

ALTO



REFORMED CHURCH

ARTICLES

Confession: I Used to Worship Me

By Pastor Kevin Van Wyk

Well, it's true, I am making a full confession. I used to worship me. I went to church and I went to youth group, but when it came down to giving worth to someone, it was all about me.

Now, I didn't bow down in front of a mirror and chant my name; I didn't offer sacrifices on a fire; and I did not write songs of my amazing accomplishments. If you had asked me who I worshiped, I would have said God.



However, most everything I did was for my own benefit. I studied hard to someday make lots of money so I could have cool things. I worked various jobs to make money so I could have cool things now. I played trumpet for accolades and a sense of accomplishment. I ate what I wanted, and watched what I wanted.

Did you notice, there's a lot of "I" in that paragraph. Of all the pronouns out there, this is the only one that gets capitalized all the time. Why? You can read a lot more online about this, but the bottom line is that uppercase letters

symbolize importance. I guess, I really am more important than you, them, or us.

Obviously, I eventually realized there is another who rightly deserves upper case letters. Interestingly, we not only capitalize God, but He and Him when referring to our Lord. In fact, you will sometimes see LORD in all caps in the Old Testament. This is to reflect a specific Hebrew name for God, YHWH, which warrants the upmost respect, so much so that the Jews would not speak this name aloud.

While capital letters are important and point us to what is most important, there is much more to worship.

Worship can be defined in different ways. It can mean...

1. Singing songs that glorify God;
2. Gathering on Sunday morning in a church to sing, pray, hear the Bible preached, receive the sacraments, and fellowship with believers; or
3. Honoring God with our whole life.

Words do have multiple meanings and all these definitions can explain the word worship. At its heart however is your heart.

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. (Matt. 22:37-38)

At some point I hope you realized, as I did, that you only deserve a small case letter. You hopefully surrendered your life to Jesus, **acknowledging** your sinful, self-centered ways; **believing** in God's grace and mercy, and **confessing** Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

Unfortunately, we live in a culture that makes it easy to profess faith in Jesus yet live as though I am lord. Consider Paul's words to the church in Rome.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed

by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom. 12:1-2)

In view of God's mercy, His incredible love and grace, we are to act. This causes us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices! So, stop crawling off the altar and conform to the world. Your body, your life, is not your own! You were bought at a price. The death of Christ covers your sin and makes you acceptable to God. It's a free gift, yet to receive it means we gratefully offer our lives back to our Savior.

REFLECT ON THESE TWO QUESTIONS

When you stand in church and sing, who are you worshipping? What are you thinking about? The music? The sound guy? Lunch plans? What the people behind will think if you lift your hands? Or what the people in front of you will think if you sing with all your heart? It's all a form of self-worship. Instead, put your attention on the words of the songs and ponder the nature and presence of God.

When you get up in the morning and as you go about your day, who are you worshipping? What are you thinking about? Pleasing your own desires or pleasing your Savior? Are you willing to sacrifice your wants and comfort to show love and grace to others?

PRAYER

Lord, forgive me for having worshipped me and sometimes still worshipping me. Forgive me for crawling off the altar to please my sinful nature. I know your great love has covered my sin, making temptation all the more appealing. Yet, sin is not what I want. Transform me by the renewing of my mind that I might know Your will and worship with all my heart on Sunday and every other day of the week.

Equipping Children & Families Update

By Lynnae Loomans

Our Sunday School and Wednesday night bible classes are off to an awesome start with lots of happy and excited children! We are gearing up for our first family night in November but in the meantime looking for donations for the Operation Christmas Child which you can find on the Children and Families

board. Any questions, feel free to contact Lynnae.

10 Ways to Encourage our Teens at Church

By Jessa TerBeest

Let's build those bridges and let our next generation know how loved and appreciated they are!

1. Acknowledge them - Thank them for being here and being involved
2. Show up to their extra curriculums
3. Let them know you support them and are praying for them
4. Write an encouraging note and put it in their mailbox
5. Send them a care package
6. Take them out for coffee or ice cream
7. Ask them about their life and listen to them
8. Ask them how you can pray for them
9. Be humble when you talk to them and try to put yourself in their shoes
10. Build them up in God's calling for their life by discipling them. Never discourage them based on the world's definition of success

MESSAGES

Sincere thanks for prayers regarding my recent cardiac cath. I definitely felt at peace. I am so thankful that I have no blockages. God is good.

-Pat Vande Zande

The outpouring of love, prayers and cards during this time of loss has been so overwhelmingly beautiful to me. I am so grateful for this church family and I apologize to those I haven't had a chance to thank personally for your acts of kindness. Please know that it hasn't gone unnoticed. Thank you from the bottom of my heart, we love you, Alto Reformed!

-Marlaina Shotsky

We would like to thank everyone for the kindness and support you showed during the passing of our father, grandfather and brother, Dale Kastein. You made this difficult time much easier to bear. Also we would like to thank all those who helped with the luncheon after the funeral. Everything was very much appreciated.

-The Family of Dale Kastein

We would like to thank everyone who remembered us on our birthdays. We really appreciated each and every one of you. We are so thankful for the years God has blessed us with.

-Paul & Audrey Elenius

Thank you so much to those who sent me birthday cards.

-Gerri Loomans

Thank you for the prayers and cards while I was in the hospital.

-Faye Janey

EVENTS

Mark your calendar...

Alto Reformed Church
October 2022

October 01 **Harvest Festival**
5:30-7:30 at the Alto Community Center. We'll have food, silent and live auctions, hayrides and fun! This fundraiser will support the young adult mission trip to West Virginia in January 2023.

October 12 **Alto Chase**
Wednesday October 12, 7:30-9pm! All 8th grade, high school students and adults are welcome to join us for a huge game of Romans and Christians around Alto! Adults we NEED you! Whether you're in or out of shape, you can help! Show up and support our teens while getting some exercise and having fun!

October 21 **Ladies' Bunco Night**
Join us on Friday, October 21st for our Ladies' Bunco Night. Registration will start at 6:30pm and we will begin playing at 7pm. Bring a friend and join us for our game night as well as time for snacks, a devotional time, fun and fellowship!! Sign up at the Information Center or on Facebook by October 14th (must have at least 12 people signed up to host the event). Hope to see you there!!

For detailed information:
Call 920.346.5505 or email office@altoreformedchurch.org

NEWS

The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, November 13th at 10:45am. There will be no Sunday school that day, but there will be activities available in the basement for the kids.

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