



Lifesong

Bible-centered worship for the Emerging Generation

Oliver Claassen



CHRISTIAN
FOCUS





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worship is infectious. His arrangements of the Psalms have enhanced our worship. All have spurred me on to complete this project. I thank Martin Maclean and the folk at Christian Focus for their support.

***Together Everyone Accomplished More
(T.E.A.M.)
To God Be the Glory!***

Dr Oliver Claassen after a career in education in South Africa and Scotland studied at Covenant Seminary, St Louis and Westminster, Philadelphia. Serving with *Mission to the World (MTW)* he planted churches in Australia before serving as Far East Director for *MTW*. His ministry experience includes serving as Senior Pastor of Westminster PCA in Atlanta, Missions Pastor at Twin Oaks PCA in St Louis and his present charge in Cape Coral, Florida (www.epchurch.net). Oliver is married to Helen and they have five children – Daniel, David, Anna-Grace, Andrew and Phillip.'





Chapter One

What is this thing called Worship?

Worship is declaring, with our lips and lives, that God is more important than anything else to us, that he is our deepest desire, and that his inherent worth is beyond everything else we hold dear.

In the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave John on the island of Patmos, the unique worth of God is heralded in songs of praise.

... behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. (3) And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.(4) Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads...(6b) And around the throne,





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on each side of the throne, are four living creatures... (8b) and day and night they never cease to say, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!... (10) the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, (11) Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.

(Rev. 4:2-11 ESV)

God alone is worthy of worship, for He alone is inherently righteous. The Psalmists declare this truth in their songs of worship.

Righteous are you, O LORD, and right are your rules.

(Ps. 119:137 ESV)

Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you.

(Ps. 143:2 ESV)

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.

(Ps. 89:14 ESV)

Louie Giglio points out that worship is simply about value. Our worship is a response to what we value most. It is easy to identify what we value most by the things we do. We consider that a person, a thing, or an experience is what matters most. This





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consideration can be in the form of a position, a status, a job, or something we own. We are willing to sacrifice in order to achieve that which has become of ultimate value. Worship is coming before the “throne” of what is of ultimate value to us. We are willing to sacrifice in order to grab hold of what is of ultimate value to us. In the Old Testament the priests would build an altar on which to offer the sacrifices to the One whom they worshipped. In the New Testament the priestly sacrifice is described as *“Through him (Jesus) then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God”* (Heb 13:15-16).

Everyone who is willing to sacrifice has first to build an altar.¹ In order to find your altar of worship just follow the trail of how you use your time, energy, money, affections. To whom or what do you offer your allegiance? At the end of the trail you will find what it is that you worship. The more time you spend before that throne the more your life will reflect what or whom you worship. It is abundantly clear that our actions speak louder than words.

Test your actions to see what it is you really worship. Don't be surprised if you discover that God is not the object of your worship. Jesus Himself warns us by saying, *“Not everyone who says (words) to me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does (actions) the will of my Father who is in heaven”* (Matt. 7:21).

