

SHORTER READINGS
for
CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Calls to Worship
Calls to Confession & Restoration
Benedictions

Compiled by
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AThingWorthDoing.com

Shorter Readings for Christian Worship

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Introduction

Before His death, Christ promised his disciples that when the Spirit of truth comes he will guide believers into all truth (John 16:13). Christ later prayed to the Father that the Spirit would sanctify his children in the truth of the Word (John 17:17). For two millennia, followers of Christ have worshiped the Father in the Spirit and truth (John 4:24). Apart from the Scriptures, the church cannot worship, for man must come to the Father on his terms—Christ, the Spirit, and the Word. The goal of *Shorter Readings for Christian Worship* is to help pastors accomplish the kind of worship that the Father requires. To assist in this purpose over 500 verses of Scripture from the Old and New Testaments have been selected for use as *calls to worship, calls to confession and restoration, and benedictions*.

The readings to follow have been labeled as “shorter” because they contain 1-5 verses. As demonstrated in the sample orders of worship below, these shorter readings are appropriate at the beginning of worship (*call to worship*), after the message (*calls to confession and restoration*), and at the end of worship (*benedictions*). This volume does not contain longer readings. Longer readings may be chosen based on the time of year, the theme of the message, or the theme of the congregational songs.

Sample Order of Worship 1

Call to Worship (**shorter**)
Prayer
Congregational Singing
Scripture Reading (**longer**)
Congregational Singing
Prayer
Message
Call to Confession and Restoration (**shorter**)
Prayer
Congregational Singing
Worship in Giving
Congregational Singing
Benediction (**shorter**)

Sample Order of Worship 2

Call to Worship (**shorter**)
Prayer
Congregational Singing
The Lord’s Table
Scripture Reading (**longer**)
Congregational Singing
Worship in Giving
Prayer
Message
Call to Confession and Restoration (**shorter**)
Prayer
Benediction (**shorter**)

May we, as the body of Christ today, give attendance to the public reading of Scripture, and by the open statement of the truth, may we commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God (1 Tim. 4:13, 2 Cor. 4:2).

Calls to Worship

- The selected passages are about 20-40-seconds in length.
- These calls bring the congregation to order in a solemn and serious way after a time of pre-service fellowship.
- These passages do not shy away from hard themes. They don't just mention praise, worship, celebration, and joy; their subjects focus on God's throne, the power of the Word, the greatness of God, the sinfulness of man, the hope of salvation, and the inability of man to comprehend God apart from His Spirit.
- This portion of the service can stand alone without commentary or teaching. Teaching (explaining the Word) is certainly prescribed in Scripture, but the call to worship can be a time when the Word stands alone.

New Testament

Matthew 11:25-26, 28-30
Mark 8:34-37
John 3:13-17
John 4:13-14, 7:37-38
John 4:21-26

Isaiah 60:1-3
1 Chronicles 29:10-13

The Psalms

Psalm 5:7, 11-12
Psalm 8:1-4, 9

Psalm 72:1-2, 17-19
Psalm 84:1-4, 10-12
Psalm 86:8-13
Psalm 89:1-2, 5-8, 52
Psalm 90:1-4, 9-12
Psalm 92:1-5
Psalm 93

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New Testament

Matthew 11:25-26, 28-30 Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Mark 8:34-37 Jesus said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?”

John 3:13-17 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

John 4:13-14, 7:37-38 Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has

said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”

John 4:21-26 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father... But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming, he who is called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

John 6:35, 47-48, 50-51 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

John 10:14-18 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

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Songs at the Throne of God (Revelation 4 and 5) “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever! Amen!”

Revelation 22:13-14, 17 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

Old Testament

Lamentations 3:22-26 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness! “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

Jeremiah 14:7-9 Though our iniquities testify against us, act, O Lord, for your name’s sake; for our backslidings are many; we have sinned

against you. O you hope of Israel, its savior in time of trouble, why should you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveler who turns aside to tarry for a night? Why should you be like a man confused, like a mighty warrior who cannot save? Yet you, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; do not leave us.

Isaiah 40:3-5, 7-8 In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Isaiah 55:1-3 Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant.

Isaiah 55:6-9 Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:10-11 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Isaiah 57:14-15 Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstruction from my people's way! For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.

Isaiah 60:1-3 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

1 Chronicles 29:10-13 Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

The Psalms

Psalm 5:7, 11-12 Through the abundance of your steadfast love, I will enter your house. I

will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before me. But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you. For you bless the righteous, O LORD; you cover him with favor as with a shield.

Psalm 8:1-4, 9 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 9:1-2, 7-10 I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High. The Lord sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice, and he judges the world with righteousness; he judges the peoples with uprightness. The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.

Psalm 19:1-4, 14 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

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