

A Worship Minute...

(by Jason Helopoulos, from the Gospel Coalition)

The Christian life is lived from Lord's Day to Lord's Day. Corporate worship is the high point of our week and the constant rhythm of our lives. We dare not "neglect meeting together, as is the habit of some" (Heb. 10:25), because there is nothing as meaningful, rich, and glorious on earth as the church gathering together with its Lord and Savior in worship. Most Christians believe this, but does it translate to our practice? Or is the moment we are sitting in the pew the first time we think about corporate worship in our week?

I would suggest that if corporate worship is as significant as the Scriptures portray it to be (Ex. 19; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:17-34; 1 Cor. 14:26-39; Heb. 10:25) then we should prepare for it. We count preaching as significant, so we expect our pastor will prepare his sermon before he enters the pulpit. We consider worship songs important, so we expect our music teams, pianists, and organists will appropriately prepare before sitting down at their instruments. We believe our engagement in corporate worship is essential, so we should also expect to prepare even as we expect the pastor and musicians to prepare for their participation in the Sunday morning service. How can you prepare for worship? Here are a few ideas:

- **Seize the Rest of the Week:** Practice family worship and secret worship throughout the week knowing that this will inform and encourage your experience in corporate worship.
- **Be Boring:** Go to bed early on Saturday night. Friday nights can be filled with late-night activity, but Saturday nights should routinely be safeguarded. Sleepy heads make for drowsy worshippers.
- **Right Attitude:** Cultivate a spirit of joy on Sunday mornings in your home. If this is the highlight of our week, then let's act like it. Talk about how wonderful the day is going to be, wake the kids up with excitement, turn on good Christian music for the whole family to listen to, and put a smile on your face.
- **Media Blackout:** Refrain from turning on the television, watching Netflix, or catching up on Facebook Sunday mornings. Our minds are so easily distracted. Safeguard your mental space.
- **Early Bird:** Rise early on Sunday morning and spend time reading the Word, praying, and meditating to prepare your heart for worship.
- **Talk & Drive:** On the car-ride to church talk about the passage that will be preached, sing a hymn together, and converse about the things of God.
- **Timing it Right:** Give yourself enough time on Sunday mornings. Rise early enough that the morning isn't rushed. Leave home with plenty of time to spare. Try not to arrive at church late or even a few minutes before the service. Rushing out the door at home and rushing in the door at church has stymied many worshippers.
- **Collect Your Thoughts:** Sit-down, read through the bulletin (if you have one), think through the songs, meditate on the Scripture readings, and pray before the service begins.

For the Christian, there is no sweeter moment in the week than Sunday morning. How good it is to meet with God and His people! Because it is part of our weekly activity, there is a temptation to treat it as common and routine. May it never be! One of the ways to ensure that this is not the case with us is to prepare our hearts, minds, and souls for corporate worship each week. Take the time and effort, your soul will be the beneficiary.