

Learning to Worship God by Dwayne Moore

SAMPLE

Introduction

Woven to Worship

The Loom of the Creator

Deep within every human heart is an inescapable need to worship. We were created not just *by* Him, but *for* Him.

Think about the profound progression of this:

1. God **forms** us as worshipers.
2. He **seeks** true worshipers.
3. Then, He **transforms** those worshipers into the image of His Son through the very act they were designed for: *worship*.

This realization should shift the ground beneath our feet. If worship is the catalyst for our transformation, then it can no longer be viewed as a religious accessory we put on for an hour on Sunday morning. It is not a song list. It's not a "service" we attend.

Worship reaches into the bedrock of our identity. It shapes what we love, what we pursue, what we trust, and what captures our attention. It forms our desires and, ultimately, dictates who we become. This is why Scripture calls us to turn our hearts toward Him repeatedly. Because whatever captures your heart eventually captures your life.

A Single Thread or a Masterpiece?

God forms us through worship, but this formation often happens more quietly and slowly than we realize.

Imagine a loom. God is patiently working in every part of your life: your surrender, your trust, your prayers, your gratitude, and even your weakness and repentance. He is forming

something stronger and more beautiful than you can see right now, more than you can see from your current vantage point.

A single thread, on its own, is fragile. It can be snapped with a light tug. But when many strands are woven together with divine intentionality, they become a fabric durable enough to endure the tension of trials, the stretching of waiting, and the pressure of time.

God isn't looking for isolated "outbursts" of praise. He is weaving worship into the very fabric of your existence. He wants it woven into:

- Your morning coffee and your evening commute.
- Your boardroom meetings and your laundry room chores.
- Your deepest suffering and your highest joys.
- Your public relationships and your most private thoughts.

The Rhythms of Love

As you embark on this journey with us, you'll be invited to develop simple, daily rhythms with God. We don't call these "spiritual chores" or "legalistic requirements." We call them **Habits of Love**.

These habits are ways of making room for love to grow. They are the stitches that hold the fabric together. Over time, worship becomes more than a concept you understand; it becomes a way of life you inhabit.

Spiritual formation rarely happens in a lightning bolt moment. More often, it is a gradual awakening. God gives us just enough light for the next step. As we respond faithfully to what He shows us, He prepares us for more. We don't grow by collecting head knowledge that we never intend to obey. We grow as we respond to the light. Today's obedience is the soil for tomorrow's revelation.

The Compartment Trap

Why does this matter so much right now? Because many of us have unknowingly fallen into the "compartment trap." We have a "worship compartment" for church services and a "real life" compartment for everything else.

But God never intended worship to be contained in a box. He intended it to be the atmosphere. True worship is the definition of wholeness. *All of us*. Not a fragment. Not a

percentage. Not a Sunday morning slice. God desires worship that reaches into the whole person: not merely outward activity, but inward affection. Not religious performance, but loving communion.

Brought Near by the Blood

At the very center of worship is *relationship*. From the Garden of Eden to the New Jerusalem, the story of the Bible is about a God who wants to be near His people. Because of our sin, we were separated from that nearness. We were loose threads, scattered and unraveling. But through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have been brought back to the loom.

Ephesians 2:13 reminds us:

“But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

This means worship isn't your desperate attempt to earn God's approval through "good" singing or "perfect" behavior. Worship is the response of a heart that has been welcomed home by grace.

The deepest worship often begins in the hidden, quiet places:

- In the stillness of a redirected thought.
- In the grit of choosing gratitude when things go wrong.
- In the surrender of a "not my will, but Yours" prayer.

Beholding and Becoming

Worship is so much more than *doing*; it is *becoming*.

As we look at Him, we are changed. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says,

“And we all, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image...”

Beholding leads to becoming. As we worship Christ, the Father gradually shapes us into the likeness of Christ.

This is the ultimate goal of the NLW Pathway. It begins with awareness of God, deepens through communion and obedience, becomes worship woven into everyday life, and eventually overflows in love, influence, and multiplication. None of us walk this journey

perfectly. We all struggle with wandering thoughts, dry seasons, and the pull of distraction. Yet, even in our weakness, God continues to draw us. Patiently. Faithfully. Lovingly.

David: A Life Woven with Worship

One of the clearest biblical witnesses to this kind of formation is David. In each chapter we will highlight David as we travel through this study. His life shows worship woven through the whole story of a person being formed by God. We will see it in hidden fields, public battles, honest prayers, painful failures, courageous leadership, restored praise, and songs that still call the nations to worship. David was not a perfect worshiper, but he was a returning worshiper. His story reminds us that God does not form worshipers in one moment only. He weaves worship through a lifetime.

This doesn't mean, of course, that David followed a neat, cookie-cutter model of growth. It means his life gives us a biblical witness to the organic, grace-shaped way God forms worshipers over time.

Your Invitation

While these resources will be especially helpful for worship leaders, pastors, ministry teams, and students preparing for leadership, this journey is not only for those with public roles. Worship is the calling of every follower of Jesus. Before worship is something we lead, teach, plan, or organize, it is something we live before God.

This book is designed to be read alongside **The NLW Pathway Guide**, a companion worship formation guide that helps you practice these truths day by day. While this book explains the vision and theology of whole-life worship, the Pathway Guide gives you space to respond personally, reflect prayerfully, and build simple *Habits of Love* as you walk the journey.

Together, this book and the formation journey connected to it are an invitation to stop performing and start responding. We're not shooting for emotional hype or outward appearance. We are reaching for a life increasingly shaped by loving communion with God.

Worship is not a department of your life. It is the thread that holds your life together. When worship is woven into your heart, mind, and habits, God forms something beautiful, durable, and lasting for His glory.

Are you ready to start the journey?

How These Principles Were Discovered

The journey of learning to worship God is not a theory to be memorized or a formula to be solved. It's a lived exploration: a decades-long walk through the quiet valleys and the mountaintops of faith. Over the past forty years, the principles you'll find in these pages were not discovered all at once. They were revealed slowly, step by step, as God patiently shared just enough light for the next few yards.

If we are to understand and appreciate the "NLW Pathway," we need to look back at how the threads were first gathered.

The Seed in the Silence

For me it began in high school, in the way many deep spiritual shifts have begun: in the quiet of a bedroom with a heart that was simply hungry to know more of God. I remember lying in bed, reading through the pages of *The Ultimate Priority* by John MacArthur.

While reading, I came to a description of worship that I'd never heard before. It spoke of worship in three distinct aspects: inwardly, upwardly, and outwardly. That concept struck a chord deep within my spirit. I didn't know it then, but a precious seed was planted deep inside me at that moment. I was captivated by the thought that worship was more than a one-dimensional activity. It was meant to be a dynamic, multi-directional flow of the soul toward the Creator and toward the world. That idea stayed with me. Over time, God kept bringing me back to it through prayer, ministry, teaching, and experience.

From Activity to Habit

Not long after that, during my college years, another vital realization began to dawn on me. I began to see a stark disconnect between "worship moments" we experience in church services and the worship *life* we're called to lead. I came to understand that if worship is truly our ultimate priority, then it cannot be confined to just moments when the music is playing or a Bible is open.

Worship was meant to permeate every part of life.

This was the birth of what I call "Habits of Love." These were early, humble insights into how God calls us to show Him honor continually and practically. I began to understand that our habits are the tracks upon which our love for God runs. If we do not form habits that direct our hearts toward Him in the ordinary, we will struggle to find Him in the extraordinary. Worship began moving from something I *did* to something I was meant to *be*.

The Cabin and the Target

Years later, during the writing of my second book, the landscape of this discovery journey expanded again. I vividly remember the quiet cabin in Fayetteville, Tennessee, where I spent hours walking the grounds and reflecting on Scripture. It was there, through deep meditation on Psalm 34 and other texts, that the "Lord-Leader-Laity" concept emerged.

I saw in the Word a beautiful order: the *Lord* who is the object of our praise, the *leaders* who call others to join in, and the *laity*—God's people—who respond in adoration. Around that same time, the idea of the "Worship Target" also took shape. It gives us a way to aim our lives: to love God fully with our hearts, our minds, and our actions. These were not just academic points for a book; they became markers on the road, discovered during long walks, fervent prayers, and an honest desire to help others know and experience Him.

The Final Threads

The final pieces of the puzzle came years later, during a devotional time in my living room. That is where the "He-We-They" pattern began to crystalize.

During my time with the Lord one morning in Louisville, Kentucky, His Word illumined my heart. In a moment of meditation on the Lord's Prayer, an understanding was made so clear to me that it was undeniable. I saw how Jesus wanted me to pray—with the "He" of inward devotion and praise, the "We" of depending on Him, and the "They" of outward concern and influence for others.

It was the final thread needed to weave decades of discovery into a coherent pathway. It became a life-altering bridge for me, aligning my heart with God's and lifting my eyes to the fields of souls that were all around me.

The Logic of the Light

Looking back across the span of four decades, I can see His awesome unseen hand in the way these principles were revealed. God didn't give me a map laying out the entire journey on that first night back in high school. Instead, He gave me enough light for the next step.

This is the beautiful, gently urgent reality of spiritual formation: we don't grow by collecting a mountain of insights that we never intend to obey. We grow as we respond faithfully to the direction He's already given us through His Word.

When we take a step of obedience in one season—even if it seems small or insignificant—it prepares the heart for the next season. It deepens our capacity to understand, enlarges our hearts for deeper surrender, and matures our spirit so that we can be entrusted with greater responsibility.

The "NLW Pathway" is not some clever method I sat down and invented on a whim. It is a road that has been walked. It's the result of years of observation, trial, failure, and refining. It is what happens when you see God's principles of worship come alive in real time in real hearts, in diverse communities, and in churches across the globe.

An Invitation to the Road

As you read through this book, I want you to remember that this is a *pathway*. It's not a textbook. It's an invitation to a journey of whole-life worship. Think of each principle as a stone laid on the path, intended to help you move from a mere awareness of God into a life where *your every breath* becomes a response to His grace.

We're all on this journey together. We all face distractions of a noisy world and inconsistencies in our own hearts. But I can testify that the God who began this work in a teenager's bedroom forty years ago is the same God who is drawing you toward Himself today. He is patient. He is faithful. And He is more than ready to give you exactly enough illumination for your next step along this amazing Pathway.

Let's walk it together.

—Dwayne Moore