

**ALL IN:
Worship
Romans 12:1-2**

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Text Introduction: We are a journey together called ALL IN. Our chief text for the study is Acts 2. It is one of the most foundational passages of the New Testament on the work of the church.

These described in Acts 2 were authentic believers in Jesus Christ. They believed, and as a result of their belief, they were baptized. After being baptized, they banded themselves together as the church.

As a church they committed themselves to these things: Discipleship (becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus), fellowship (doing life together), prayer, worship, and stewardship.

The reason that I want us to take a hard look at this passage is because these are the very things that will happen in the new building that we will build. There will be a Fellowship Hall that will seat double the capacity that our existing Fellowship Hall seats. This will be a place of teaching with up to 17 Adult Education rooms being available. This space will also have connecting corridors that are a vibrant place of fellowship. This space will also house a new prayer room for our church's prayer ministry.

As a result of doing these things together, the LORD continued to prove Himself to them so that there was a sense of awe about them, they experienced miracles together, they had favor with one another, and every day people were being saved.

We have focused on this first three commitments—a commitment to the Apostles' teaching, fellowship, and prayer. Today we focus on the commitment to worship. Reminding ourselves of the Acts 2 passage, that indicates that there was "fear" or "awe" about them and that they were praising God, let's put another text before us today that deals specifically with worship. It's one of the most important texts of the New Testament in my opinion.

Text: Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Introduction: Perhaps one of the things that might surprise us is that there is not a lot about worship in the New Testament—that is a prescription for the worship service. We know that they gathered regularly if not weekly. They gave attention to the public reading of Scripture (1 Tim 4). They observed the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11). They sang. ((Eph 5) But, we don't get a lot about what they did or how they did what they did. The emphasis is not on form or function, but the heart of worship.

Worship that really pleases God is life worship. “Let my life song sing to you.” That’s the key to Romans 12:1-2. And it’s not an idea foreign to Scripture.

Hosea 6:6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Micah 6:6-8 ⁶ With what shall I come before the LORD,
And bow myself before the High God?
Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,
With calves a year old?
⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
Ten thousand rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression,
The fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?
⁸ He has shown you, O man, what *is* good;
And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly,
To love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?

Psalms 51:16-19¹⁶ For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give *it*;

You do not delight in burnt offering.

¹⁷ The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart—
These, O God, You will not despise.

¹⁸ Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion;
Build the walls of Jerusalem.

¹⁹ Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness,
With burnt offering and whole burnt offering;
Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

The Reason for our Worship

Believe it or not, the reason for our worship can be summed up by one word in this text. The word is therefore.

But this one word takes us back to many words that appear previously in Romans.

Looking Back

- Romans 5:6-11--6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when we

were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

- Romans 6:20-23--20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Romans 8:1--1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

As we look beyond the word “therefore,” we see some additional reasons or the basis for worship. Notice that Paul urges (beseech) them on the basis of the mercies of God. The basis of the appeal is the mercies of God, obviously pointing to the cross—the sacrifice of Christ.

So, looking back and looking forward, the cross is the reason for our continued worship. This leads Paul to say that presenting his body to the LORD is his reasonable service.

The word for reasonable service is *logikos*. You can hear our English word logical in that word. This is logical. Christ died for us. It seems logical or reasonable that we would devote ourselves in worship to Him 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Liz Curtis Higgs was a shock value radio host. In fact Howard Stern was the a.m. guy; she was the p.m. Stern even told her on one occasion “you ought to clean up your act.” She had a friend who kept inviting her to church. Finally she went and the preacher was preaching on Ephesians 5, “Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands.” But the preacher went on to talk about the rest of that passage, “And husbands, love your wives just as Jesus loved the church.” He talked about how husbands ought to sacrifice just like Christ sacrificed for the Church. Liz leaned over to her friend and said, “Well, shoot, I would give myself for a guy like that.” “Really,” her friend said, “well a man has—his name is Jesus.” Not long after that Liz Curtis Higgs gave her life in surrender to Christ and now tours the country speaking to women.

The Description of Right Worship

Quite simply, the right way to worship God can only be expressed by presenting ourselves to God.

Right worship is not so much revealed by what we do on Sunday, but what we do on the other days.

Hear the way that Eugene Peterson translated these words in his Message translation.

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life--your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life--and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. ²Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the

inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

This kind of offered life...

1. Lives a Sacrificial life—all of us. The problem with a living offering is that we can get off the altar.
2. Rejects worldly conformity.
3. Accepts spiritual transformation

It's a life fully surrendered to Christ.

Isaac Watts well expressed this idea in the words to *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* when he wrote,

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

The Result of True Worship

So that, you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

There is a cycle: we live out our lives in worship, we understand more about the will of God for our lives, our lives are more surrendered to Him, we understand more about the will of God.

Exaltation leads to Examination leads to Revelation.

Some of you are members, some are regular attending non-members, and some are here for the first time. The challenge is the same. Find a church that causes you to encounter God. If this isn't the one—you have a decision to make. Am I the problem or is the church the problem? The reason that some of you do not hear from God is not this church, but it is you. If you sense that you are not the problem, then the next step is that you need to seek a church where you encounter God.

But here is the plea—if this is going to be your church where you expect to encounter God—give yourself to that. Don't be half-hearted; don't be on the fence. Stop complaining about all that you find wrong with your church. Pray for your church. Love your church. Honestly, seek to make your church a place where you and others can experience fresh encounters with God.

In his book, *The Air We Breathe*, Louie Giglio says, "So how do you know what you worship? It's easy. You simply follow the trail of your time, your affection, your money, and your allegiance. At the end of the trail you'll find a throne; and whatever or whoever is on that throne is what's of highest value to you. On that throne is what you worship."