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Living a Life of True Worship

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Kay Arthur, Bob & Diane Vereen

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P R E S S

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# LIVING A LIFE OF TRUE WORSHIP

**T**here's a hunger, a quest for the spiritual. Man was made for worship. But worship of whom—or what? Or does it matter as long as a person finds what works for him? Is there a way to worship that is right—and another that is false? Is there a way that will help us develop a genuine, intimate relationship with God?

These are the questions we want to answer as we search out what the Bible has to say about the subject of worship. We are going to take an inductive approach, which means that you will observe the Word of God for yourself. Then, discovering what it says and means, you can determine if you want to order your life according to its truth.

## WEEK ONE

### OBSERVE

The first place the word *worship* is mentioned in the English Bible is in Genesis 22. Although the word appears only once in that chapter, you can learn some foundational truths about true worship by studying this passage.

**Leader:** Read aloud Genesis 22:1-10, which you see printed in the sidebar. Have the group say “God” aloud every time He is mentioned. Also have the group...

- draw a triangle around each occurrence of the word **God** (plus all pronouns that refer to Him).
- mark the word **worship** with a big **W**.

### INSIGHT

*Worship* is the Hebrew word *shachah*. It means to prostrate oneself or to bow down. In the Old Testament, it is the common term used for coming before God in worship to honor Him. The English word means to look at someone’s “worth-ship.” To worship God is to respect and honor Him for who He is.

### GENESIS 22:1-10

<sup>1</sup> Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

<sup>2</sup> He said, “Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.”

<sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

<sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance.

<sup>5</sup> Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you.”

## OBSERVE

When Abraham was seventy-five years old and childless, God told him that He would make of him a great nation through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Isaac, the son God had promised, was born when Abraham was one hundred years old. It was through Isaac that God would give Abraham a land, a nation, and a seed, which according to Galatians 3:16 would be Jesus Christ.

## DISCUSS

- What do you learn from marking the references to God?
- What did God instruct Abraham to do?

## OBSERVE


*Leader:* Read Genesis 22:1-10 again. This time have the group say **Abraham's name** aloud and underline it every time you read his name or a pronoun that refers to him.

## DISCUSS

Look at the references to Abraham that you marked and discuss what you observe about this man from the text.

- What does Abraham do?
- How does he respond to God's command?
- What's his relationship with God? with his son?

## OBSERVE

**Leader:** Read aloud Genesis 22:1-10 once again. Have the group mark the phrase *burnt offering* like this: 

## DISCUSS

- What do you learn from these verses about the burnt offering and how it relates to the act of worship?

<sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together.

<sup>7</sup> Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

<sup>8</sup> Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

<sup>9</sup> Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

<sup>10</sup> Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

### GENESIS 22:11-19

<sup>11</sup> But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

<sup>12</sup> He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for

### INSIGHT

The *burnt offering* is described in Leviticus 1. A burnt offering was a voluntary offering, an offering by fire that was a soothing aroma to the Lord. The entire sacrifice was to be placed on the altar. Nothing was to be held back. When the person offering the sacrifice laid his hand on the head of the sacrifice, it was accepted to make atonement on his behalf.

### OBSERVE

**Leader:** Read 22:11-19 aloud and once again mark...

- every reference to **God**, including any pronouns or synonyms.
- every reference to **the angel of the Lord** with a box, like this:  Do not bother to mark synonyms for the angel of the Lord.



## DISCUSS

- What did the Angel of the Lord stop Abraham from doing in verses 11 and 12?
- Why did the Angel of the Lord stop Abraham?
- How does this relate to Genesis 22:1 and to what God was doing to Abraham?
- Read the Insight Box on fear and discuss how Abraham showed his fear of God.

### INSIGHT

In verse 12, the word *fear* is the Hebrew word *yare* (yaw-ray). In this context it means to have reverence toward God, to trust Him, to respect Him. It does not mean to be afraid of Him. God is revered when a person respects Him for who He is. A believer's fear of God is seen when he or she walks in His ways and loves and serves Him in absolute obedience.

now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.

<sup>14</sup> Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.”

15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven,

16 and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,

17 indeed I will <sup>①</sup> greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

18 “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

- In verses 15-18, what did the Angel of the Lord tell Abraham that God would do as a result of his obedience? (This is the first time *obey* is used in the Word of God).

**Leader:** *Have the group put a number (1,2,3) with a circle around it to mark each of God’s promises to Abraham. See example in verse 17.*

## OBSERVE

**Leader:** *Read Genesis 22:11-19 again. Once again, have the group mark...*

- *every reference to **Abraham**. Remember to also mark any pronouns.*
- *any reference to the **burnt offering** as you did before.*

## DISCUSS

- What did Abraham offer to God as a burnt offering?
- According to what you read in verse 14, where did this offering come from?

- What does Abraham learn about God from verse 14?
- Suppose this incident is a picture of God's love for us. Genesis 22:2 is the first time *love* is used in the Bible, and it's used in connection with a father offering his only son as a burnt offering. We were supposed to die for our sins, but Jesus died in our place. Who provides the ram that dies in Isaac's place? What does this picture for you?
- How does fearing God relate to worship?

19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived at Beersheba.

**WRAP IT UP**

If you are going to be a true worshiper of God according to the example of Abraham, what have you seen that you would need to do? What do you learn about worship from this chapter?

- Using Abraham's life as a pattern, how should you respond to God?
- How does the way you live (or "walk," as the Scripture says) relate to your worship?
- What effect would this have on the way you worship?

If you desire to understand how a sinful person can come into the presence of the Holy God that he or she might have intimacy with Him as never before, then you are going to be so blessed in the weeks ahead as you discover the awesome pattern of worship given to Moses by God.



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# No-Homework Bible Studies

That Help You Discover Truth For Yourself

