

# IS EVERYTHING WE DO WORSHIP?

Is everything we do worship? The Greek word *proskuneo* (“kiss toward”), translated “worship,” contains the idea of reverence and devotion expressed to God. Christians do not do this at all times. Another Greek word, *latreuo* (“service”), can include worship but is not limited to worship. Christians should seek to serve God in all things.

The following usages of *proskuneo* reveal that a person enters into periods of worship but does not worship at all times:

- Matthew 2:2, 11—The magi went to worship Jesus.
- Matthew 2:8—Herod stated that he wanted to worship Jesus.
- Matthew 14:33—When Jesus calmed the sea, those in the ship worshiped Him.
- Matthew 18:26—Jesus told a parable in which a servant did homage to his master.
- Matthew 28:9, 17—After His resurrection, Jesus’ disciples worshiped Him (see Luke 24:52).
- John 9:38—A blind man Jesus healed worshiped Him.
- John 12:20—People went to the feast to worship God.
- Acts 8:27—The Ethiopian nobleman had been to Jerusalem to worship.
- Acts 10:25—Cornelius fell at Peter’s feet to worship him.
- Acts 24:11—Paul said that he went up to Jerusalem to worship.
- 1 Corinthians 14:25—Those convinced by truth will worship.

These passages give conclusive evidence that not everything is worship, because the moment of worship is specified. Revelation 5:14 and 7:11 indicate the same truth: Worship of God is not continuous, but begins and ends at certain times.

Evidence that we are not always worshipping is seen in other examples. The people of Israel worshiped when they saw the pillar of cloud at the entrance of the tent (Exodus 33:10). When they brought the first fruit of the land, they were to sit down and worship God (Deuteronomy 26:10). Elkanah went yearly from his city to worship the Lord in Shiloh (1 Samuel 1:1, 3). Paul wrote that spiritually gifted saints

should prophesy in easy-to-understand language, so that the unbeliever in attendance would fall down and worship God (1 Corinthians 14:24, 25).

Man is to worship (*proskuneo*) and also serve (*latreuo*) God (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8). *Latreuo* includes every aspect of service to God, including worship. Israel was to “serve” God day and night (Acts 26:7). Anna was “serving” night and day with fastings and prayers (Luke 2:37). Not all service, however, is worship. Jewish worship, as a shadow of Christianity, was to “serve” (*latreuo*) as an example (Hebrews 8:5). Jesus stated that those who killed Christians would think they were “offering service” (*latreia*) to God (John 16:2). Paul’s goal was to “serve” God (Romans 1:9; 2 Timothy 1:3). Feeding the hungry is a way to serve (*latreuo*) God, but such an act is not adoration (*proskuneo*) of God.

In Luke 17:7–10, Jesus taught a lesson concerning a slave who obeyed His master’s commands. This slave was not worshipping his master by working in the field and serving him at the table. If service were worship, then every time we served others we would be worshipping them. Worship includes communication with God from the heart in ways that are acceptable to Him (Hebrews 13:15).

If we conclude that everything we do is worship, then worship includes every mundane and menial task we do. Some of these would be considered disrespectful even to man if we did them for the purpose of showing gratitude and appreciation. Cooking, occupational activities, husband/wife relations, and caring for personal hygiene can be pleasing to God but are not acts of *proskuneo* toward God. They are right in their place as *latreuo* but would be wrong if used in private devotions or in the worship assemblies of the saints. Distinguishing between worship and service to God is important: Worship (*proskuneo*) must be in spirit and truth. Not everything we do in our daily walk, even in service to God, can be used in worship of God. ◆