

Rediscovering the Joy of being with God and his People

Practicing the discipline of worship during Advent

Richard Foster says that a **striking feature of worship in the Bible is that the people gathered in what we could call only a “holy expectancy.”** Advent is a time of “holy expectancy” too, when we remember and celebrate the first coming of Jesus in eager anticipation of his second coming. This posture of holy expectancy during Advent is very conducive to being more thoughtful and deliberate about practicing the discipline of worship.

Consider

There are many words that denote worship in the Bible—**glory, honor, reverence, homage, adoration, laud, praise, thanksgiving, blessing, exultation**—and the Advent readings from both Old and New Testaments, our Christmas carols and liturgies are replete with words like these. Meditating on some of these can usher us in to worship if we really slow down and pay attention.

Pray

- Read the following familiar description of the angels worshipping God at the birth of Jesus:

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” Luke 2: 8-14

- Following the example of the angels, make the liturgy below your prayer of worship to God for sending Jesus, his indescribable gift:

**Glory to God in the highest,
And peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
Almighty God and Father,
We worship you, we give you thanks,
We praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
You take away the sin of the world:
Have mercy on us;
Receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
With the Holy Spirit,
In the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Act

We are also called to be living sacrifices by giving our whole selves to God in worship wherever we are, and whatever we're doing: **So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering.** (Ro.12:1 Msg) How can you live more worshipfully this Christmas week?

We are praying for you to experience great joy as you worship King Jesus this Christmas!