

3. I Will. Worship Together

In His book, “I WILL” Thom Rainer writes, “You had to admire His commitment. He made the decision to attend. He would not miss it. The weather was terrible that day—steady rain, temperature in the 40’s. He still gouted out in the weather.

Because of the bad weather, he still did not make it on time. It was difficult to get to his seat as well. But he persevered. His seat was not comfortable, but he neither left nor complained. His presence vividly demonstrated his love and commitment.

He was joyous the entire time. He enjoyed the presence of fellow believers. His attitude, his attendance, and his enthusiasm all reflected his deep and abiding commitment.

He was at a college football game on a Saturday afternoon. By the way, he did not attend church worship services the next day. He was tired from the ball game and there was a 40% chance of rain¹.”

This is a story that is all too familiar to many pastors and churches across this country during football season, but it’s not specific to football season. Just think of all the things that get in the way or reasons that alter the decision for Christians to be with other Christians in corporate worship like we are at this moment.

The renowned English pastor and preacher **Charles Spurgeon** once said, “One of the first signs of God’s presence among a people is that THEY TAKE GREAT INTEREST IN DIVINE WORSHIP”.²

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, the famed pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, PA was quoted to say, “The most important and highest activity that a company of God’s people could ever engage in, is to offer Almighty God acceptable worship”.

The Bible is clear to teach the importance and necessity of worship and in worship we express, unashamedly, our **praise, adoration, and devotion** to God. Worship is the personal response

¹ Thom Rainer, *I Will: Nine Traits of the Outwardly Focused Christian* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2015), 25.

² C. H. Spurgeon, “A Call to Worship,” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 19 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1873), 217.

and expression of every individual believer that is manifest (visible and evident) by the salvation of God through the **sacrifice of Jesus Christ** and the **spiritual stirring of the Holy Spirit**.

And while worship begins first with the individual, it is to reach out in a public way through a corporate gathering of believers—whether it is 10 or 10,000.

And worship (corporate, congregational worship) may look different depending on what church and church service you walk into with concern to style, but when you look at worship in the life of a local church there are some things that are to be evident in that church as it gathers for worship. In **Acts 2:42-47**, after Peter's sermon at Pentecost, we see the birthing of the church and in this there are some things that are a part of the church and the worship that takes place in the life of a church.

Acts 2:41–47

- They were **devoted**, vv42,46
- They were **reverent**, v43
- They were **unified**, v44
- They were **sacrificial**, v45
- They were **joyful**, v46
- They were **humble**, v46
- They were **worshipful**, v47
- They were **respected**, v47
- They were **growing**, v47

There are **four characteristics** to congregational worship in the church; characteristics found in the first century Church and characteristics to be found in the twenty-first century Church, which includes us here at Parkway.

1. We are **consecrated** in corporate worship. *We have been created and set apart for a holy purpose, by a holy God.*
2. We are **collective** in corporate worship. *We are gathered together as one to worship the One true God.*

3. We are **connected** in corporate worship. *We come with a common purpose in Christ to give thanks for Christ.*
4. We are **committed** in corporate worship. *We are faithful to give glory to God for His goodness in our lives singularly and corporately as a church.*

Charles Spurgeon addresses the attitude and action of worship for the believer and the local church as he writes: *There should be some preparation of the heart in coming to the worship of God. Consider who he is in whose name we gather, and surely we cannot rush together without thought. Consider whom we profess to worship, and we shall not hurry into his presence as men run to a fire. Moses, the man of God, was warned to put off his shoes from his feet when God only revealed himself in a bush. How should we prepare ourselves when we come to him who reveals himself in Christ Jesus, his dear Son? There should be no stumbling into the place of worship half asleep, no roaming here as if it were no more than going to a playhouse. We cannot expect to profit much if we bring with us a swarm of idle thoughts and a heart crammed with vanity. If we are full of folly [foolishness], we may shut out the truth of God from our minds.—31.350*³

The Bible teaches that it is a privilege to worship God and to worship Him TOGETHER as a church. So, today may we make it our priority to be prepared when we come TOGETHER and come to God in worship.

Baptist pastor and teacher **Herschel Hobbs** tells the story as illustration that:

“Satan was standing outside a church building one Sunday morning. Inside, the people were singing, praying, and listening to preaching. A passerby asked Satan if that did not bother him. With a demonic, sneering laugh he replied negatively. Then he added, “They get that way on Sunday, but they will be all right on Monday. It’s just a little habit they’ve acquired.”

Dr. Hobbs in comment of this went on to say, *“God save us from such a habit. Our worship is to make a difference in who we are and what we do”*.⁴

³ C. H. Spurgeon, *2,200 Quotations: From the Writings of Charles H. Spurgeon : Arranged Topically or Textually and Indexed by Subject, Scripture, and People*, ed. Tom Carter (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 223–224.

⁴ Herschel H. Hobbs, *My Favorite Illustrations* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1990), 272.

Today would we as a church say, **“I WILL” [WE WILL] WORSHIP TOGETHER.**