

## MEMORY VERSE

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."  
(Hebrews 12:28-29)

**A \_\_\_\_\_ of Worship**

- \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- The \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Worship Is \_\_\_\_\_ On \_\_\_\_\_**

**Worship is an \_\_\_\_\_**

**Worship is \_\_\_\_\_**

**Worship is a \_\_\_\_\_**

WORSHIP

MEMORY VERSE AND DAILY READINGS

MEMORY VERSE

- Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:28-29)

DAILY READINGS

OCTOBER 12 ~ THE CONSUMING FIRE

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:28-29)

REFLECTION: Most of us have done it--stared into a fireplace or a campfire and been mesmerized by the work of the flame. It just eats up whatever is put into it until finally, nothing is left--it is all consumed. We can't put a stick in the fire and have it be a part of the fire **and** still be a stick in our hand. It will be one, or the other. God is a "consuming fire". He is the power and force in life. To worship him, we must be willing to throw ourselves into that expression fully. We need to be thankful, and willing to say so to God. We can't approach him lightheartedly, but with a sense of awe that we are in a relationship with God himself, and an awareness that he wants all of us to be a part of his kingdom.

OCTOBER 13 ~ SPIRIT AND TRUTH

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:21-24)

REFLECTION: People have argued over worship--how to do it, when to do it, where to do it--for thousands of years. When a Samaritan woman tried to pull Jesus into the old argument between her people and the Jews regarding where worship should be done, he would have none of it. He didn't even address her question. Instead, he pointed her to what is most important--that our worship be real. Worship can be expressed in many cultural ways, but it **must** be done with integrity. We have to allow our spirits to connect with God, to focus on God, and never just go through the motions. Everyone has ups and downs when it comes to worship, but when we worship in spirit and truth, we lay our doubts and distractions before God. We admit to him the truth that even in worship, only he is perfect, and allow him to draw us closer to him as we come before him. How can God help you worship today?

## OCTOBER 14 ~ TREMBLING!

Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness;  
tremble before him, all the earth. (Psalm 96:9)

REFLECTION: "Trembling" is usually associated with fear. The Psalmist tells us to tremble before God. Surely we aren't supposed to fear him, are we? Why would we be afraid of God? Normally we fear someone we think might hurt us in some way. God's purpose is not to hurt us. But think back. As children, we feared what we don't understand. We feared what seemed so big or so powerful that the very size or power evoked a fear in us. When we come before God in worship we do so as children. We are experiencing someone so big, so powerful--and so different from us in his holiness that we stand in awe of him--we tremble in the throes of that awe. But what if we don't? The answer is simple. We see ourselves as bigger than we are--or we don't see God as big as he is. Part of our task in preparing for worship is to remind ourselves of how small we are--and of how great God is!

## OCTOBER 15 ~ RELIGION AND RELATIONSHIP

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our  
God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. (Psalm 95:6-7)

REFLECTION: There's an old saying "Christianity isn't a religion--it's a relationship". To those outside the faith, that makes no sense at all. Sadly, to many in the church it doesn't make sense either. Certainly it isn't the same kind of relationship we have with one another. But it is a relationship. The problem is, we don't understand our role in the relationship. Jesus is our shepherd. That makes us sheep, and most of us aren't really good at being sheep! The Lord is our shepherd. He guides us. He provides for us. He protects us. He comforts us. To worship him, we need to remember our relationship with him and his with us. As his sheep, it is the most natural thing in the world to come before the shepherd, kneeling before him in worship.

## OCTOBER 16 ~ THE HEART OF WORSHIP

The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men." (Isaiah 29:13)

REFLECTION: God is picky. We can worship him in many ways--singing, giving, teaching, serving, remembering, offering--but it isn't good enough. He doesn't want us to do the right **things** when we worship him. He wants us to have the right **heart**. When we say one thing in worship--to him or the people around us--and another in our lives, it betrays a discrepancy between what we do and who we really are--what is in our hearts. God wants our heart. He wants it to be clean, so he's willing to clean it up if we're willing to bring it to him. He wants it to be holy (set apart for him), so he's willing to sanctify it (set it apart), if we're willing to give it to him. He wants it to be close to him, so he's willing to pull us closer--if we are willing to let him. The amazing thing is, if we aren't willing, he is willing to give up what he wants and let us have our own way. Worship from the heart requires that we be willing to give up what **we** want, and allow him to have his own way in us. Is there something you need to let go of today?

## **OCTOBER 17 ~ GATHERING**

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

**REFLECTION:** Today, the disdain for "organized religion" has led many to believe that "going to church" is a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. We get up in the morning and decide whether to "go to church" or not. We stay out late on Saturday night and decide sleeping in is no big deal today. Our kids are in activities someone planned for a Sunday morning (do we ever stop to think whether that's accidental?) and say we can go to church another day, or week, or month... And when someone suggests that this attitude toward church-going isn't a good idea--or is even dangerous, well, that's just going too far. The odd thing is, this isn't new. Two thousand years ago, a generation after Christ rose from the dead, Christians began to think it just wasn't that important to gather together for worship. The writer of the Hebrews letter saw the danger in this, and instructed his readers to make it a priority to worship together, and in doing so not only strengthen themselves, but encourage and build up others at the same time!

## **OCTOBER 18 ~ THE LIVING SACRIFICE**

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)

**REFLECTION:** We usually think of worship as something we do when we get together at a church--we sing, we pray, we celebrate communion, we teach the Word of God--but to the person in the first century, worship normally involved offering a sacrifice. This was usually an animal, whose death symbolized the absolute devotion of the worshipper to God. But Paul suggested something radical. Instead of offering a sacrifice to be killed, we should offer to God a living sacrifice--our own lives--set apart for God's purposes instead of our own. This sacrifice isn't designed to cover our sins. It is simply a way of pleasing God--showing him that there is nothing and no one more important to us than Him. Our worship when we gather together is important, but it is the beginning of our offering to God, not the end. Everything we do in our lives is an act of worship, showing God and the world around us how important God is to us.

**STUDY GUIDE**  
**THE FOCUSED LIFE**  
*WORSHIP*

1. Define the word "worship". Please explain how you arrived at this definition.
2. Using a concordance and/or Topical Bible, look up passages in the Old Testament which refer to worship. What do you learn about worship in the Old Testament from these passages?
3. How did Jesus worship (cite your sources)?
4. Read Isaiah 29:13 and John 4:21-24. What do you learn about how we should worship?
5. Is corporate worship (worshipping with others) important? Please explain your answer and cite the passages you rely on.

6. What aspects of our corporate worship are universal (meaning part of corporate worship regardless of culture)? Please cite your sources.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What aspects of our corporate worship are cultural?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Read Romans 12:1-2. What form of worship is Paul commanding, and what should this look like in your life (please be specific)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What is idolatry? Why is it wrong?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What does idolatry look like in America today?