

**Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church**  
2080 West Grand Blvd.  
Detroit, Michigan 48208  
Nathan Johnson, D.D., *Senior Pastor*

## **Lesson 9: Sustain Worship**

**Scripture:** Psalms 95-96

**Goal:** To embrace and fulfill our covenant relationship with God and one another.

**Objective:** To understand the meaning and significance of sustaining the church's worship.

**Church Covenant Segment:** "We engage... to sustain [the church's] worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine."

### **Introduction:**

"O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." (Psalm 95:6-7) "The church covenant calls us to sustain the church's worship, ordinances, and doctrine.<sup>1</sup>" According to William C. Turner, the vitality and vibrancy of church life requires committed Christians who are deeply devoted to God. Worship is like the breath of the body entering and going forth. It keeps the church alive. True worship is in Spirit and in truth, which is to say that it is not the form of worship that matters but the substance. Without question, it is the heartbeat of the church. How do we sustain true worship? We sustain true worship as we join with all creation, the host of heaven, and the saints who have preceded us in giving glory to God.

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<sup>1</sup> Turner, William, *A Journey through the Church Covenant*, Valley Forge PA: Judson Press, 2002

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## Dialogue Web ~ an Interactive Bible Lesson

### Sustain Worship

The church above everything that she does or stands for is a worshipping community. Too often people believe that worship is for them. To the contrary, God is the object of our worship. We gather to celebrate who He is and what He has done. Worship is reverent devotion and allegiance pledged to God; the rituals or ceremonies by which this reverence is expressed. The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are included here. The English word "worship" comes from the Old English word "worthship," a word that denotes the worthiness of the one receiving the special honor or devotion.<sup>2</sup> In its root, worship signifies bowing, bending the body, and showing reverence.<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew term is *shachah* (shah-chah); *Strong's #7812*: To bow, to stoop; to bow down before someone as an act of submission or reverence; to worship; to fall or bow down when paying homage to God. The primary meaning is "to make oneself low"<sup>4</sup> In the New Testament the word, *proskuneo* (pros-koo-neh-oh), especially denotes homage rendered to God and the ascended Christ.<sup>5</sup>

As a worshipping community, we gather in full acknowledgement of the power, majesty, glory, and honor of our God. We assemble as a corporate body to esteem our Holy Creator, Savior, and Sovereign God who first loved us and gave His only Son who died for our salvation. Through the singing of songs and preaching of the living Word of God our hearts are enlivened, encouraged, refreshed, and made glad. To sustain vital worship, members must be present in body and spirit<sup>6</sup>.

Worship is multifaceted. It embraces music, singing, liturgical dancing, praying, preaching, teaching, and reading the Word of God to include our giving of tithes and offerings. "The Baptism and the Lord's Supper constitute the highest expression of our worship."<sup>7</sup> True worship, one that is acceptable to God, must be anchored in sound doctrine (I Timothy 1: 6-11). We engage to sustain the church's worship, ordinances (Baptism, Lord's Supper) and doctrine. Come let us worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness.

<sup>2</sup>Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. Rev. ed. of: Nelson's illustrated Bible dictionary. Includes index. Nashville: T. Nelson.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid p. 49

<sup>4</sup>Hayford, J. W., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Hayford's Bible handbook*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

<sup>5</sup>Hayford, J. W., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Hayford's Bible handbook*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

<sup>6</sup> Turner, William, *A Journey through the Church Covenant*, Valley Forge PA: Judson Press, 2002, p. 47

<sup>7</sup> Ibid p 50

## Sustain Worship

<b>Sustain Worship</b>	<b>Scriptures</b>	<b>Class Discovery Points</b>
<i>Guiding Questions</i>	<i>What the Word Says</i>	<i>Application (s) to the Church</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the significance of sustaining our church's worship?</li>   <li>2. What does our vitality in worship reveal about our relationship with God?</li>   <li>3. How does God's holiness dictate the tone for worshipping Him?</li>   <li>4. Describe some of the forms of worship?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. John 4:23-24</li>   <li>2. Eph. 2:16</li>   <li>3. Romans 6:4-10</li>   <li>4. 1 Peter 2:5</li>   <li>5. Psalm 96:9</li>   <li>6. I Chronicles 16:29</li>   <li>7. Psalm 100:1-5</li>   <li>8. Psalm 149</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li>   <li>2.</li>   <li>3.</li>   <li>4.</li>   <li>5.</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Class Summary Statement</u></b>  <i>Sustaining the church's worship is essential because...</i></p>		

### **Lesson Summary**

What a challenge this lessons issues to us as a church family! Does our praise and worship represent our joy, knowledge and relationship for everything that God has done and continues to do? Each Sunday provides an opportunity to join with other believers in worshipping God and giving him the glory for all that He has done! The invitation to worship invites us to leave whatever else preoccupies our minds and focus our praise in the presence of the Lord. Worship

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should be included in the total worldview of each individual Christian. It is a significant part of a believer's life.

True worship is in Spirit and truth and guided by the doctrine of Christ. In order for our worship to sustain life all members must be present in body and in spirit. We must present ourselves before our Holy God so His beauty can be reflected in us. We depend on the Holy Spirit for unity, communion, and fellowship. We join each other by releasing self with the help of the Holy Spirit in order for us to glorify God and be built up in faith.

Worship is the believer's response of all that he is--mind, emotions, will, and body--to all that God is and says and does. When we think of our covenant as a solemn oath and agreement between God and each other, it makes us more aware of the interdependence that God has woven into the Body of Christ. God's design for the church is one in which we have a responsibility to grow individually and to help each other grow corporately. This lesson clearly articulates that:

- Worship is given to enlighten and invigorate the church.
- All we do as God's people is to be done with an attitude of worship.
- Worship entails joining with others by a release of the self through the Spirit.

"In a profound sense, all we do as God's people is to be done with an attitude of worship. Discipline and doctrine are to be dispensed with an attitude of worship. The order of worship may change, but Bible study, choir rehearsal, even committee meetings and conferences should be done in an atmosphere of worship, for we are not dealing merely with formal principles and agenda items but with how our personal lives and our common life are to reflect and radiate the beauty of the Lord our God."<sup>8</sup>

### **Going Deeper (Group Discussion/Personal Reflection)**

1. Describe the various forms of worship.
2. What principles distinguish worship as glorifying God from worship as performance?
3. In what ways is a church's vitality and ministry influenced by the vitality of its worship?

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<sup>8</sup> Turner, William, *A Journey through the Church Covenant*, Valley Forge PA: Judson Press, 2002, p[g. 51

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4. What are some common differences between our purposes in worship and God's priorities?

**Closing Prayer:**

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## ***Where we are in the Church Covenant... \****

HAVING BEEN LED, AS WE BELIEVE, BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

*We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to give it a place in our affections, prayers, and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, towards its expenses, for the support of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of difference of opinion in the church, we will strive to avoid a contentious spirit, and if we cannot unanimously agree, we will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.*

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to study diligently the word of God; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be kind and just to those in our employ, and faithful in the service we promise others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all men to exemplify and commend our holy faith.

We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; to be slow to give or take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Savior in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, amid evil report, and good report, to seek to live to the glory of God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When we remove from this place, we engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

*\*New Feature: Each month we will include a copy of the Church Covenant and highlight the current lesson. It is our hope that this will give the larger context for the passage being studied.*