

# Preacher's Pen points

## About Worship



Did you ever think about our English word “worship”? Sure, we use it all the time. It is the common word used to describe “a church service or rite showing reverence or devotion for a deity” (Webster’s). But what idea lies behind the word?

### The Original Meaning of Worship

Our word “worship” is derived from the Old English “weorthscipe”. Look at it more closely and see two words “worth” and “ship”. The latter word is to be understood as a condition or a state, (such as in the word “friendship”) or as an office (such as in the word “kingship”). The former word “worth” suggests the idea of what is intrinsically excellent or honorable. So then, our word “worship” originally meant “a condition or state of intrinsic worth”. Surely, such a word is appropriate for God; for He is “worth”-y of our service! He above all exists in a condition of honor and intrinsic excellence.

### The Present Meaning of Worship

Today, of course, our word “worship” describes more what we do for God rather than the one for whom we do it! That’s unfortunate! For often in worship it appears that the worshipper seems to forget that what makes “worship” meaningful is not the worshipper but the one whose worth we are affirming! Just understanding this concept will get us a long way toward the proper frame of mind about worship!

### It’s about God and Not Us!

Every time we meet we should remember that the focus of our meeting is not ourselves. We are not even the audience. God is! He is the center of all our activities. Even when we “teach and admon-

ish one another”, it’s about God. It is His excellence of which we are speaking and His word that we are teaching!

When people forget this, they start thinking that worship is about them. You hear it all the time—”I didn’t get anything from the worship”, “I didn’t like the songs, the prayer, the sermon, etc.” When people make those kinds of statements they are probably saying more about themselves than they are about the worship leaders or the content of the service. Perhaps they are too focused on themselves and not enough on God!

### Affirming His Worth

The word “worship” says something else important. The very word affirms the intrinsic honor of God as our Creator and Savior and His value to us as His people. Today the stress of worship is often focused on our value to God. I can almost hear that preacher from the Crystal Cathedral saying, “Jesus died to sanctify our self-esteem!” Baloney! We do not gather to affirm our value to God, but instead His value to us! Jesus reminded us that even when we have done all that He has commanded, we are unworthy slaves! We have only done what is our duty to do! (Lk. 17:10).

To fail to sense the value of the death of His Son and to give His memorial the proper honor is to “eat and drink un-worth-ily” (1 Cor. 11: 27); but to live in obedience to Him is to walk “worth-ily” of the calling with which we have been called (Eph. 4:1).

We can never be “worthy” of God has done for us; but we can affirm His “worth ship” in everything we do. That’s what “worship” is all about!

—Johnny Felker ([www.truthchasers.com](http://www.truthchasers.com))