



AWAKENED

TO WORSHIP

LESSON 1 // THE CALL TO WORSHIP

All of us have found ourselves dozing when we should have been awake. At times this can be harmless and natural. In other situations, it can be extremely dangerous.

One of the areas we may fall prey to spiritual slumber is in our worship. It's important for us to be freshly challenged and renewed in our worship of God. Without a regular wake-up call to worship ringing in our ears, we have a tendency to become stale and dry. We easily allow our worship to slip into outward religious forms that are void of God's power (2 Timothy 3:5).

This series will encourage you to be alert to love, serve and worship the Lord. We will understand from God's Word the value, benefits and biblical patterns of worship. This all begins with a call to worship. Let's look at three aspects of this call:

1. God's initiative.

Our call to worship actually begins with God's initiative toward us. Before He ever commanded us to worship Him, the Lord set in motion a process that makes our worship of Him possible and reasonable. Romans 1:18-20 speaks of this initiative:

Romans 1:18-20 (NLT) *The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*

In these verses we learn that God wants us to know Him and that "what may be known" about Him has been made plain and clear. This means we are all without excuse in terms of knowing and worshiping the Lord. He created us, loves us and has revealed Himself to us.

According to Scripture, God has revealed Himself to us in three basic ways: through His creation (Psalm 19:1-4), His Word (Hebrews 1:1) and His Son Jesus (John 1:14, 18; Hebrews 1:2, 3). He doesn't call us to a life of worship without first revealing His "eternal power and divine nature" to us (Romans 1:20)!

2. Our sinful resistance.

In Romans 1-3, the Apostle Paul helps us see how every person has turned away from God and is in need of salvation, and that this salvation is only found through faith in Jesus. Romans 1:18-32 explains the terrible nature and consequences of our sinful condition.

Although God clearly reveals Himself to sinful people, many refuse to turn from their sin and worship Him. This revelation of who God is and what He is like should lead to an immediate response and ongoing lifestyle of glorifying and thanking Him (Romans 1:21).

When we fail to worship God in this way, all kinds of unholy and unhealthy things happen. Romans 1:22-32 describes the profound moral and mental unraveling that occurs when we fail to properly glorify and thank God. This includes darkness, deception, impurity, idolatry, perversion, depravity, iniquity and distortion.

3. Embracing the call.

If we go down this destructive pathway, we will miss the call to worship. Don't let this happen to you! As Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mark 4:9). Notice how Psalm 29 invites us to embrace this call by responding the right way to the revelation of God:

Psalm 29:1, 2 (NIV) *Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. ² Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.*

Three times in these verses we are commanded to "ascribe to the Lord" certain things. The Hebrew word translated "ascribe" means to give honor where honor is due. In worship we ascribe to the Lord "glory and strength." We honor God by giving Him the "glory due his name." We appreciate and declare the beauty of His holiness. This kind of worship involves:

- An inner acknowledgment of God's glory, greatness, goodness and holiness (1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 145:3; Isaiah 6:3).
- A personal acceptance of His plan of salvation (Romans 10:9-13).
- External expressions of praise and thanksgiving to Him (Revelation 4:8-11).
- Daily submission to His principles and pattern for living (Luke 9:23; Romans 12:1, 2).

Colossians 3:23, 24 (NIV) *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

Answering the call to worship is the beginning of a lifestyle of worship. We need to be alert every day to the greatness of God and our great privilege and responsibility to honor Him.

Discussion questions

1. Read Romans 1:18-20. According to these verses, how has God revealed Himself to us? What should our response be to this revelation?
2. Read Romans 1:21-32. What do you learn from these verses about sinful responses to God's revelation? How can you avoid these?
3. Read Psalm 29:1, 2. What does it mean for you to "answer the call to worship"? What difference should this make in your everyday life?