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Title: How Shall We Worship?

Text: 1 Chronicles 16

Turn, if you will, to 1 Chronicles chapter 16 and verse 29: *"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: WORSHIP the LORD in the beauty of holiness."* Now, the passage of Scripture you have before you is part of a longer passage that tells about David bringing the ark into Jerusalem. There was praise, and the glory of the Lord, and music. It was absolutely, indescribably glorious. In the 15th chapter of Acts, when the Apostle was talking about the latter-day glory that would come to the Church, he said, *"It's going to be like the tabernacle of David that has fallen down. It's going to be set up again, and there's going to be glory in the last days, even greater than the glory when the Ark of the Covenant came into Jerusalem"* (Acts 15:16). What is the Ark of the Covenant? It was a piece of furniture, maybe a little bigger than the size of this pulpit. It has been called a treasure chest of blessing. In the Old Testament it was a type, a picture, an illustration of Jesus Christ. It was a treasure chest of blessing, and it had been in captivity. David wanted it, to give God glory. He retrieved the ark. He brought it back into Jerusalem, and he set it up in a tabernacle, or a tent, there on Mount Moriah called the Tabernacle of David. Well, that's the background for our passage of Scripture for today, and it is surrounded by praise. Again, look, if you will, in verse 29. David said, *"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name..."* – and the last part of that – *"...worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."*

1. We are to Worship Him CONSTANTLY. There are a lot of things that can be said, but let's cut to the chase. How are we to worship the Lord? At Marlowe Assembly of God, in these last days, how are we to worship the Lord? First of all, we are to worship Him CONSTANTLY. Verse 6: *"And Benaiah and Jahaziel, and the priests, with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God."* Look down at verse 11: *"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually."* Go to verse 37: *"So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required."* Skip on down to verse 39: *"And Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place..."* – he goes on to say in the last part of verse – *"...offering continually morning and evening."* Now, all of these verses tell us that there is to be constant and regular worship. You are to worship God CONTINUALLY. A Sunday worship service isn't enough. Two worship services aren't enough. For those who attend Wednesdays, three times a week isn't enough. It needs to be the habit of your life. David wrote in Psalm 34, verse 1: *"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall"* – what? – *"continually be in my mouth."* We need to learn the power of perpetual praise. Praise God when you feel like it. Praise Him when you don't feel like it. PRAISE THE LORD! Somewhere I read that there is more emphasis on praise than prayer in scripture. I didn't take the time to substantiate that. This I do know though – Praise and Prayer are so inextricably interwoven that you cannot really do one without the other. Learn to praise God. Make it a holy HABIT. Pull some of the groans out of your prayers and shove in some *hallelujahs* and see what happens. Have you got it? Say it: continually, continually, continually. Now, get that in your heart.

2. We are to Worship Him CREATIVELY. Here's why we have a ministry of praise in our church. We are to praise Him. We are to worship Him CREATIVELY. In David's day, as in our day, there were skilled musicians. 1 Chronicles 15, verse 22: *"And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skillful."* Now, here was a man who was gifted. He took the Spiritual Gift Test and his gift was music. He instructed about the song. Why? Because, he was skillful. Go back to 1 Chronicles 13, and notice in verse 8: *"And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing,"* – now watch this – *"and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets."* As a matter of fact, there were some 4,000 special worshipers who were Levites, and 288 of them, the Bible says, were specially skilled. Turn to 1 Chronicles chapter 25, and look, if you will, in verse 7: *"So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the LORD, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight."* That is, there were 288 out of these 4,000 who were specially skilled. Now, what does that mean? We are to worship God continually, we are to praise Him continually, we are to learn the power of perpetual praise, and we are to do it creatively. Skillfully. Now, not everybody has the same musical gift. I thank God for the gifted people who lead us in worship, for the special occasion choir, soloists and ensembles. I thank God for the gifted people who play their instruments. I thank God for people like Darlene, Chris, Tim, Jim, Wendy, Angelo, Harold, and others who play their instruments. God made us different that He might make us one. God does that in marriage. Has anyone here married someone whose personality and gifts were the same as yours? I doubt it. When two become one under God – even with their differences – they complete each other. In the church, God gives one the ability to preach the Word, another the

ability to teach. Some are gifted to run sound and video. Some have artistic ability. It's a neat experience to go through the exhibit hall at Fine Arts and see all kinds of ways that young people can praise the Lord. To another He gives the ability to lead us creatively to praise the Lord. I thank God for a church that has much creativity that is given for the glory of God. Do you know God made us in His image? And, what is one thing that God specializes in – CREATION. God is a creative God. And, when we do creative things, we are reflecting His glory.

3. We are to Worship Him CELEBRATIVELY. What do I mean by that? Worship, in this passage that was a prophecy of last day worship, according to Acts chapter 15, was exuberant. It was full of passion. Go back to where we started – 1 Chronicles 16:29. I love this verse. *“Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.* No wonder G. Campbell Morgan said, “Lukewarmness is the worst form of blasphemy.” I mean, it's saying, “God, You just don't excite me.” Listen, if God is God – and He is – then we cannot turn the church into a mausoleum. We serve a mighty God, a Great God, and we're to serve Him – PRAISE HIM – exuberantly. When David brought the ark into Jerusalem, his wife, Michal, was filled with gold-plated sarcasm. She said, *“Well, didn't the king behave himself gloriously today?”* (2 Samuel 6:20). Do you know why she looked down upon David? Because David was so full of God he was leaping and dancing and praising God, with ALL of his heart and with ALL of his might; and, there was a great ensemble of musicians – instrumental musicians and singers – and Michal didn't like it. That was David's wife. By the way, she became barren because of that. You know, there's nothing more deadening than refusing to worship. Let me warn you. If you get happy in Jesus, you might make some people mad. Did you know that? They say, “Well, I believe in dignity.” Dr. Havner said, “They don't know the difference between dignity and rigor mortis.” Dr. Seuss wrote the children's book about the Grinch. One thing about the Grinch, when he saw anybody happy, he always bit himself. It made him unhappy to see anybody else happy. Let me tell you something, folks. We just need to celebrate Jesus. Some time back I read an article about mental health among believers. It notes that many Christians are nervous and neurotic. I believe that if people would learn how to praise – mentally, psychologically, spiritually, physically – it would change them. The article indicated that many mental and nervous disorders are due to one thing: it is an over-occupation with personal ego. This ego causes people to become extremely self-centered. When you become self-centered, then you become defensive. When you become defensive, you become hostile, and you may become aggressive. You say, “Oh, don't give me all that psychological stuff.” It's not psychological stuff. It is Jesus. Listen to this. Luke 9:24: *“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”* The word *life* is soul – the ego, the self. When you lose yourself in the Lord Jesus Christ – listen – you cannot truly celebrate Jesus without losing preoccupation with yourself. And when you focus your life on Jesus, it changes you. You cannot praise and sulk at the same time. You cannot praise and be irritated at the same time. You cannot praise and be filled with fear at the same time.

4. We are to Praise Him CONFIDENTLY. If you begin in chapter 16 of 1 Chronicles, verse 7, you're going to find out that what follows is a song. *“Then on that day David delivered first this psalm”* – that is, this song – *“to thank the LORD, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.”* He said, “Here, Asaph, take this song now, and I want it sung.” And then, it begins: *“Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people”* (vs. 7-8). Then, he talks about the worldwide ministry of praise. And, in these short verses – 30 verses – at least 8 times he mentions praise impacting all of the earth. Verse 14: *“He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.”* Verse 24: *“Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvelous works among all nations.”* Verse 31: *“Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; and let men say among the nations, The LORD reigneth.”* Verse 32: *“Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.”* David said, “Praise is to circle the globe and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as waters that cover the sea.” Let the earth hear His voice. Do it confidently, because, you see, what he's talking about here is aggressive evangelism. With confidence, you praise the Lord, and you can change this world by praise. I believe that. Psalm 22:3, says that God inhabits the praise of His people. God's address is PRAISE. You want to know where God lives? Where people are praising! God is especially near when we praise Him. Do you want God to be near in our services? Then don't sit there like a wooden Indian when we praise. The view isn't always so pleasant from here. I think to myself, “Why don't they sing? Why don't they praise the Lord? What's the matter with them?” Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God, but children of the Heavenly King will make His praise glorious. Praise the Lord! If you can't sing, make a joyful noise unto the Lord, because God occupies the praise of His people. Let me tell you something else. When you take the precious name of Jesus Christ in vain, do you know what you're doing? You're opening the door to the devil. Satan is allergic to praise, but he gathers to profanity. When you use profanity, you're making a foul mess for Satan to come and inhabit wherever you are. Let His praise be continually upon your lips. Praise Him confidently. The Bible says, *“He's taught my fingers to war, but He's taught my mouth to praise”* (Psalm 144:1;

145:21). You want to have victory? You want to really be used of God? Learn to praise the Lord. Praise Him continually. Praise Him creatively. Praise Him celebratively. Praise Him confidently. Oh, God is such a great God!

Conclusion. Let me illustrate. Here's a woman. She's in an apartment building, the building is on fire, and she's at the window. There's no way out. And she's saying, "Please, somebody help me! Please save me!" They put a long ladder up to the window. A brave fireman goes up that ladder at the risk of his life. He takes that woman in his arms and brings her down the ladder to safety, and she is saved. Well, later on, she realizes that she has been rescued by a man who laid his life on the line for her. She goes by the firehouse to give him thanks. They have a cup of coffee together and find out they have an affinity for one another. After a while, they go out on a date. And, after a while, they fall in love. And, after a while, they get married. And, she gives all there is of her to all there is of him, and they become one. That's kind of like worship. Prayer is saying, "O God, save me," and that's wonderful. If you haven't done that, you need to do that. Call upon Him and He'll answer you. Say, "Lord, I have a need." That's prayer, and that's wonderful. And then, when she went to the firehouse to thank him and to say, "You're so strong," that is thanksgiving and praise, and that is wonderful. But, when they got married, and they became one, that's worship. The Church is the Bride of Christ, AND we become one with our Lord when we give all there is of us to all there is of Him. What is worship? Worship is all that I am, responding to all that God is. You can't really praise the Lord without being saved. If you do, it's kind of religious adultery. You have no right – no right – to try to get intimate with a God that you're not committed to, that you're not surrendered to. You, first of all, need to be saved. Here's some wonderful news. God loves you incredibly. He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, to take your sin – my sin, our sin – to the cross, and with His precious, crimson blood, to pay the sin debt – which Jesus did. Jesus paid – IN FULL – our sin debt on the cross. Did God receive that payment? Yes, because God raised Him from the dead. And, with that, He's shown to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. He walked out of that grave, triumphant and all-powerful. Now, all that is necessary for you to be saved has been done, except for one thing. You must receive that gift. The Bible says, concerning Jesus, *"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the [children] of God"* (John 1:11-12). Would you receive Him right now? "Pastor, how can I receive Him?" By faith. The Bible says, *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God"* (Romans 5:1). You put your faith where God put your sin – on Jesus. Pray and ask Him into your heart right now. Pray this prayer: "Dear God, I'm a sinner. I'm lost. I deserve judgment. But I need to be saved. I don't want to go to Hell, but to Heaven. And, I want You in my heart, and in my life, right now. I believe, Jesus, that You died to save me, and You promised to save me. Now, I open my heart. I receive You this moment." Pray that. "I receive You this moment." Pray it from your heart. "I receive You, Jesus, as my Lord and Savior. Save me, Lord Jesus." Did you pray that? Then, by faith, pray this way. "Thank You for doing it. I receive it by faith. You cannot lie. I stand on Your Word. You're now my Lord. Now Lord, I'm weak, but You're strong. You're now in my life. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be, and help me never to be ashamed of You. Lord, I'll make this public. I'll not be ashamed of You. I'll make it public because You died for me. In Your name I pray. Amen."