- *These three areas of temptation are in the world and they rule those who set their hearts and minds on the world and the things of the world.*

- *“is not of the Father but is of the world” – The key to being free from the lure of temptation is to dwell on the Father and one of the ways we do that is through worship.*
- *We will either worship God or worship the things of this world.*
- *When we worship God our focus is on Him and we are no longer subject to those three areas of temptation.*
- *However, once we begin to focus our hearts and minds on the world, we begin to feel the tug of those three areas of temptation.*
- *We are always worshipping something.*
- *The lust of the flesh is the worship of comfort and pleasure.*
- *The lust of the eyes is the worship of things.*
- *The pride of life is the worship of self.*
- *When we are worshipping comfort and pleasure we will do anything to serve those gods.*
- *To worship comfort and pleasure will hinder us from resisting addictions, because it is uncomfortable and sometimes even painful to say “No” to addictive substances or addictive behaviors.*
- *How do we worship God so we can overcome the lust of the flesh?*
- *Thankfulness is the key to overcoming the lust of the flesh and therefore we must worship God with thanksgiving.*
- *When we worship God with thankfulness it tears down the idol of comfort and pleasure.*

**Psalm 26:7 (NKJV)**

**<sup>7</sup>That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, And tell of all Your wondrous works.**

- *As we worship God with thanksgiving we exalt Him for all His wondrous works.*

**Psalm 69:30–31 (NKJV)**

**<sup>30</sup>I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.**

**<sup>31</sup>This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bull, Which has horns and hooves.**

- *Thanksgiving is worship that resembles giving sacrifices to God.*

**Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV)**

**<sup>15</sup>Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.**

- *Praising God with thanksgiving during difficult times can truly be a sacrifice, but it will protect us from the lusts of the flesh enticing us to worship comfort and pleasure that would lead to compromise.*

Psalm 107:22 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup>Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, And declare His works with rejoicing.

- *Thanksgiving is a form of worship that produces joy in our prayer life.*

2 Timothy 4:10 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup>for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

- *Demas had been a faithful co-worker with Paul, but we see what can happen if we stop worshipping God with thanksgiving. The love of this present world can cause us to depart from serving God for the sake of temporary comfort and lustful pleasures.*
- *When we worship God with thankfulness it tears down the idol of comfort and pleasure.*
- *The lust of the eyes is the worship of things.*
- *How do we worship God so we can overcome the lust of the eyes?*
- *Contentment is the key to overcome the lust of the eyes and therefore we must worship God fully satisfied with the provision He has provided for us.*

Colossians 3:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup>Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

- *Covetousness in the Greek means greediness, exploitation, a strong desire to acquire more and more material possessions irrespective of need.*
- *Idolatry means to literally worship idols.*
- *Therefore covetousness is the worship of things.*

- *A covetous person will work and slave to acquire possessions, and he will serve and worship his god materialism tirelessly.*
- *We will never be able to serve God fully until we learn to be content with whatever God gives us whether it is much or little.*

**Philippians 4:11–13 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup>Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

<sup>12</sup>I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

<sup>13</sup>I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- *Paul was a true worshipper and he knew how to be content regardless of whether he had much or little.*

**1 Timothy 6:6–9 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup>Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

<sup>7</sup>For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

<sup>8</sup>And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

<sup>9</sup>But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

- *“we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” - We need to constantly worship God with contentment, because what He has given us are eternal things which will never perish.*
- *Worshipping God with thanksgiving produces joy.*
- *Worshipping God with contentment produces satisfaction.*
- *How do we worship God so that we can overcome the pride of life?*
- *The pride of life is the worship of self.*
- *Humility and servanthood is the key to overcoming the pride of life and therefore we must worship God with humility.*
- *One of the Greek words for worship is προσκυνέω proskyneō and it means to prostrate oneself before someone as an act of reverence.*

- *Thus worship is really an act of humility, acknowledging the greatness of God, and our total need and love for Him.*
- *Another Greek word for worship is λατρεία latreia and it means worship or service*
- *Thus worship is not just prayer or praise, but it is also service unto God and others in the name of Christ.*
- *Thus anything from giving offerings to the Lord, to helping others, to serving in the church are all part of worship to God as long as it is done with a humble servant-like heart.*

**Romans 12:1 (NKJV)**

**<sup>1</sup>I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.**

**Romans 12:1 (ESV)**

**<sup>1</sup>I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.**

- *It is our reasonable worship to be living sacrifices.*
- *To be a living sacrifice means that our entire being is consecrated to serving and worshipping God.*

**John 4:24 (NKJV)**

**<sup>24</sup>God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."**

- *Worship cannot be produced by the flesh, but only by the spirit.*

**Romans 8:5–8 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup>For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.**

**<sup>6</sup>For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

**<sup>7</sup>Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.**

**<sup>8</sup>So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**



- *Only when we are spiritually minded can we truly worship God.*
- *“To be carnally minded is death” – If we are not worshipping Christ we will never find freedom from temptation and sin.*
- *“To be spiritually minded is life and peace” – Freedom comes from having our hearts and minds stayed upon Christ.*

**Philippians 1:21 (NKJV)**

<sup>21</sup>**For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**

**Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup>**I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

- *Worship is a total surrender to the will of God for our lives.*
- *One will never find freedom and victory without living a life of worship.*
- *The lust of the flesh is the worship of comfort and pleasure and we must learn to worship Christ with thanksgiving and this will produce joy.*
- *The lust of the eyes is the worship of things and we must learn to worship Christ with contentment for His provision and this will produce satisfaction.*
- *The pride of life is the worship of self and we must learn to worship Christ with humility and servanthood and this will produce character.*