

## Seeing the Psalms as God’s Guide for Worship

Because the New Testament doesn’t mention the connection of worship and the arts, artists in the modern church tend to turn to other sources for ideas on worship - friends, books, personal experiences, and culture. Yet, God has given us a “North Star” to know him and to know how to worship him in the Psalms. This seminar will unpack a biblically-based definition and vision of worship, demonstrating how worship can take a wide variety of forms.

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### I. Introduction

- a. *Worship* is an invitation to know and experience God.
  - i. It is Gods eternal purpose to dwell in the midst of His people.
  - ii. God longs for His people to make his praise glorious.
  - iii. Artists have a special calling to express the divine attributes of God in the world.

### II. The Psalms are God’s guide to worship

- a. Worship:
  - i. To esteem with worth, to honor, to place highest value on, to bow down, to perpetually give thanks, to prostrate, to surrender, to enjoy.
- b. Martin Luther called the Psalms “a little Bible”
- c. The Psalms contain history but are not arranged chronological
  - i. Block of 150 songs/prayers

### III. Types of Psalms

- a. Prayers – 4, 13 Seek relief from distress

- b. Hymns – 92, 103, 113 Addressed to God Himself in praise and worship
- c. Thanksgiving – 18, 32, 34 Acknowledgement that God has answered prayer
- d. Remembrance – 78, 105, 106 Recalling God’s mighty works for Israel
- e. Wisdom – 1, 19, 25, 37, 119 Guidance on how to live
- f. Kingship – 20, 21, 59, 132 Written about a King - David or his successor
- g. Messianic Hope – 2, 22, 72 110 The promise of the Messiah
- h. Covenant 105, 106, 78 – A special relationship with God
- i. Imprecations – 55, 59, 69, 79, 137 – Praying for God’s judgment on enemies

IV. New Testament and the Psalms

V. God’s Guide for the Artist from Psalms:

- a. Immerse in the Psalms
- b. The Psalms are poetry
  - i. The Psalms express metaphorically rich language

- ii. The Psalms engage our senses as a way to the knowledge of God
  - iii. The Psalms express the full range of emotions from joy to lament
- c. Work to revitalize the Christian Imagination as a way to get inside the truth

## VI. Conclusion

- a. The Psalms are honest and truthful about God and life.
- b. They teach me how to praise God in the real world as I live out the promise of the world to come.

*Bless the Lord, oh my soul, let ALL that is within me bless His holy name. Psalm 103:1*

### **Suggested Readings:**

*Essential Worship, A Handbook for Leaders*, Greg Scheer

<https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/do-worship-and-the-arts-matter/>

*Imprecations in the Psalms: Love for Enemies in Hard Places*, Steffen Jenkins