

## Biblical Worship: Responding to God Together

At Shawnee Bible Church, we value biblical worship. In view of all the ways that God demonstrates his greatness and his goodness through his Son Jesus Christ, we believe that the sincere and humble response of all believers is to give him all the credit (Ephesians 3:20–21). Along with the Apostle Paul, we do not “consider anything as coming from ourselves...” (2 Corinthians 3:5). In our desire to be focused and organized for gospel ministry, we confess that we cannot manufacture faith, repentance, and new life but that we depend wholly upon the goodness and grace of God through the work of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4–7). Additionally, we do not seek to function merely out of duty or habit but out of sincere love and gratitude to God (Revelation 2:1–7).

We see worship first and foremost as a lifestyle of loving submission—the response of knowing God through his Word, receiving his grace, and surrendering ourselves to him (James 4:5–10). A major way that we worship and submit to God is through genuine dependent prayer. Ultimately, we believe that prayer does not involve coming to God in order to “get” from him but to “be given” more fully to his will (Matthew 26:39). At the same time, we recognize that God delights to grant his children’s requests (Matthew 7:7–11).

Another fundamental expression of worship to God is biblically loving others, especially other believers. The Apostle John cautioned, “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 John 4:20, NASB). We see commitment to the local church, with all its responsibilities and opportunities to sacrificially give of ourselves to others, as one of the truest contexts for worshipping God.

In such ways we worship God at all times; however, we believe that in the corporate gathering of the local church, we celebrate God’s grace, confess our need for him, and submit to him together as one body. Therefore, in our worship services we assemble to hear the Bible preached and read (2 Timothy 4:1–2), to pray together (Acts 2:42), to observe the Lord’s Table<sup>1</sup> (1 Corinthians 11:23–26), to financially give towards God’s work (2 Corinthians 8–9), and to sing God’s praise (Psalm 149:1–4). We believe these means of grace build us up to “[stand] firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (Philippians 1:27).

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<sup>1</sup> We celebrate communion once a month.