

**“Worship by the Book — Dialogue with the Divine”**  
*Sermon Notes*

*What do we do and how do we do what we do when we gather on the Lord’s Day?*

*\* Worship should not be profane, presumptuous and prideful, permissive, passive, vainly patterned, or pragmatic...but rather purposeful and principled:*

**We gather for corporate worship *by the Book***

➤ **When we gather for corporate worship by the Book, God speaks and we respond**

*\* God begins and ends worship with these two elements of corporate worship:*

1. God calls us to worship (John 4:21-26; Ps 100; 96; Isa 55:1-9; Heb 12:18-29)

2. Benediction: We receive God’s blessing (Num 6:22-27; Luke 24:50-51; 2 Cor 13:14; Rom 15:13, 33; Rev 22:21)

**Next Week: Various Texts “Worship by the Book — Communion with God”**

## MEFC Study Guide

For the week of September 9th - 15th

### Getting Started

1. When you think of Sunday worship on the Lord's Day, what activities come to mind? That is, what does the church do (and not do) in corporate worship? As you have been involved with different churches, what have you experienced in the corporate gathering? What has differed across the churches you have attended?
2. What are examples of false worship in the Bible?
3. Bob Kauflin, in *Worship Matters*, suggests the following principles of guidance for churches:
  1. Do what God clearly commands
  2. Don't do what God clearly forbids
  3. Use scriptural wisdom for everything else

What is good and true in these principles? How do these principles challenge you? After reflecting on these some, what lingering questions do you have?

4. What do you make of the distinction between *elements* and *forms* of worship? *Elements* are worship practices grounded in Scripture. They are the "what" we do in worship. Examples include praying, singing, and reading Scripture. What are other biblical *elements* of worship? *Forms* of worship are the "how" we do the elements of gathering. For instance, there are many ways to pray. A single person might pray. The congregation might pray silently. A written prayer might be prayed. Prayer might be spontaneous. How might the *forms* of worship become sticky points of contention between believers?

### Call to Worship

3. What is a call to worship? Consider Psalms 96, 99 and 100.
4. Reflect on John 4:21-26 and Isaiah 55:1-8. Why is it important to say that God is the source of the call to worship? What is God calling us to do?

5. What are different ways that a call to worship might take place on a Sunday?
  
6. Read Hebrews 12:18-29. Given the description there, how does this impact your posture and attitude when you come to worship on Sunday? How is reverence expressed? What are cultural ways that we show reverence at other events? What does worshipping God with gravity and gladness mean for how we dress, what we say (or don't say), how we use our bodies, the things we might do (or not do) in worship (e.g. like eating, drinking, use of phones, etc.)?
  
7. Are there ways that you have not rightly heeded the call to worship God — to come into his presence with reverence and awe? If so, repent and receive his grace and forgiveness!

### **Benediction**

8. What is the benediction? Consider Numbers 6:22-27. What was God doing through his mediator, the priests?
  
9. Read over the following benedictions in Scripture. 2 Corinthians 13:14; Romans 15:5-6, 13, 33; 1 Corinthians 16:22-23; Galatians 6:18; Ephesians 6:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13; 5:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; 3:5, 16, 18; Philemon 25; Hebrews 13:20-21; Jude 24-25. What themes do you observe?
  
10. Have you ever wondered why our church always ends the gathering with a benediction? How common is this practice amongst churches you've attended or visited?
  
11. How do you find the benediction to be a blessing?
  
12. God speaks. We respond. This is a good pattern for corporate worship. In what ways do you see this lived out in our church gatherings?