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link

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From the Pastor's Pen



Worship's Role in Making Disciples

Jesus was a disciple maker. In fact, when we consider His command to "make disciples" (Mt 28:18-20), Jesus didn't simply seek a profession of faith. He also wanted His disciples to obey all that He commanded. So, we must not only believe the right things but also put those beliefs into action. And equipping you to be a disciple like that is just what we desire to do at Redeemer Bible Church.

But how do we go about doing it? Through what we call "the Discipleship Pathway," which consists of three steps: WORSHIP, CONNECT, SERVE. Maturing Disciples of Christ must be involved in all three steps on a regular basis.

Let me describe what each of these steps means. **First, maturing disciples WORSHIP God, demonstrating His supreme worth and growing in love for Him.** Next, maturing disciples CONNECT with God's people in meaningful relationships, loving one another. And finally, maturing disciples SERVE others, demonstrating the love of Christ in word and deed.

Over the last couple of issues of the Link, we've worked our way through the Discipleship Pathway. So far, we've covered CONNECT and SERVE. And, as we enter the Christmas Season, we chose to focus this issue on WORSHIP.

Now WORSHIP is much more than what happens on Sunday mornings. So take the time to peruse the various articles and learn about the many ways that the people of Redeemer Bible Church are worshipping the One true God and loving Him fully! May the Lord richly bless you and your family during this Christmas Season!

Worshipping Together,

Mark Fortney, Senior Pastor

Christmas at Redeemer

Redeemer will kick off the Season with a sermon series entitled, "The REAL Christmas Story," Sunday, December 7, focusing on the reality of the incarnation ("God made flesh"). Along the way, we'll explore several real-life events found in the Scriptures, in order to bring this miraculous birth to life!



Come enjoy an evening of festive cheer as Redeemer presents *Spirit of Christmas Concert* where our Sanctuary Choir will join an Orchestra in rousing holiday selections. The Grace Notes Handbell Choir and Children's Choir will be featured along with soloists and small ensembles.



Finally, Christmas Eve services will be offered at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Both are family friendly and very interactive, with childcare provided for infants-4 year olds. Join us for Redeemer's Celebration of Jesus' birth!



- Dec. 6: The Redeemer Women's Ministry presents *Merry Mugs & Muffins* from 9:30-11 a.m.
- Dec. 7: The Redeemer Music Ministries present *Spirit of Christmas Concert* from 6-7 p.m.
- Dec. 24: Christmas Eve services at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- Dec. 28: Special Sunday Morning Caroling Service



What is Worship?

by: Kendall Carter

The Biblical concept of worship seems broad. And, as believers, our perception of worship often seems inaccurate. But worship should be to us what an engine is to a car: the most essential element, the very core of what makes our spiritual lives run.

SO WHAT IS WORSHIP? The simplest definition: Worship is honor and adoration directed to God. We don't need much explanation beyond that. But to dig a little deeper, two Greek words in the New Testament are relevant. The first is *proskuneo*, a term found frequently in Matthew's gospel and even more frequently in the Revelation account – meaning literally “to bow down” or “to kiss the hand.” Clearly it is a sign of humble adoration. The second word is *latreuo*, which suggests rendering homage or serving God through observance of customary practices – essentially bringing honor to God.

Both terms point to the act of giving. Indeed, worship is *giving* something to God. **When we worship, it is we who are giving and God who is receiving.** In fact, our English word “worship” is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word – *weorthscipe*, which is linked to the concepts of worth and worthiness. When we dynamically attribute to God His worth, we are affirming His matchless significance. As we worship God, we in turn grow in love for Him.

Worship is found when we do things like treat fellow believers with proper sensitivity. Romans 14:18 says, “Anyone who serves [*latreuo*] Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.” What is the context of this verse? Verse 13 says, “Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.” Worship is reflected in how we behave toward others.

So worship can be expressed by sharing love with fellow believers, sharing the gospel with unbelievers and meeting other people's needs. We are worshiping when we are *giving*. We worship when, through our love, we share.



Worship Through Prayer

by: Kent Barnard

Jesus made it clear that “apart from me you can do nothing.”

AS A CHURCH, WE ARE COMPLETELY POWERLESS AND USELESS TO GOD WITHOUT PRAYER. Jesus made it clear that “apart from me you can do nothing.” As a church, we are completely powerless and useless to God without prayer. Prayer is communion and fellowship with God. His power can only be appropriated through prayer. The Apostle Paul prayed night and day with intense earnestness. **He understood prayer is the only way to access God's supernatural omnipotent power.** “If you will ask ... I will do.”

The world is facing a crisis of terrible and ominous proportions. At Redeemer, our heart-felt desire is to reach out to others in our community and the world to win them to Christ. We have numerous opportunities to pray with and for one another “on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” We pray for our church and for our pastor, staff and leaders, for spiritual and physical protection, the preaching of the Word, and for encouragement. We pray for unity in the Spirit and that we do His work “not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit.”

If you are not already doing so, pray daily for our church and join others in corporate prayer in any of our small groups, adult fellowships and Wednesday night Bible fellowships. There is power in prayer!



Worshiping as A Family

by: Amanda Battaglia

We all know it is important to worship as a family, but sometimes life gets ahead of us and it becomes hard to keep up.

WE ASKED A FEW OF OUR MEMBERS HOW THEY WORSHIP AS A FAMILY or how they have worshiped as a family in the past. We received some really creative ideas to encourage and use in your home.

Youssef and Lynne Sleiman sum it up best: "God's grace is sufficient and our whole day can be filled with worship to God if we are constantly recognizing our need for Him in every moment."

"Worship, involves the head and the heart. It involves a heart response to who God is and what he has done and does for us. Most of what we did was more in the head category - memorizing verses, reading the Proverbs and other scriptures, reading the Chronicles of Narnia and other Christian books and praying together. By the grace of God, He took our feeble efforts and used them for good. I thank God for that, but I wish looking back that we had worshipped more as a family [with our hearts]. Maybe it was what our kids saw in our hearts that impacted them more than anything we did."

— Paul Ramler

"We started taking our kids to church when they were infants. At home, we read Bible stories each day, had nightly prayer time, helped them learn their Bible verses each week and discussed their Bible lessons with them. We were reinforcing the precepts that were taught in their Sunday school classes through our discussions and guidance of their studies. We encouraged the kids to let their 'lights' shine wherever they were."

— Jim & Louise Jenkins

"I can think of two ways that my daughter, Alice, and I worship as a family. We memorize scripture verses together at meal times and we often sing hymns or Bible songs together in the car."

— Jenny Escobar



"We gathered at bedtime for a time of Bible reading and discussion. We often read from *Hurlbut's Story of the Bible* — first published in 1904 and still in print! — followed by a time of family talk and prayer."

— Dave Higgins

"We pray together in the car on the way to school. We use that time to quote scripture verses that we have memorized. Sometimes everyone takes turns reading a devotional or scripture in the car, too."

— Gordon & Stephanie Robinson

"We talk about what we are thankful for, and about how amazing God's creation is throughout the day."

Our biggest hindrance to worshiping God is when we are unthankful. Children obviously covet and I'm realizing that as their parent I can feed their covetous attitude or I can help guide them toward thankfulness. The latter is much more work, but so important. It feels too subtle sometimes, but I can best guide them when I'm watching my own attitude and how much I'm complaining and modeling thankfulness."

— Youssef & Lynne Sleiman

"We had two special nights where no one was allowed to have outside conflicts. No exceptions! One was a family dinner. We would have each kid pray for the one next to them. We tried to place the kids next to the one they were having trouble with so they would have to pray for them."

The other was family worship night. Each kid would act out a verse of scripture and everyone else would have to guess what verse they were acting out. We would also read Christian books. The kids would hear us pray out loud for each one of them by name."

— Jim & Debbie Raikes



Ways to Worship

by: Kendall Carter & Amanda Battaglia

Worshipping the Lord at church often comes naturally, but what does worship look like in our day-to-day lives?

Here are some practical ideas and ways you can personally direct your adoration to God throughout your day. These suggestions aren't meant to represent an inclusive list, but are ways to help you think of ways to worship the Lord throughout your day. Share these ideas with your family and use them as an opportunity to discuss worship.

Morning

- Turn on worship music as you get ready for your day.
- In the shower, pray prayers of thanksgiving and worship.
- Put scripture on your mirror to focus your mind when you first wake up.
- Read your Bible while you eat breakfast.
- Memorize a Proverb and make a note to reference it throughout the day.

Afternoon

- Pray or memorize scripture in your car.
- Be a cheerful help to others throughout your day, listening to the Holy Spirit when He gives you an idea of ways to bless others.
- Do you know your spiritual gifts? Read 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. Use your gifts to bring God glory!
- When you face a challenge instead of complaining, praise God for who He is.
- As you do what seem like the menial tasks of life and work, praise God for the opportunity to be able to do those things.
- Give of your first fruits — your time and money — to the Lord.
- Pray and take opportunities to share your faith with others, even sharing small references to what God is doing in your life with a co-worker, stranger, neighbor or friend.

Evening

- Pray for church leaders while you get ready for bed.
- Pray through a Psalm before bed.
- Send an encouraging word or verse to a friend.
- Pray for others using Colossians 1:9-11 or Ephesians 3:14-21.
- If you can't sleep, open your Bible and read scriptures and thank God for who He is and what He has done for you.

Outreach Corner

BIRTHDAY BASH

Redeemer Bible Church celebrated more than 15 years of worship and service on Sunday, Sept. 21. It featured a barbecue meal with all the fixings and Redeemer's own Dennis Cavalier and his Zydeco band, the picnic was a resounding success complete with perfect weather, tours of the newly renovated Oasis, and plenty of fantastic fellowship! The celebration also signaled the kick-off of our Fall Connections Ministries, with mid-week meals and children, youth and adult fellowship activities. For details on how you can get connected contact Pastor Bert Howard at bert@redeembiblechurch.org.

FALL CARNIVAL

The Fall Carnival this year included the musical group *Water-Within*, bounce houses and, of course fun! Thanks to all who helped by giving candy, decorating and welcoming people in the community through Trunk or Treat!

USING OASIS TO REACH "THE HILL"

We are *Reaching the Hill* on Wednesday afternoons. About 20 students from Robert T. Hill Middle School across the street come hang out at the Oasis on Wednesdays between 3:30 and 5 p.m. playing games and receiving homework help. We've had as many as 12 stay for Wednesday night activities. If you want to get involved or help provide snacks and drinks, please contact Patrick Boyd at patrick@redeembiblechurch.org.

The Carpenter Chaplain

by: Amanda Battaglia

If you have visited Redeemer more than a few times, you have heard Jim Raikes say, "AMEN" during the service. But Jim and his wife, Debbie, don't just worship God on Sunday. They see their everyday work as a ministry and worship to the Lord.

WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SIT DOWN WITH THE RAIKES and ask them a few questions, read and learn how you can worship God through work.

Jim is a nuclear physicist turned "family chaplain with a carpenter's belt." He graduated undergrad with a degree in physics with a nuclear emphasis and did a short stint working in a lab. But if you know Jim, you can guess he "got tired of that real quick" and needed "more people exposure" than you get in a science lab.

When we asked Jim if he saw his career as more than just financial provision, he quickly responded: **"It's a ministry. I have contacts with people who wouldn't ever darken the doors at church."** When on a call, "I am sensitive to the demeanor of the house." God uses him to get into conversations about issues that need prayer. It's a real opportunity to worship at work too, by showing honor to God by loving those He loves, doing good work and, in turn, growing in our love for Him.

Jim says, "Often, it may be the first time anyone has ever asked them to pray." Debbie quickly adds, "He comes home all the time saying we need to pray for so and so." But he doesn't stop there, Debbie says. "He calls them back and follows up about prayer requests and remembers the names and a detail." He gives and pours into the life of others and by so doing is worshiping the Lord.

When Jim trains his associates, he teaches his beliefs. "We are working for the Lord, and if we can please Him we ought to be able to please man. My work is exemplary. It reflects God's character totally. If it isn't, then I am not living up to my responsibility." Jim wants his work to show honor and adoration to God.

All of us as a Redeemer family have the privilege to worship our God through our work and in so doing bring honor to Him. Seek Him first, and ask Him, "How can I, your servant, give back to you through my work today?"



Getting to Know the Stantons

by: Tommie Loveless

The Stantons are among Redeemer's newest young couples.

DURING THE SIX MONTHS THEY HAVE BEEN ATTENDING, God has blessed them with a baby boy, named Davied, who was born May 16. Davied was pictured in the last "Connect" Link.

When asked what brought them to Redeemer, Erica said, "We were driving around the neighborhood and noticed the church.

We decided to visit and see what the church was teaching and in what ministries the church was involved."

Ryan and Erica are both in the young families small group and Erica sings in the choir. Born in Waco, Ryan grew up in an avid sports family. He said, "I grew up playing golf with my Granddaddy, and traveled to NCAA Final Four and collegiate sporting events." Later, he graduated from Baylor with a bachelor's degree in business.

Erica was born and raised in St. Louis. She commented, "I grew up doing musical theatre and teaching neighborhood Bible clubs." (She played Maria in The Sound of Music.) Erica said, "Before becoming a member of the Stanton family, the only sport I knew about was water skiing!" She was

home-schooled and attended Hillsdale College, a small liberal arts school in Michigan where she earned a degree in elementary education.

Ryan started attending a Baptist youth group during high school. He and 12 other guys were mentored by a man who encouraged them to be thoughtful men. He said, "We embraced the outdoors, Scripture and writing. I became a believer during church camp in 2007."

Erica grew up in an Evangelical Free Church. She said, "I became a believer during first grade, but my faith became my own during a high school camp."

Ryan and Erica met in the fall of 2008 while she was teaching at West Dallas Community School. Ryan said, "I volunteered to help tutor students, and I was assigned to one of Erica's students." They were married in July 2011.

The Redeemer family welcomes you, Ryan and Erica. We look forward to knowing you better and to serving and worshipping the Lord with you.



Missions Corner

RE-ENVISIONING MISSIONS

Redeemer Bible Church is currently re-envisioning our missions program. Following a discovery workshop in late July, the Missions Leadership Team (MLT) has partnered with Matthew Ellison and Sixteen:Fifteen, a respected church missions coaching ministry, to help us work through this six- to nine-month process. Participation involves the MLT, senior pastor, and a cross-section of believers who worship at Redeemer. The team is meeting monthly to ensure the alignment of fruitful missions engagement with our church's biblical core values in order to cultivate a thriving culture of missions locally and globally. Please be in prayer for this important process.

Key Dates

Nov. 8	Men's Breakfast at 8-9:30 a.m.	Dec. 28	Sunday Morning Caroling Service
Nov. 27	Thanksgiving (church office closed)	Dec. 25	Christmas Day (church office closed)
Nov. 28	(church office closed)	Dec. 31	New Year's Eve (church office closes at 1 p.m.)
Nov. 30	Thanksgiving Sunday Service		
Dec. 5	Parent's Night Out	Jan. 1	New Year's Day (church office closed)
Dec. 6	Men's Breakfast at 8-9:30 a.m.	Jan. 19	Martin Luther King Day
Dec. 6	<i>Merry Mugs & Muffins</i> at 9:30-11 a.m.	Jan. 20	Women's Fellowships resume
Dec. 7	<i>Spirit of Christmas Concert</i> at 6-7 p.m.	Jan. 21	Mid-Week activities resume
Dec. 10	Last fall Mid-Week		
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Services at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. (church office closes at 12 noon)	Feb. TBD	Parenting Conference

