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## Committed to His Worship



### QUESTION 1:

*When have you been swept up in a moment of excitement?*

## THE POINT

God deserves our worship and praise.



## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

We have many reasons to love the fall season: the leaves change colors, the weather gets cooler, and football season arrives. Boys in small towns and big cities put on pads and helmets so they can play a game that borders on sanctioned violence. Fans pack into stadiums to cheer for what has become the ultimate American pastime.

The people watching these games are called fans—a word that’s short for fanatics—and for good reason. Their behavior often borders on the fanatic. When their team scores, fans

simultaneously shout at the top of their lungs—thousands of people joining their voices in a mighty roar of approval. As the fans scream and cheer for joy, they also jump to their feet, raising their hands in the air. Thousands of hands instantly reach for the sky as a symbol of both victory and sheer adulation.

We all grow excited and lose ourselves in rapturous joy at such times. Each of us has an innate desire to give adulation and praise to something we love—and nothing and no one deserves our worship and praise more than God.

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## PSALM 99:1-3

<sup>1</sup> **The LORD reigns! Let the peoples tremble. He is enthroned between the cherubim. Let the earth quake.** <sup>2</sup> **The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted above all the peoples.** <sup>3</sup> **Let them praise your great and awe-inspiring name. He is holy.**

The innate desire to worship is in all of us for a very good reason: God put it there. In fact, God created us for the purpose of worshipping Him. Some have accused God of being self-centered for creating us to worship Him. However, instead of seeing God's command to worship Him as narcissistic, we should view it as the most loving thing He could ever do. Since God is truly the greatest, most holy, most loving Being in all the universe, then pointing us to Himself is the most loving thing He can do. We are drawn to worship, but to worship anyone or anything else is to worship a lesser god, and we would be missing out. God loves us and desires the absolute best for us—and that best is found only in the One who created us.

Where do we even begin in worshipping God? God's beauty is infinite; His majesty has no end. Once we are with Him in heaven, we will have eternity to discover and worship God for all His amazing attributes. But even now we can worship Him for what we know of Him.

We praise God for His holiness. Verse 3 ends with this summation: "He is holy." He is set apart and separate from all of His creation, and no one is like Him. Verses 1-3 lead us to this declaration of God's holiness.

- ▶ **God alone reigns.** No one else reigns.
- ▶ **God alone sits on His throne surrounded by His angelic attendants, the cherubim.** No one else sits on that throne.
- ▶ **God alone is exalted and lifted high.** No one else comes close.

God deserves our praise because no one is above Him or is even His equal. He stands apart in His holiness.

### QUESTION 2:

***When have you been awed by who God is or what He has done?***

We praise God for His great power. We see His power in the created world around us: in the massive stars in the galaxies above us and in the microscopic atomic particles we can't even see. Only God could create those. Only God has the power to heal our wounded souls. Why should we praise God for His greatness and power? The answer is quite simple. God is powerful and we are not.

If this great and powerful God were against us, we would cower in horrified, paralyzing fear. Thankfully, the all-powerful holy "God is *for us*" (Rom. 8:31, emphasis added), not against us, so our response should be a reverent awe and respect that draws us to love Him and praise Him! When we encounter God in all His holiness and glory, we worship. We worship because He created us to worship Him. And we worship because He is worthy of our worship.



## PSALM 99:4-5

**<sup>4</sup> The mighty King loves justice. You have established fairness; you have administered justice and righteousness in Jacob. <sup>5</sup> Exalt the LORD our God; bow in worship at his footstool. He is holy.**

The psalmist disclosed other attributes of God that ought to motivate us to praise: His justice, fairness, and righteousness. We all value justice because we have all been on the receiving end of injustice. Unfortunately, this happens far too often in a fallen and sinful world. People are selfish, spiteful, and sometimes downright mean. And while it's not

always intentional, fallen and sinful people often use the power given to them in ways that are hurtful toward others. We even face injustice when something is misunderstood and we're wrongfully blamed. And in this sinful world, many of us have been victims of injustice because of our gender, ethnicity, or political party.

In the face of injustice, let's remember the One who is never unjust. Even more so, God loves justice. Some may ask, "If God loves justice so much, why doesn't He step in and fix the injustice I'm facing?" In His righteousness, God will see that justice is served, but His justice is not always on our timetable. Certainly, when Christ returns and consummates His kingdom, He will deal with all injustice. As Peter wrote of the coming judgment and the day of the Lord, he said, "The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Lest we think God doesn't understand the injustice we're facing, remember Jesus experienced the greatest injustice ever committed. Jesus never committed a single sin, yet through an unjust arrest, trial, and crucifixion, He became our sin "so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21). He willingly bore our sin and shame, suffering unjust cruelty and punishment by the hands of wicked, unjust men, so that we could inherit eternal life through Him.

We can praise God because His justice and righteousness are now ours through Christ. Even as we face injustice, we can praise God and trust Him to work His justice. "Therefore the LORD is waiting to show you mercy, and is rising up to show you compassion, for the LORD is a just God. All who wait patiently for him are happy" (Isa. 30:18).

What should be our response to our justice-loving, justice-executing God? "Exalt the LORD our God; bow in worship at his footstool. He is holy" (v. 5). Even in the midst of injustice, we can lift our hands in praise to Him. Even in the middle of a difficult moment of our lives we can shout at the top of our lungs and worship our God. Why? Because He is trustworthy, and He will always and inevitably make things right.

### QUESTION 3:

***How does our culture reflect God's justice, fairness, and righteousness?***



## PSALM 99:6-9

**<sup>6</sup> Moses and Aaron were among his priests; Samuel also was among those calling on his name. They called to the LORD and he answered them. <sup>7</sup> He spoke to them in a pillar of cloud; they kept his decrees and the statutes he gave them. <sup>8</sup> LORD our God, you answered them. You were a forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their sinful actions. <sup>9</sup> Exalt the LORD our God; bow in worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.**

The psalmist gave us another reason we should be committed to worshiping God—He hears us and answers us! God, the wisest and most powerful Being in the entire universe, actually answers the cries of His people! This all-powerful God chooses to answer us!

The psalmist used the examples of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, priests who called on the name of the Lord in their distress. When trials and tribulations came, they didn't shrink away in despair, but they did what all children do in times of trouble. They cried out to their father—"the LORD."

- ▶ When the Israelites complained because of a lack of water, Moses went to the Lord in prayer, and God miraculously provided (Ex. 17:1-7).
- ▶ When God was ready to wipe out the Israelites and start over, Moses interceded in prayer. God answered and pardoned the people (Num. 14:11-20).
- ▶ Samuel prayed for the people on multiple occasions (1 Sam. 7:2-5; 8:6), and he ended his years of service by saying, "As for me, I vow that I will not sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you" (12:23).

### QUESTION 4:

***How do the lives of those who've gone before us set an example for us to follow?***

God answered them each time they called out to Him in faith. God answered because He is "a forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their sinful actions" (v. 8). What's amazing about this verse is that it doesn't say God avenged the wrongdoings done against them. It says He avenged their wrongdoings. Unlike fallen human beings, God doesn't avenge our wrongs with harm or anger; He avenges our wrong with love and forgiveness.

The awareness of God's response to us draws us right back into worship.

### QUESTION 5:

***What are some ways you've seen God answer prayer in our group?***

## WORSHIP ALWAYS

*What are some practical ways for you to include worship in the following areas of your life?  
Write some ideas; then offer a prayer for strength and guidance in implementing them.*

**At work:**

**While driving:**

**During conversations:**

**When life gets quiet:**

My Prayer:

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*“A glimpse of God will save you.  
To gaze at Him will sanctify you.”*

A.W. TOZER

