

Course Outline

Class 1 *Unity*

Class 2 *Church Membership*

Class 3 *Preaching*

Class 4 *Prayer*

Class 5 *Ordinances*

Class 6 *Church Governance*

Class 7 *Church Fellowship*

Class 8 *Discontentment Within the Church*

Class 9 *Church Leadership*

Class 10 *Church Discipline*

Class 11 *Giving and Service*

Class 12 *Corporate Worship*

NEXT:

Class 13 Evangelism

LIVING AS A CHURCH



Class 12: Corporate Worship

Celebrating God-Given Unity

I. Introduction

God is seeking worshippers

- In Spirit
- In Truth

The wide scope of worship

Connection between worship and unity

II. Definition of Worship

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.”
– Romans 12:1

“Obedient action motivated by the beauty of who God is in Himself”
– Tim Keller

God is worthy of our praise.

Worship is God-centered and Christ-centered.

Biblical understanding of worship:

1. Proper response to God
2. Encompasses our entire lives
3. Delight in the beauty of God

III. Definition of Corporate Worship

Elements regulated by Scripture

- Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:4-5)
- Second commandment
- Offering of “unauthorized fire” (Leviticus 10:1)
- Worship of the Pharisees (Mark 7:7)

Element vs. form

Corporate worship is public: open to outsiders

Implications:

1. Corporate worship includes much more than songs at the beginning of a service

Neither solely intellectual or solely emotional

2. Unity in corporate worship is important despite any diversity

Worship with a sense of need rather than fullness

Worshipping together involves sacrifice and love

Worshippers can learn to benefit from new worship forms

Avoiding distraction; making ourselves resistant to distraction

IV. Unique Elements of Corporate Worship

Corporate worship displays our God-glorifying unity

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”
– Matthew 5:23-24

“For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.”

– I Corinthians 11:29

In corporate worship, we can help each other to worship God

In corporate worship, we edify each other

“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord”

– Ephesians 5:19

Corporate worship offers a taste of heaven

“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.”

– Hebrews 12:22-25

“Worship is the proper response of all moral, sentient beings to God, ascribing all honor and worth to their Creator-God precisely because He is worthy, delightfully so. This side of the Fall, *human worship* of God properly responds to the redemptive provisions that God has graciously made. While all true worship is God-centered, *Christian worship* is no less Christ-centered. Empowered by the Spirit and in line with the stipulations of the New Covenant, it manifests itself in all our living, finding its impulse in the gospel, which restores our relationship with our Redeemer-God and therefore also with our fellow image-bearers, our co-worshippers. Such worship therefore manifests itself both in adoration and in action, both in the individual believer and in *corporate worship*, which is worship offered up in the context of the body of believers, who strive to align all the forms of their devout ascription of all worth to God with the panoply of New Covenant mandates and examples that bring to fulfillment the glories of antecedent revelation and anticipate the consummation.”
– D.A. Carson