

7, 8, 11, 12

“Worship in Spirit and Truth”
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I. Why Worship? - For the Glory of God and the gladness of man

A. God demands our worship

1. First Commandment - Have no other gods before Him (Exod 20.3).
2. Love the Lord alone and always - “shema” (Deut 6.4-5, Matt 6.24).
3. Jesus demands the same loyalty for Himself (Matt 7.21-29, John 10.30).

B. God deserves our worship

1. His Creation is Great

- a. Light travels at a speed of 5.87 trillion miles a year
- b. The galaxy - of which our solar system is a small part - is 100,000 light years in diameter, about 587,000,000,000,000 miles!
- c. Today’s powerful telescopes can see more than 1,000,000 different galaxies.
- d. In our galaxy there are 100,000,000,000 stars - our “sun” is just one of the smaller stars in our galaxy.

16. Jesus endured His final hours of suffering for God's glory (John 12.27,28, 17.1).
17. God gave His Son to prove the glory of His righteousness (Rom 3.25-26).
18. God forgives our sin for His own sake (Isa 43.25, Psa 25.11).
19. Jesus receives us into His fellowship for the glory of God (Rom 15.7).
20. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Son of God (John 16.14).
21. God tells us to do everything for His glory (1 Cor 10.31, 6.20).
22. God tells us to serve in a way that will glorify Him (1 Peter 4.11).
23. Jesus will fill us with fruits of righteousness for His glory (Philip 1.11).
24. All are under judgment for dishonoring God's glory (Rom 1.23, 3.23).
25. Herod was struck dead for failing to give God glory (Acts 12.23).
26. Jesus is coming again for the glory of God (2 Thess 1.9-10).
27. Jesus' ultimate aim is that we see and enjoy His glory (John 17.24).
28. Even in wrath, God's plan is to reveal His glory (Rom 9.22-23).
29. God's plan is to fill the earth with the knowledge of His glory (Hab 2.14).
30. Everything that happens will result in God's glory (Rom 11.36).
31. In the New Jerusalem, the glory of God replaces the sun (Rev 21.23).

“The great end of God's works, which is variously expressed in Scripture, is indeed but ONE and this one end is most properly and comprehensively called THE GLORY OF GOD.”
Jonathan Edwards

D. God delights in our worship

1. Throughout the whole Bible - from eternity past to eternity future - God “seeks” worshipers (Malachi 1.11, John 4.23).
2. It is a mystery that a God who needs nothing “seeks” worship (Psalm 90.2-4, Habak 2.20).

1. Two Groups of Hebrew & Greek words are translated "Worship"

- a. Refers to labor or service, referring mainly to work of OT priests
- b. Refers to bowing or bending the knee; i.e. paying homage to the worth of someone else

2. English term has the same connotation of "worth" / "worth-ship"

3. Russian word

4. Kazakh word

A
X

~~B.~~ Implications of these Words

1. Worship is Active, it is a "verb"; we are to participate.
2. Worship is Adoration; primary aim is to please someone else
3. Any benefits we receive will be a secondary result of this action and adoration

~~C.~~ In Worship we do Familiar Things in an a Special Way

1. We speak well of another; we speak most highly of God - Praise!
2. We express our feelings: love, joy, sadness - Come to God openly and honestly.
3. We confess our faults; make requests; give thanks; listen to commands - talk to God and listen to Him.
4. Washing oneself (baptism), eat and drink (Lord's supper) - beginning and continuing sacraments of the faith
5. Yet, all of these become special in worship; we do them for the Lord God, in the presence of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit.
6. Common activities become unique, mysterious, and life-transforming in worship; they become our priestly service for the living God.

D. God-Centered Worship

1. We worship our Covenant Lord for His Control, the Sovereign of All Creation (Exod 15.1-18, Psalm 104, Ephes 1.20,21, Rev 15.3,4).

5. In John 4.23 the word "truth" can also accurately mean the Scriptures; the written record of Him who is the truth incarnate (John 1.1,14, 14.6, Revel 19.13).

6. Biblical worship is God-centered; directed to Him as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with the full devotion of our spirit, according to the truth of God's Word.

G. Vertical and Horizontal

1. Worshiping God must be done with awareness of others (Matthew 22.37-40, 1 John 4.20-21).

2. We must not worship God and ignore the needs of the poor (Isaiah 1.10-17, James 2.1-7, Hosea 6.6, Micah 6.6-8).

3. We must not worship God when the church is divided (1 Corinthians 1.10-17, 11.17-22).

4. We must seek to build up one another in worship (1 Corinth 14.26, Rom 15.5-7, Hebrews 10.24-25).

5. We must seek to worship in a way which will enable unbelievers to witness the presence of God (1 Corinth 14.25, 1 Kings 8.41-43).

6. God-centered worship seeks to both edify the believer and evangelize the unbeliever.

H. Broad and Narrow

1. Worship is both a specific activity and a total style of life (Romans 12.1).

2. At Jesus' death God tore the veil into the Most Holy Place (Matthew 27.51), now the way to God has been opened to all His people (Hebrews 10.19-25).

3. The old covenant Aaronic priesthood has ended, Jesus is our High Priest in the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7.11-28).


4. Now in Jesus all believers are priests before God (1 Peter 2.5,9); as priests we offer Him:

a. Sacrifices of praise (Hebrews 13.15).

b. Evangelism (Romans 15.15,16).

c. Good works (Hebrews 13.16).

d.

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1. Israel was a Holy Nation, chosen by God's grace (Deut 7.7-9).
 2. All the duties of life before God was to be worship (Deut 4.5-10).
 - a. Israel's entire existence was to be a worshipping nation (Psalm 149.2).
 - b. This is worship in the "broad" sense, all of life (Prov 14.34).
 3. The Law of Moses directed all areas of the life of the people of Israel
 - a. Rules for prayers and sacrifices
 - b. Exhortations to hear and obey God's Word
 - c. Regulations for Civil Government
 - d. Calendar for family life, economics, diet, cycle of work and rest.
 4. Many ordinances of the Law emphasized the distinction between Israel and their pagan neighbor nations (Deut 6.13-15).
 - a. They were to wear distinctive clothing
 - b. They were to avoid the foods pagans ate
 - c. Their males were to be circumcised (Genesis 17.14); which was necessary for full access to the Temple (Acts 21.27-29).

D. Sacrificial Worship

1. Shortly after the Fall, people began to bring offerings to God.
 - a. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4.2-5).
 - b. Noah (Genesis 8.20-22).
 - c. Abraham (Genesis 15).
2. God's Covenant made through Moses had elaborate details for sacrifices
 - a. Some were to be made by individuals (Leviticus 1 - 7); sin offerings, consecration, communion with God, peace offerings, fellowship offerings.
 - b. Other offerings were to be made on special occasions; such as the making of a covenant, consecration of priests, dedication of Temple.

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3. The sacrifices of Israel did not atone for sin, it was a “reminder of sin” and the need for a final solution to their sin problem (Hebrews 10.1-4).

→ E. Sabbaths

1. The 4th of Ten Commandments is to keep the Sabbath day holy (Exod 20.8).
 - a. To keep a day holy for God is an act of worship (Exod 20.8).
 - b. The Sabbath was begun at Creation (Gen 2.2,3 Exod 20.11).
2. The Law of Moses created a system of Sabbaths
 - a. There was to be a special Sabbath observed during Passover (Lev 23.7).
 - b. God ordered there to be a “Sabbatical year” (Lev 25.1-7).
 - c. The 50th year, Sabbath of Sabbaths - “Jubilee” (Lev 25.8-13).

F. Feasts - 3 times a year all Israelite men were to go to Jerusalem for worship.

1. Double Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread (during March or April); remembering God’s deliverance from Egypt.
2. Feast of Pentecost [or Weeks, or Firstfruits] (in May or June); anniversary of God’s meeting with Israel at Mt. Sinai and giving the Law.
4. Feast of Tabernacles [Autumn]; marked end of harvest season; included:
 - a. Feast of Trumpets - when the Law was read
 - b. Day of Atonement - sin was confessed, atonement made

G. Tabernacle and Temple

1. God commanded Israel to build a place for Him to dwell among them (Exod 25.8); He provided the pattern (Exod 25 - 28, Hebrews 8.5) and anointed the workmen (Exod 31.1-3).

2. Tabernacle was a tent in a courtyard [50 meters by 25 meters]

a. Outer Courtyard contained:

1) Altar for Burnt offerings

2) Basin (or laver) for Ceremonial washings by priests

b. Outer Tent (Holy Place) contained

1) Table of Showbread or Bread of the Presence

2) A lampstand

3) Altar of incense

c. Inner Tent (Most Holy Place) contained:

1) Ark of the Covenant - the throne of God's presence; on top of this box was the Mercy Seat; inside the box was:

a) Two stone tablets of the Law

b) Golden pot full of manna

c) Aaron's staff which budded confirming his priesthood

3. The tabernacle was portable for Israel's wilderness wanderings.

4. Temple had a similar plan but it was much larger with nonportable materials.

a. Furniture was the same, but there was more of it; ten golden lampstands, ten tables for the bread of Presence, and ten basins (2 we Chron. 4).

b. Temple was destroyed three times and rebuilt twice; temple that existed during time of Jesus was built by Herod the Great.

5. principles Tabernacle and Temple were mainly devoted to sacrificial worship; but they were also places for:

a. Prayer (1 Kings 8.22-53, Isa 56.7, Matt 21.13, Acts 3.1).

b. Swearing of oaths (1 Kings 8.22-53).

c. Singing of praise (1 Chron 15.16-22, 25.1-31).

d. Teaching (Matt 26.55, Luke 2.41-52, Acts 5.21).

H. Priests and Levites

1. Levi was one of the 12 tribes of Israel, Moses & Aaron belonged.

2. They did not receive territory in the Promised Land, God was their inheritance (Num 18.20-24, Deut 10.9, 12.12).

Түрмө

3. Their special assignment was care of the sanctuary & altar (Num 18.5).

a. For this service they received tithes from other tribes (Num 18.21).

b. Their work involved simple and humble tasks.

c. King David made them singers and musicians (1 Chron 15.16-24, 16.4-6, 37-42).

4. Levites were also teachers of God's law (Deut 33.10, 2 Chron 17.7-9).

5. Most lived in, others were located at various places throughout the land of Israel (Joshua 21).

6. Priests were called "Aaronic" - as descendants of Aaron.

a. They were the worship leaders of Israel and teachers of the Law (Levit 10.10-11).

b. They were the mediators between God and Israel and served as judges (Levit 13-15).

I. The Synagogue *Ἱ. Синагога*

1. By the time of Jesus, there were synagogues throughout Palestine and other places in the Roman world.

2. A synagogue could be formed with 10 male Jews over the age of 12.

3. Services were held on the Sabbath, and other days of the week.

4. No animals were sacrificed, this was done only at the Temple.

5. The focus of the service was Scripture reading and prayer.

Масдаарын эр өрөөлүүн
Хүний муруу даамт.

a. Scripture could be read by any Jew.

Төвөг бүтэйгээр нь мөнхөөр

b. Text would be explained and applied to the congregation.

Ор нэгж дүр нэмэ алтар, нэгж айтмал, дуулар, баталар, нэгж

c. There were various recitations, prayers, benedictions, and responses. Тар

Синагогийн үндэстэн (баатар) гажуудуу элс,

6. Origins of the Synagogue are not certain.

a. Law of Moses mentions nothing about them.

b. They may have existed from before the Exile, or even at the time of Moses; as places of gathering for worship and instruction.

c. Believers in the Northern is Kingdom hosted traveling "men of God" (2 Kings 4.23).

d. Details about a certain "sacred assembly" are not given (Levit 23.3).

e. Destruction of the Temple made synagogue worship vital.

7. After the Exile, the teaching of Scripture was a top priority of Jewish leaders.

a. They desired to restore Israel to glory in the Promised Land.

b. Ezra's teaching of the Jerusalem law is sometimes called the "Great worship" (Nehemiah 8 - 9).

c. Jesus regular synagogue participation is evidence of God's approval of their existence (Luke 4.15,16).

8. The fact that God did not give revelation of the synagogue to Israel, meant that He expected, and approved of, them working out some details of worship.

9. If God allowed this during the strict code of the Old Covenant, how much more are we free in Christ to worship Him (Galatians 3. -25).

IV. Worship in the New Testament

A. Christ fulfills Old Testament Worship

1. The most significant fact about N.T. worship is that its focus is on Christ.

a. He is the Lord of the Covenant



Synagogue

- b. He displays the control, authority, and presence of Yahweh.
 - c. His “exodus” was out of the eternal bondage of sin (Luke 9.31) .
 - d. In Him, Jew and Gentile become the Israel of God (1 Peter 2.9).
2. From the N.T. we can see that all the O.T. finds its fulfillment in Christ.
- a. He is the true Tabernacle where we meet with God (John 1.14, 2.21).
 - b. His death for our sin, and His resurrection to new life, should move us to great praise (Rom 9.5, 11.33-36, Eph 1.15-23, 3.14-21).
3. His ultimate sacrifice brings an end to all temple offerings (Heb 10.1-18, Ephes 5.2, Mark 10.45).
- a. O.T. sacrifices showed their failure by daily repetition.
 - b. Jesus made a “once for all” sacrifice and sat down at God’s right hand (Hebrews 10.10).
4. Jesus is also the ultimate priest who offers the sacrifice of Himself.
- a. He is the ultimate mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2.5)
 - b. He is a priest in the order of Melchizedek, not from the line of Aaron (Hebrews 6.13 - 8.13).
 - c. His eternal priesthood is based on the power of an indestructible life, as such He lives forever (Hebrews 7.16,24).
 - d. Thus, He is able to save all who call on Him (Hebrews 7.25).
5. Jesus is the ultimate High Priest who serves in God’s heavenly Temple.
- a. The tabernacle on earth was made according to the pattern of heaven’s (Hebrews 8.1-6).
 - b. This heavenly tabernacle is the ultimate dwelling place of God.
 - c. Jesus as High Priest brought His own blood into this heavenly tabernacle (Hebrews 9.11-28).
6. Jesus Himself is God’s Temple (John 1.14, 2.19-22).

- a. The purpose of the O.T. temple was to point to Him (1 Kings 8.27-30).
- b. In heaven there will be no temple, because God is there (Rev 21.22).
- c. All the temple furniture of Christ:
 - 1) Altar - His offering of Himself for our sins (1 Peter 3.18)
 - 2) Basin - His cleansing of us from sin, symbolized in baptism (1 Peter 3.21)
 - 3) Lampstand - He is the Light of the World (John 8.12)
 - 4) Bread - He is the Bread of Life (John 6.35,41).
 - 5) Incense - His prayers for us always go up to God (Heb 7.25).
 - 6) Veil - His body was torn upon the cross (Hebrews 10.19-25).
 - 7) Ark - He is Immanuel, "God with us" (Isa 7.14, Matt 1.23).
 - 8) Tablets - He is the Word become man (John 1.1, Rev 19.13).

7. Jesus is "Lord of the Sabbath" (Matt 12.28)

- a. He is the final Passover Lamb (John 1.29, 1 Cor 5.7).
- b. He sends His Spirit to baptize the church on Pentecost (Acts 2.36).
- c. His blood was taken into the Most Holy Place and fulfills forever the Day of Atonement (Romans 3.25,26).
- d. He fulfills the Feast of Tabernacles by forever dwelling with us (Matt 18.20, John 1.14, Hebrews 13.5).

8. Jesus is the True Israel

- a. Those who believe in Him are "the Israel of God" (Gal 3.26-29, 6.16).
- b. God's elect have been chosen from eternity (Ephes 1.4).
- c. Our "assembly" is greater than at Mt. Sinai (Hebrews 12.22-24).
- d. Our "circumcision" is from sin unto holiness (Philip 3.3).

e. Believers are priests unto God in Christ (1 Peter 2.5,9
Revel 1.6, 5.10, 20.6).

1) In the N.T. there is no special group of priests

2) Instead, every believer is to offer sacrifices to God
(Rom 12.1, Phil 2.17, adoration 4.18, Heb 13.15-16).

f. Believers are also “temples” of God’s Spirit (1 Cor 6.19).

1) We should not be defiled by sexual sin (1 Cor 6.18,20).

2) We should not be divided by pride (1 Cor 3.16-23).

9. It is evident that N.T. worship should be full of Christ (John 14.6).

B. Worship in the Broad Sense

1. Changes from O.T. to N.T. imply there will be changes in worship.

2. O.T. worship is parallel to N. .T. worship, but all is fulfilled in Christ.

a. In the N.T., as in the O.T., there is a covenant, priesthood, sacrifices,
tabernacle, circumcision, atonement, and feasts.

b. Now all these institutions exist in and through Christ alone.

3. In the N.T., words which had a specific and narrow O.T. meaning are now
interpreted more broadly.

a. Sacrifices in the O.T. were to prescribed with great detail (Leviticus),
in the N.T. it can be anything we offer up to God’s glory (1 Cor 10.31).

b. Observance of O.T. rituals would be to deny Christ’s fulfillment.

c. In the N.T. all of life is to be worship unto God (Romans 12.1).

C. Christian Meetings

1. The apostles sanctioned meetings of the early church (Acts 1.14, 5.42, 13.2).

2. Jesus promised to be present with them (Matt 18.20, John 14.13-14,26).

3. The “Lord’s Supper” is a “participation in His body and blood” (1 Cor 10.16).

4. From the beginning, the early believers often met together for:
 - a. Prayer, teaching and the sacraments (Acts 2.42-47, 1 Cor 11.18-34).
 - b. They received gifts for the needy (Acts 4.32-37, 1 Cor 16.1,2).
 - c. They exchanged the “holy kiss” (Rom 16.16, 1 Cor 16.20).
 - d. Great emphasis made on edification (1 Cor 14.26)
5. Meeting was an important gathering for believers (Hebrews 10.25).
6. God is present in a special way in the worship service (1 Cor 14.24,25).
 - a. He is present everywhere all the time (Psalm 139.7-10).
 - b. In worship we focus on His presence and power (Rev 1.9-12).
 - c. We meet face to face with the King in His palace (Isa 66.1, 6.1).
7. God invites us to approach Him in worship to do a special work in . our lives (Hebrews 10.22, Psa 100.2).
 - a. He reveals His greatness and holiness (Isa 6.3, Mark 4.31).
 - b. He rebukes our sin (Isa 6.5, Luke 19.8).
 - c. He restores us in grace (Isa 6.6,7, Hebrews 4.16).
 - d. He renews our calling (Isa 6.8, Hebrews 3.12-14).
8. N.T. worship is “in Jesus name”; meaning we meet because of HimWhen .
 - a. By this name we are saved (Acts 4.12, John 20.31).
 - b. Into this name we are baptized (Matt 28.19, Acts 2.38, Gal 3.27).
 - c. His name we love others (Mark 9.41, 3 John 7).
 - d. In His name we pray, and He answers (John 14.13-14,26, 15.16,21, 16.23-26).
 - e. Because of His name believers suffer (Matt 10.22, 24.9, Acts 5.41).
 - f. In His name His power, protection, and blessing are present

(Prov 18.10, 1 Corinth 5.4 Rev 3.12).

9. We should be expectant and eager when we meet in Jesus name (1 Thess 1.4,5).

V. What are the Rules for Worship?

A. We must know the rules to properly worship God.

1. God is not always pleased with worship offered Him
 - a. God rejected Cain's offering (Genesis 4.5).
 - b. God consumed Nadab and Abihu for their offering (Levit 10.1-3).
 - c. Saul lost his kingship for doing the work of a priest (1 Sam 13.7-14).
 - d. God destroyed Uzzah for touching the Ark (2 Sam 6.6-7).
 - e. King Jeroboam's entire family was slain for his idolatry (1 Kings 12.31-33, 15.29,30).
 - f. King Uzziah was made a leper for improper worship (2 Chron 26.16-23).
 - g. King Ahaz killed his own children as offerings to God (2 Chron 28.1-5).
2. The first 4 of the 10 Commandments regulate our worship (Exod 20.3-11).
 - a. 1st Commandment forbids worship of false gods.
 - b. 2nd Commandment forbids worship of any god, even the true God, with the use of idols.
 - c. 3rd Commandment forbids wrong use of God's name.
 - d. 4th Commandment forbids wrong use of God's day.
3. Throughout the Bible, God condemns idolatry (Acts 17.16, Rom 1.21-23, 1 Cor 10.6-22, 2 Cor 6.16, Gal 5.20, 1 Pet 4.3, 1 John 5.21, Rev 21.8, 22.15).
4. Proper worship is a matter of life and death (2 Corinth 2.15,16).
 - a. Wrong worship brings God's cursing, not His blessing (1 Corinth 5.8).
 - b. We must never be too casual in our worship of God (Hebrews 12.28).

B. The Bible is the Rule Book for true Worship.

1. Different Christian traditions have different interpretations of true worship.

a. Orthodox, Lutherans, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics teach that we may do anything except what Scripture forbids.

1) For them, Bible says “no” to what we should not do

2) What we actually do is determined by tradition and reason.

b. Reformed and Presbyterian tradition teaches we may only do in worship what the Bible clearly teaches.

1) For them, the Bible says “yes” to what we should do.

2) What ever Scripture does not command forbidden.

3)

Scripture must positively , endorse the a practice for it to be acceptable to God in worship.

4) For this professor, this is the correct interpretation.

2. Worship is for God, not ourselves.

a. Thus, we cannot trust our own imagination, traditions, or reasoning.

b. We must seek God’s own wisdom, revealed to us in Scripture.

3. Scripture condemns worship based on human ideas.

a. “Worship is only rules taught by men” (Isaiah 29.13).

b. Jesus quoted and affirmed these words of Isaiah (Matt 15.8-9).

c. Paul condemned “self-imposed worship” (Coloss 2.23).

4. Scripture is a sufficient guidebook for all of life and worship.

a. We must not add to it or subtract from it (Deut 4.2 Rev 22.18-19).

b. We must follow its teachings carefully (Deut 12.28, 2 Tim 3.16,17).

C. How do we apply the rules of Scripture to worship?

1. Scripture is silent about many details of our worship, for example: when and where we meet, length of the service, arrangement of the room, which songs to sing, what text of Scripture to read.
2. Scripture is sufficient to give us the basic guidelines, God expects us to plan the details according to Biblical principles.
 - a. All we do in worship is to be for God's glory (1 Cor 10.31).
 - b. All is to be done in Jesus' name (Coloss 3.17).
 - c. All is to be done in edifying love for others (1 Cor 13, 14.26)
 - d. All is to be done with sensitivity to unbelievers (1 Cor 14.23-25).
 - e. All is to be done in order and peace (1 Cor 14.33).
3. This method of application of Scripture is the same for all of life.
 - a. Everything we do is to be in obedience to God's commands (Psalm 119.9-16, John 17.17).
 - b. Everything we do requires our interpretation and application of God's commands (Deut 29.29, Galat 3.23-25, 5.16-26).
4. The worship service is a public event for a particular purpose.
 - a. The Lord's Supper must not be treated as an ordinary meal (1 Corinth 11.20-34).
 - b. The service may be entertaining, but it must not be designed just for people's entertainment.
 - c. Instead, God is the "audience" and we perform our praise to Him.
 - d. The task of human wisdom and tradition is to apply Biblical principles to the situation of our life and worship (Psalm 19.7,14, 119.33-35).
5. This way of applying Scripture is our charter of freedom (Galat 5.1).
 - a. We are free from human traditions to worship God in His way.
 - b. This "limitation" is like telling a fish he must swim in the water; a

command which promotes its best interests and future.

c. We are free, within the limits of Scripture, to worship God in our own language, to edify and evangelize the people of our own culture and time.

6. We must be both more conservative and liberal in the proper ways.

a. Conservative in holding faithfully to Scripture as our only standard for life and worship.

b. Liberal in promoting any Biblical way of reaching others with worship which promotes the glory of God and the gladness of men.

VI. What do we do in worship?

A. General Principles of Worship

1. The challenge is to move from general principles (God's glory and man's gladness) to the specifics of what to do in worship.

2. Scripture does not give us a specific list of what to do in worship.

a. Old Testament believers had very specific worship instructions.

b. Now in Christ we have the freedom of sonship (Galat 4.4-11).

3. What we actually do in worship is not always easy to distinguish exactly:

a. As we sing hymns we are also teaching (Coloss 3.16).

b. As we pray we are often declaring Scripture (Acts 4.24-26).

c. As we preach we are sometimes praying (Acts 2.40, 2 Tim 4.1,2).

d. As we take the Lord's Supper we are also preaching (1 Cor 11.26).

e. As we give offerings we are also witnessing (2 Corinth 9.13).

B. Specific Parts of Worship in the Scriptures

1. Greetings and Benedictions

a. This is not commanded anywhere in Scripture, but there are many written examples (Romans 1.7, 1 Corinth 1.3, Rom 15.33,

2 Corinth 13.14, Numbers 6.24-27).

b. These written blessings were read in worship (Coloss 4.16, 1 Thess 5.27).

2. Reading of Scripture

a. It was read in the synagogue (Luke 4.17-19, Acts 15.21).

b. It was read in the N.T. church (1 Tim 4.13, 2 Tim 3.15-17).

c. When God's Word is read, He is personally present to those who hear His voice (John 10.27, 1 Corinth 5.4, 1 Thess 2.13, Rev 1.3).

3. Preaching and Teaching

a. God intends that His word be understood and applied to life (Nehem 8.8, Luke 4.20, Acts 20.7, 1 Tim 4.6, 5.17, 6.2, 2 Tim 2.2, 3.16, 4.2, Titus 1.9).

b. There is no clear difference made between preaching and teaching in the New Testament; their purpose is to make known the Word.

c. It can happen in many different settings (Acts 2.1-14, 13.5, 20.20).

d. Whenever God speaks to His people it is a worship event.

4. Prayer

a. There are many examples of prayer as God's people worship together (Acts 2.42, 1 Corinth 14.16, 1 Tim 2.1-2).

b. There are many types of prayer including; praise, petition, lament, confession of sin, repentance, and thanksgiving.

5. Songs

a. God is pleased when His people sing His praise (1 Chron 16.9, 1 Corinth 14.26, Ephes 5.19-20, Coloss 3.16).

b. Songs do not have an independent purpose. Rather, they are a vehicle for doing many different things: praising, praying, teaching, blessing, fellowshiping, etc.

6. Vows

a. In Scripture this is a public act of swearing promises witnessed by people (Psalm 22.25, 50.14, 65.1, 76.11, 1 Timothy 6.13,14).

2 21.26, 49.14, 64.2, 75.12
b. Such vows are made in baptism, the Lord's Supper, marriage, *testimony* church membership, and ordination.

7. Confession of Faith

a. All public worship is confession of faith; confession results in salvation (Matt 10.32, Luke 12.8, Romans 10.9-10).

b. Such confession is a sign of belief (1 John 4.2,3,15).

c. It is proper for believer's to confess their faith, in both testimony and the reciting of biblical creeds, in public worship (Hebrews 13.15).

8. Sacraments - symbolic ceremonies instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ

a. Baptism (Matthew 28.19, Acts 2.38, 1 Peter 3.21).

b. The Lord's Supper (Luke 22.17-20, Acts 2.42, 1 Corinthians 11.17-34).

9. Church Discipline

a. Jesus teaches how to deal with sin in the church (Matthew 18.15-20):

1) The sinner is to be confronted, their sin must not be ignored (Galatians 2.11, 6.1, James 5.19,20).

2) This must be done privately at first, and if necessary to the entire church; this results in "excommunication" or restoration.

b. Promise of Jesus' presence says that this activity is an act of worship.

10. Collections and Offerings

a. In the O.T. term refers to sacrifices in the Temple.

b. In the N.T. we trust in Jesus' "once for all" offering for our sins.

c. In Him we give ourselves first, then our gifts as offerings (2 Cor 8.5).

d. This was done as the church gathered for worship (1 Cor 16.1,2).

11. Expressions of Fellowship

- a. Worship has both a vertical and horizontal focus, to God and to man.
- b. The horizontal is expressed in our exhortations, prayers for one another, preaching, greetings, discipline, collections, and sacraments.
- c. The “love feast” was a fellowship meal held during worship (Jude 12).
- d. The “holy kiss” was a time of greeting in God’s presence (Rom 16.16, 1 Cor 16.20, 2 Cor 13.12, 1 Thess 5.26, 1 Peter 5.14).
- e. Announcements can be seen as part of the life of the church body (2 Tim 4.13).
- f. It is also appropriate to publicly thank people during worship service (Phil 1.3-6, 4.10-19).

C. Specific Applications

1. There are many other “worship actions” listed in Scripture:
 - a. Clapping hands (Psa 47.1, 97.8).
 - b. Raising hands (Psa 63.4, 134.2, 1 Tim 2.8).
 - c. Choirs and instruments (Exod 15.1, 1 Chron 25.1-31, Psa 150).
 - d. Congregational responses (Deut 27.15, Psa 118.2-4, 136, 1 Cor 14.16).
 - e. Dance (Exod 15.20, Jer 31.4, Psa 149.3, 150.4).
 - f. Choosing leaders (Acts 1.12-26).
2. This list of worship events and actions is more than can be done in any one service; leaders should be creative and sensitive to people’s needs.
3. Not everything done at the meeting is only focused on “worship;” it is proper to have visiting, sharing, and other enjoyable activities when you gather.
4. This list is a general guideline of what to do when we meet in God’s name.
5. Anything that compromises the meaning and purpose of worship should not be done during worship (Malachi 1.7-9, 1 Corinth 11.22, Rev 2.14,15,20).

VII. When and Where do we Worship?

A. Leadership - those responsible for creating an orderly worship

1. Lord Jesus rules His church through His apostles; whose teaching is recorded in the New Testament (2 Tim 3.16-17, 2 Peter 1.19-21).

2. Elders are commanded to teach the Word of God and lead the church (Acts 14.23, 15.2, 1 Tim 3.2, 5.1,17).
3. Leadership does not always mean total control; Scripture allows leaders to delegate the control of worship services (Titus 1.5).
4. Many voices were heard in N.T. worship (1 Corinth 14.26); every believer is a priest before God (1 Peter 2.9).
5. The elders were responsible for general oversight; but each member was responsible for the orderly control of the service (1 Cor 1.2, 14.26-33).
6. Worship leaders are to be servants not masters; following the example of Jesus (Matt 20.25-28, 1 Peter 5.3).
7. Leading worship is a spiritual responsibility and should be done by a mature believer who is a good model of Jesus (2 Corinth 3.3).

B. Times for Worship

1. In O.T. God ordained the Sabbath days as holy (Exod 20.8-11).
2. N.T. believers worship on Sunday to celebrate the Resurrection; calling it "The Lord's Day" (1 Corinth 16.1-2, Revel 1.10).
3. The pattern of 1 day a week for worship continues in both covenants.
4. God does not forbid worship on other days we may choose to honor Him, such as thanksgivings, Christmas, Good Friday (Romans 14.5).

C. Order of Worship Events

1. Christian believers can learn much from Church history of worship; yet, we are not bound by traditions but by the Word of God (Mark 7.9).
2. It is important to appreciate that our worship services are connected to what God's people have been doing for centuries (2 Timothy 1.5, Revel 1.9).
3. It is important that what we do is understood by people today (1 Cor 14.24,25).
4. It is possible to have both an appreciation for Christian tradition and history and speak to today's generation; many ancient practices can be communicated in modern expressions (Revelation 5.13).

5. In all we do we must remember the main task of the church in the Great Commission - discipling all nations (Matthew 28.18-20).
6. Worship arranged the same way every week can soon lose its power to communicate and fresh sense of meeting with God. Different Biblical themes can be emphasized: God and His attributes, the person of Jesus, the work of Jesus, the Resurrection, God's calling, adoption, sanctification, stewardship, holiness, evangelism, prayer, etc.
7. The main fact that controls worship is that Jesus has finished the work of our salvation; and we respond with grateful joy and praise (Revel 5.9,10).

D. The Place of Worship

1. The N.T. allows believers to worship anywhere (John 4.20,24).
 - a. O.T. believers could pray and teach Scripture anywhere.
 - b. O.T. sacrifices could only be performed in the Tabernacle/Temple.
2. Jesus is our final sacrifice, High Priest, and central altar; He is now in heaven; so anywhere on earth is a good place to worship Him in the Spirit.
3. We are free to determine our places of worship, following general of Scripture and God-given wisdom.
4. One important rule is "no idols" (Exodus 20.4, 1 John 5.21).
 - a. This command does not forbid the use of any pictures in worship.
 - b. Even the Tabernacle/Temple had many images and pictures (Exod 25.17-22, 31-36, 26.1-6, 1 Kings 6.29, 2 Chron 4.2-3).
 - c. The creation itself is filled with pictures and symbols of God (Psalm 19.1 Romans 1.19-20).
 - c. Scripture is filled with word pictures and symbols of God (Exodus 33.21-34.7, Revelation 1.12-18).
 - d. Pictures, symbols, and banners may be used in worship. Yet, we must be careful that we do not become so attached to them that they become an idol. The best way to know is to remove them and see the people's reaction!
 - e. Do not allow any symbol or picture to hinder your "view" of God (Matthew 5.8).

VIII. How should the worshiper Feel?

A. Our Emotions in Worship

1. Some believers may be embarrassed to think about their emotions in worship.
2. Scripture has much to say about the positive value of our emotions in worship.
3. God addresses His Word to the “whole person” - mind, will, and emotions
 - a. These parts of our personality cannot be separated from one another; they all affect one another.
 - b. Some Scripture appeals more to our intellect, for example “Romans”.
 - c. Other Scripture appeals more to our emotions, like the “Psalms.”
 - d. But all Scripture makes appeal to have joy, peace, free from worry and fear, full of courage and confidence in God, and love.

B. Biblical Examples of Feelings in Worship

1. Reverence - profound respect to God; “awe” before Him
 - a. We are to “fear the Lord” (Psalm 5.7, Proverbs 1.7).
 - b. “Fear” does not mean terror of judgment, but great honor and respect.
2. Joy - a glad heart because of who God is and what He has done for us
 - a. Worshipers are to be joyful (Psa 98.4-6, John 8.56, Acts 2.46, Jude 24).
 - b. Joy and fear are not contradictory, but should be combined in our worship to make a perfect balance (Psalm 2.11).
 - c. When a person is deeply touched in their emotions they often feel many different senses; joy, gratitude, wonder, surprise, even fear. So it is to have an encounter with Almighty God (Job 42.5,6, Revel 1.17,18).
 - d. Joyful worship can be loud and exciting (Psalm 47.1, 100.1, Zeph 3.17).
3. Sorrow for sin - a realization that we have offended our Holy God
 - a. This sorrow should be a passing moment and not a lasting feeling

(Psalm 51.1,7,13).

- b. Because we are confident that Jesus has paid the full penalty for our sins.
 - c. The dominant feeling in worship should be one of grateful, holy, joy in Christ (Psalm 122.1, 126.1-6, Ephes 1.3, Philipp 4.4).
4. Participation - the worshiper is actively involved, not passively observing
- a. Worship is our “priestly service” : to God in Christ (Revel 1.6).
 - b. We should go to church more to “give something” - our praise and thanks to God - than to “get something” (Psalm 122.2-4).
 - c. Worship should have a “democratic” structure with many people participating (1 Corinth 14.26).
 - d. Because God is so gracious, He gives to us more than we could ever give back; which makes us want to continue praising Him; so the cycle will continue for all eternity (John 1.16, 1 John 4.19).
5. Faith - fully trusting God in all we do in our life, including our worship
- a. Faith is the heart of our relationship with God (Heb 11.6, Rom 14.23)
 - b. Faith is an emotional expectation that God will keep His promises; to meet with us, to bless us, and to change our lives by the power of His Word (2 Corinthians 4.13-18).
 - c. The person who worships in faith will find their expectations fulfilled (Psalm 145.18-20).
6. Love - for God and for one another (Matt 22.37-40, John 13.34-35, 14.15,21).
7. Boldness - to enter the very presence of God in Christ
- a. In the O.T. only the High Priest could approach God’s Most Holy Place, and only once a year, with an offering of blood (Leviticus 16.34).
 - b. Jesus, our High Priest and perfect sacrifice, has opened a “new and living way” direct to God (Hebrews 4.16, 10.19, 13.16, Eph 3.12).
 - c. Boldness is one major difference between worship in the Old Covenant and the New; Christ brings us near to God (Hebrews 12.28).

8. Family Intimacy - God is our Father, we are His children, Jesus is our Elder Brother (John 15.14-15, Romans 8.14-16, Hebrews 2.11-12).

C. Style and Atmosphere of our Worship

1. Worship leaders should direct the overall “tone” of the service, for example:
 - a. Formal or informal?
 - b. Quiet or noisy?
 - c. Friendly or solemn?

2. Scripture allows freedom to decide these issues as is best for each situation.
 - a. We should not think that people must be solemn to truly worship God.
 - b. One can be overwhelmed by God’s presence in an informal setting.

3. Humor is proper in worship as we see from many examples in Scripture (Gen 18.13-15, 21.6,7, Prov 26.15, Isa 44.12-20, Matt 19.24, 23.24, Acts 12).
 - a. Humor allows us to see ourselves from God’s perspective; we are small and foolish, He is great and wise (Psalm 2.7).
 - b. Humor can also express deep joy in the Lord (2 Corinth 9.7).
 - c. Human emotions can quickly turn from one to the other, so that joy can turn to deep sorrow for sin and a deep desire for God’s grace.
 - d. Humor can develop a bond between the leader and the people who see that he is one of them, not someone high and untouchable.
 - e. Care must be taken that we have “holy” laughter which pleases God.

3. Our style must be understandable to those we are trying to reach (1 Cor 14.24).
 - a. Love demands that we try and promote understanding (1 Cor 13.7).
 - b. We are also sending a message by our body language, using popular terms instead of technical ones, musical styles (1 Cor 12.27).
 - c. It is probably most biblical to have a friendly, informal style, in the modern language of the people; to share God’s welcoming love.

4. We should be willing to set aside our prejudices and personal tastes in worship; as we seek to evangelize unbelievers and edify the believers (Rom 15.7).

D. Worship that is True

1. Believers may have periods without “feeling” the presence of God even though they remain faithful; Ex. William Cowper (Psalms 42 & 43, 2 Corinth 12.7-10).
2. In worship, and in everything, God is Sovereign; that is He chooses to work where and when He wills (1 Kings 19.11-13, Romans 11.33-36).
3. Deep experiences of the presence of God can occur in many different settings; in a worship service, during a family crisis, in evangelism, while having one’s personal prayer time, at a conference - be open and seeking God.
4. Sometimes a change in worship styles or place of worship allows us to experience God’s presence in an unique way (Exodus 3.1,2).
5. There is no special technique or formula for meeting with God; except the teaching of the Word of God and prayer.
 - a. We are to give Him honor whether we “feel” like doing so or not.
 - b. We do so because He is worthy of our praise, and He commands it (Psalm 150.6, Malachi 1.11, Revelation 4.11).
6. We must make sure that our hearts are pure and truthful in His presence (Psalm 15, 24.3,4, 51.10-12, Matthew 5.8).

IX. How does God speak to us in Worship? - The Word and Sacraments

A. The Word of God

1. God speaks to us through the reading and preaching of Scripture.
 - a. To hear God’s word is to encounter God Himself (1 Corinthians 2.12-15, 1 Thessalonians 1.5).
 - b. God’s Word itself is divine (Psalm 29.4, John 1.1).
2. The Word cannot be separated from God; in everything He does He speaks:
 - a. Creation (Psalm 33.6)
 - b. Providence (Psalm 148)
 - c. Judgment (John 12.48)
 - d. Salvation (Romans 1.16, James 1.21)

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- a. Creation (Psalm 33.6)
 - b. Providence (Psalm 148)
 - c. Judgment (John 12.48)
 - d. Salvation (Romans 1.16, James 1.21)
3. God's Word itself has divine attributes, it is:
- a. Eternal (Psalm 119.89, 160).
 - b. Omnipotent (Isaiah 55.11)
 - c. Perfect (Psalm 19.7-8)
 - d. An object of worship (Psalm 119.120, 161-2, 56.4)
4. Because of this, we must never take the Word of God for granted.
- a. Whenever we hear God's Word it demands and deserves our attention.
 - b. To hear the Word of God is to meet with God Himself.
 - c. We may not, nor should we seek to, have an experience with God that is not according to the teaching of His Word.
 - d. Those who speak His Word must do so with great care (2 Tim 2.15).
5. God's Word brings great blessing when we receive it in faith (Mark 4.20).
6. God's Word brings judgment when we fail to receive and obey it (Isa 6.9-10).
7. God's Word never leaves us the same, we are either better or worse after hearing it; so we must hear it in faith (2 Corinth 2.15,16).

B. The Reading of Scripture

- 1. The first written Scripture was on tablets of stone (Exodus 24.12)
 - a. These 10 commands were the main "words of the covenant" (Ex 34.28).
 - b. Israel was to obey the whole law of God which they heard (Deut 29).
- 2. God expected that His Word be read to His people (Deut 31-32).

3. In the same way, the Apostles expected that their letters be read to the N.T. Churches (Coloss 4.16, 1 Thess 5.27, 1 Tim 4.13).
4. Reading of Scripture is more than just preparation for the sermon, it is itself an act of worship; a renewal of God's Covenant promises.

C. Preaching and Teaching the Scripture

1. This is to explain and apply the Word of God to the believer.
2. It is usually through preaching that people believe in Jesus (Romans 10.14-17, 1 Corinth 1.21, 2.1-5).
3. The Second Helvetic Confession says "The preaching of the Word of God is the Word of God."
 - a. This does not mean that the preacher is infallible or cannot be corrected (Acts 17.11, 18.24-26).
 - b. It means that the preacher who faithfully and accurately presents the message of Scripture is speaking God's own Word.
 - c. True preaching is to be confronted by the power, authority, and presence of God.
4. Any believer may have the privilege of sharing God's Word in worship.
 - a. In the Jewish synagogue any Jewish man could be appointed to read the Word of God to the congregation (Luke 4.16-19).
 - b. This is the same practice in the early church (1 Corinth 14.26)
 - c. Every believer is responsible to edify the congregation (Heb 10.24-25).
 - d. All believers teach one another as they sing (Coloss 3.16).
 - e. All Spirit-filled believers have wisdom (1 Cor 2.12-15, 1 John 2.27).
5. There are some believers gifted with special abilities to teach the Scriptures (Romans 12.7, 1 Corinth 12.29, 1 Peter 4.10,11).
 - a. Ezra was a gifted teacher of Israel (Nehemiah 8).
 - b. Older women are to teach younger women (Titus 2.4,5).

6. To clearly understand and apply the Word of God is of primary importance.

D. Drama

1. There are no specific commands in Scripture to use drama in worship.

2. What God gives are general commands to preach the word.

3. Drama could be a proper application of how to communicate God's message.

4. Scripture contains many examples of drama:

a. O.T. prophets sometimes did symbolic acts (Jer 13.1-7, Ezek 4.1-15).

b. Jesus told dramatic stories (Luke 12.13-21, 16.19-31, 18.1-8).

c. Paul's letters contain dramatic dialogue (1 Cor 15.29-34, 2 Corinth 11).

d. The book of Revelation is filled with dramatic action (Revel 13).

5. God often teaches His people through dramatic acts:

a. The Book of Job

b. O.T. sacrifices and feasts

c. N.T. sacraments - baptism and the Lord's Supper

6. There are problems to consider in the use of drama:

a. Teaching is usually better presented through a speaker than a drama.

b. Dramas can be difficult to write, plan, and rehearse.

c. Poor drama can be a distraction from the message you want to share.

d. Costs can be too great sometimes.

e. With sophisticated technology and videos widely available, it is hard to compete with the standard people have become used to seeing.

7. Yet, Scripture gives us the freedom to use drama in worship services.

E. Blessings

1. God can speak to the church through words of blessing; at the beginning of

worship like a greeting; or as a closing benediction. For example:

- a. Aaron's blessing (Numbers 6.22-27)
- b. Apostolic benediction (2 Corinthians 13.14)

2. Through such blessings God identifies the people as His own; His name is placed upon them, the promises of the Gospel are renewed.
3. Scripture does not command the use of such blessings in worship, but they are appropriate words from God to His covenant people in Christ.

F. Censures

1. This is the opposite of the blessing, it is a word of rebuke to covenant breakers.
2. Jesus teaches this is sometimes necessary in the church (Matthew 18.18).
3. Paul taught that the church could act with apostolic authority (1 Corinth 5.3-5).

G. Calls to Worship

1. Readings from Scripture to invite the congregation into worship; a biblical reminder of the reason for the meeting (Psa 95.1-7, 96.1-3).
2. This reminder can also be done through a song, prayer, or exhortation.

H. The Sacraments - Baptism and the Lord's Supper

1. These are signs and seals of God's covenant of grace; symbols of our salvation and promises of our salvation in Christ (1 Corinthians 12.13).
2. Through these ordinances God identifies us as His people and binds us to one another in Christ.
3. The blessing received is the same as that received through the Scriptures; these are visual symbols of the Gospel promises - "visible words".
4. Their blessing is not magical, but received by faith in God's gracious promises.
 - a. Baptism symbolizes cleansing from sin (Rom 6.4-7, 1 Peter 3.21).
 - b. The Lord's Supper (or Communion, or Eucharist) is a spiritual meal which proclaims the death of Jesus (1 Corinth 11.26).
5. The sacraments could be the sign of a curse for those who are faithless. (Luke 12.47-48, Hebrews 6.4-6, 10.26-31)

- a. The waters of baptism symbolize an ordeal of threatening waters of judgment (Luke 12.50).
 - b. The Lord's Supper can bring death to those who eat without careful self-examination (1 Corinth 11.27-34).
6. The blessings of the sacrament do not happen automatically, they come only to those who receive the sacraments by faith (Hebrews 11.6).

X. How do we speak to God? - Prayer and Praise

A. Prayer - "an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies" Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 98

1. Praise - telling God how wonderful He is

- a. In Scripture God's people often acknowledge His greatness; His eternity, wisdom, power, love, mercy, and justice (Psa 139.17).
- b. Such adoration is the heart of worship (Psalm 100).

2. Requests - bringing our concerns and needs to God in prayer

- a. The main rule of the N.T. for requests is that they be made "in Jesus name" (John 14.13-14, 15.16, 16.23-26).
- b. This means our prayer should be pleasing to God, not our will (1 John 5.14).
- c. This also means it is accordance with Scripture.
 - 1) "Prayer is asking God for what He has already promised in His Word" - Martin Luther
 - 2) We may ask God for things not specifically mentioned in Scripture; if our request comes from a pure heart before God (Luke 22.42, 2 Corinth 12.7-10).
 - 3) God's "no" is only temporary; every godly prayer will be answered in heaven (John 14.14).
- d. Praying for God's will means holding a loose grip on our own desires for the overall good of God's kingdom and glory (Matt 6.33).

3. Confession of Sin - telling God what He already knows about us

- a. We approach God as sinners saved by grace, through the blood of Jesus.
- b. Although God forgives our sin, we do not forget it (1 John 1.8-10).
- c. Sins of believers are as grievous to God than those of unbelievers.
- d. True confession must involve repentance from sin (Luke 13.3).

4. Thanksgiving - realizing we owe God everything we have and are

- a. All good gift to everyone comes from God (Matt 5.45, James 1.16).
- b. God does not owe anyone anything; His blessings come to us because of His kindness (Romans 2.4).
- c. The entire Christian life is to be one of thanksgiving; to be thankless is to despise both the gifts and the Giver (2 Timothy 3.1-4).
- d. Biblical prayer is filled with thanksgiving; even in the midst of great difficulties (Acts 5.41).
- e. We are to give thanks "in" everything, not "for" everything. That is, we acknowledge that even "in" the most terrible situations, things we could never be thankful for, God is working His perfect purposes (1 Thessalonians 5.18).

B. Confessions of Faith

- 1. There are many Scriptures which contain summaries of our faith (Deuteronomy 6.4-5, Romans 1.3-4, 4.24-25, 1 Corinth 15.3-5).
- 2. Baptism involves a public confession of faith (Acts 2.38, Romans 10.9,10).
- 3. Churches recite different historic, biblical, creeds which give a statement of essential doctrines; like Apostle's and Nicene Creeds.
- 4. Such creeds are the church's summary statement of what they believe the Bible teaches (2 Corinthians 4.13).
- 5. Creeds do not need to be recited in every worship service; churches also declare their beliefs in prayers, teachings, hymns, and sacraments.

C. Congregational Responses

1. God's people are to express their enthusiastic agreement with what God says.
 - a. This may be done through responsive readings (Psalm 136).
 - b. Or even by the reciting of the "Amen" - "May it be true!"
2. There are historic statements which have been used for many centuries:
 - a. Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And with your spirit.
 - b. Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up to the Lord.
3. Such statements can be a way to apply biblical principles and build up one another in their faith (Ephesians 4.29).
4. Such statements must be meaningful and understandable to the people of today, not just meaningless rituals and words (2 Chronicles 16.9).

D. Individual Participation

1. The early church had many people participate in worship (1 Corinth 14.26).
 - a. This was to be done in an orderly way (1 Corinth 14.29-33).
 - b. Elders are to oversee, not control, the service; the Lord is to be the one in control (Habak 2.20, Matthew 18.20, Acts 4.32).
2. Individual members should be free to participate in various ways in worship:
 - a. Give testimony of God's work in their lives for all to give thanks
 - b. Offer requests for congregational prayer.
 - c. Lead in prayer themselves.
 - d. Teach and present songs to the congregation.
 - e. Ask questions about the teaching of the Word.
 - f. Present their own insights from their own Bible study.
3. Sometimes the people should be offered opportunity to participate with the use of a written script; i.e. Scripture readings, prayers, testimony, etc.
 - a. This allows those who feel more shy to be more comfortable.
 - b. Through this method believers gain more confidence in speaking freely.
4. Our deepest, and most important, participation is not what we say and do, but

what is in our hearts and minds (1 Corinth 14.15, 2 Corinth 10.3-5).

5. Whether or not people participate depends on what God does in their hearts (Jeremiah 20.9, Acts 4.20).
6. One of the best motivations for people to respond is Spirit-filled, biblical preaching and prayer (Luke 24.32, Acts 17.11, 18.28, 1 Thess 1.5).

XI. What about Music in Worship? - Challenges and Controversy

A. Why Music?

1. God's people are not only to speak, but also to sing, His message of truth (1 Chron 16.9, Psalm 33.2-3, Coloss 3.16).
2. Human speech has a kind of natural music; rhythm, timbre, and pitch
 - a. Music is closely related to the spoken word; all language is musical.
 - b. Adding instruments, melodies, and harmonies gives words a new life.
3. The Word of God itself has musical characteristics.
 - a. Many of the Scriptures are written in poetic and musical form.
 - b. This form serves to drive the words into our hearts (Deut 31.19).
 - c. Poetry is used to describe the creation of mankind (Gen 1.27).
 - d. Poetic-music describes the institution of marriage (Gen 2.23).
 - e. God's curse and promise of salvation (Genesis 3.14-18).
 - f. Lamech's proud and murderous boasts (Gen 4.23-24).
 - g. God's Covenants with Noah, Abraham, and Hagar (Genesis 8.22, 9.6,25-27, 12.2-3, 16.11-12).
 - h. Isaac's blessings on Jacob and Esau (Gen 27.27-29, 39-40).
 - i. Israel's blessing on his 12 sons (Genesis 49).
 - j. God's deliverance from Egypt was celebrated with songs (Exod 15).
 - k. God's Covenant with Moses was sung (Deuteronomy 32).

4. In Ancient World, the most important things were expressed in poetry & song.
 - a. Written texts were less available and people were not as literate; songs and poems were much more easily remembered.
 - b. God wants His Word to get into our hearts (Psalm 1, 119.11,34,36,69).
5. During periods of revival in the Church, new songs and music is produced; salvation and praise go together (1 Chron 16.7-36, Psa 51.14-15,12, 2 Chron 15.4,14, 23.11-13, 29.15,25-30, Zeph 3.9-17).
6. The most important reason we use music in worship is because it honors God.
 - a. He commands it (Psalm 29.1,2, 33.1-3, 47.1, 50.1-5,22-23, 66.1-4).
 - b. He delights in it; He created music to glorify Himself and edify His people.
7. When we sing God's praise, the Lord Jesus is singing with us (Psalm 22.22, Zephaniah 3.17, Romans 15.9).

B. What does music do?

1. Music has many specific functions:
 - a. Praise (Psalms 8; 147-150).
 - b. Thanksgiving (Psalms 50.14, 100.4).
 - c. Supplication (Psalm 5.1-3).
 - d. Confession of sin (Psalm 51).
 - e. Confession of faith (1 Timothy 3.16).
 - f. Lament (Psalms 6, 10, 137).
 - g. Blessings (Psalms 4.6, 80.3,7,19 86.16).
 - h. Teaching (Psalm 1, Colossians 3.16).
2. Music is not an "element" or part of worship on its own, it is a way of doing all the other elements of worship; i.e. praise, prayer, teaching, etc.
3. Because it is such a powerful tool, music must be used with great care.

C. Why is music controversial?

1. Music is one of the main components of worship; it effects the entire service.
2. When the music is "bad" the entire service seems to be "bad"; and vice versa.
3. Music touches the heart of the worshiper deeply and makes a lasting impression.

4. There has always been controversy in the Church over the issue of music.

- a. Controversy over the words of songs; because the words convey the theological and biblical interpretation of the Church.
- b. Controversy also over the music; instruments, choirs, and soloists.

D. Accompanying periods of revival there are new musical developments in the Church.

1. During the Protestant Reformation, Lutherans produced new hymns and Calvinists made new musical arrangements for the Psalms.

- a. Both groups used borrowed "secular" tunes for their arrangements.
- b. Both groups used languages of the people, not Latin.
- c. Both groups were criticized for their "new" musical presentations.

2. During the Evangelical Awakening in the 1700's, led by the Wesley's and George Whitefield, there was a great outpouring of new music.

- a. Charles Wesley and August Toplady were some of the new writers
- b. They stressed a personal experience of redemption; such as, "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me" and "And Can it Be that I Should Gain?"
- c. They too were criticized for this emphasis on personal faith.

3. In the late 1800's there was another great output of Christian music.

- a. Fanny Crosby, Ira Sankey, Frances Havergal, and Philip Bliss used popular music styles and common words of their day.
- b. Critics said they were not doctrinally solid and too subjective.

4. Up to the present day, Christian music is changing greatly.

- a. In recent years there have been many "Scripture choruses."
- b. Popular music styles have been both appreciated and attacked.
- c. The pace of change today is great because of modern communications.
- d. "Non-Christian" culture of the world is hard for the Church to resist.
- e. Believers must be even more open and flexible to musical varieties.

E. How do we respond to these changes in the area of Christian music?

1. Change in worship is biblical if we want to reach a changing world (Acts 2.8).
2. Some believers find change to be very painful and difficult.
 - a. One's worship language is the language of their "heart"; older believers may have grown up loving certain songs and styles of worship.
 - b. They should remember that the goal of worship is to meet with God; not to get a good feeling from songs and memories of past experiences.
 - c. Younger believers must be sensitive to others feelings (Matt 20.20-26).
 - d. A biblical balance must be achieved to insure the Gospel message is always relevant to the present day society (1 Corinth 14.24,25).
3. Focus on personal experience of salvation is biblical, it was the central point of the Protestant Reformation; but it should not overshadow our primary focus on the glory of God (1 Corinth 1.30,31, Galat 2.20, 6.14). ✓
4. Worship songs must always be biblical in their content (John 17.17).
 - a. When a song in a new style is unbiblical, then we do not reject the style; instead we produce biblical songs in that new style for God's glory.
 - b. Songs are poetry, not prose, they may not teach each doctrine perfectly.
 - c. No song can say everything there is to say about a specific doctrine.
5. Music of each new period of history has grown increasingly complex.
 - a. Critics of new music consider it too simple and shallow; saying older music is more developed and complex. This is often true.
 - b. History shows that each period in Church Music History grows deeper.
 - c. Both complex hymns (see Psalms 68, 69, 119) and more simple songs (see Psalms 23, 117, 131, 133) have an important place in worship.
 - d. We should be sensitive to the spiritual maturity and musical abilities of our congregation in the selection of songs and hymns (Hebrews 6.1).
6. Believers should be concerned about "musical quality" (God deserves our best), but this concern is balanced by love and sensitivity to others (1 Cor 13.4-6).

7. We must promote both joy and reverence through our worship music.

a. Older people often say youth music has no reverence, youth criticize elders for having no joy.

b. We should realize there are different “musical languages” in different cultures and traditions.

1) Joy is often expressed in major keys and fast speeds; a feeling of reverence is often produced at slower tempos.

2) And youth have more energy (joy?) and elders move at a slower tempo (lacking in joy? reverence?).

8. Music is a great tool for getting God’s Word into our hearts; decisions we make about worship songs must be done with care, love, and sensitivity to the body. Because our greatest desire is that God will be pleased with our praise.

F. Music of the Body: Dance, Lifting our Hands, Clapping

1. People communicate with words, but also with “body language”; in a similar way God speaks through His Word and through natural revelation (Psalm 19.1,7).

2. God wants our body, as well as our spirit, to give Him praise.

a. God approves of His people dancing His praise (Exod 15.20, 1 Sam 21.11, 29.5, 2 Sam 6.14, Psalms 30.11, 149.3, 150.4, Jeremiah 31.13).

b. Dance is not an element of worship which must be included in our worship, yet it can enhance our worship occasionally.

c. God also commands us to: “clap our hands” (Psa 47.1), and “lift up our hands” (Neh 8.6, Psa 28.2, 63.4, 1 Tim 2.8) unto the Lord.

3. We must carefully consider what kind of body language is proper for worship.

a. Dance in modern society is often erotic and perverted; like anything we do in worship, we must carefully make sure we are more influenced by Scripture than by cultural values, tastes, and standards.

b. As a reaction, some churches have banned any dance completely. Yet, we cannot ignore a form of worship which God has sanctioned.

c. “Sacred dance” should be a spontaneous response to God’s blessing; the simple, natural, physical expression of reverence and joy.

G. The Words of our Worship Songs

1. The words we sing should be both Scriptural and understandable; that is they should honor God and edify His people.
2. Christians would benefit from making a greater use of the Psalms in worship.
 - a. As part of Scripture, they are a great treasury of doctrinal truth.
 - b. Believers should imitate the thoughts and feelings of the psalmists.
 - c. The Psalms present a realistic, balanced view of our life of faith; honest, sad, happy, discouraged, joyful, struggling, and contented.
 - d. In the Psalms we see a great variety of songs; some long and complex, others short and simple; some addressed to God, others to people.
 - e. They look forward to God's deliverance through His Messiah.
 - f. Their ultimate desire is to be with God forever (Psa 27.4, 73.28).
3. Living after Jesus' resurrection means we have even more reason to praise God
 - a. Our worship songs should emphasize Jesus; his miraculous birth, teaching ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and return.
 - b. Because of Jesus we have more biblical experiences; being justified by faith in His finished work, adoption into His family, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, membership in His Church, witnessing to the world.
 - c. We do not look forward to God sending a Messiah; we look back with praise that He has come, and forward to His coming again (Acts 1.11).
 - d. Even in this world of evil and sadness, we know God is in control (Romans 8.28); He will judge the wicked (1 Corinth 16.22, Galat 1.8, 2 Tim 4.14) and reward His saints (Rom 8.18, 1 Peter 1.1-8).

H. The Tunes of our Worship Songs

1. We do not know the tunes of the worship songs in Scripture. Perhaps this is to encourage every culture to put the biblical message in their own tunes.
2. Scripture does list a wide variety of instruments used in the praise of God: "trumpet, harp, lyre, tambourine, strings, flute, cymbals" (Psalm 150.3-5).

3. Scripture also records dance, clapping, loud noises, and shouting (Exod 19.16, Isa 6.4, Psa 33.3, 98.4, 100.1) in their worship of God. Thus, their worship was often strongly rhythmic and loud, but sometimes quiet (Psa 23, 46.10, 131.1-3).
4. The most important rule for music is that it reinforces, and does not detract from, the message of our worship songs (1 Corinthians 14.8,9).
 - a. The blend of words and music should support one another.
 - b. Generally, loud, rhythmic music is appropriate for triumphant texts, and quiet music is appropriate for words of comfort in sorrow; though there are exceptions to these general rules.
5. Within the Church there are “weaker” and “stronger” believers who can or cannot worship with various music styles, depending on their understanding, past experiences, and upbringing (read Romans 14 replacing “food” with “music”); in all things we should let love and truth be our guide.
6. Differences in musical styles and tastes are not divisions in the body. Instead, they are evidence that God is working out His eternal purpose in bringing every people, language, and musical style to praise Him (Revelation 7.9,10).

“Mission is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the renewed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.”
 Pastor John Piper

XII. Cross-Cultural Worship

A. God’s Church - Local, Global, Heavenly

1. Local - “in Almaty”

a. Every Christian church is located in a specific place.

1) This is seen from the N.T. letters to various churches (Romans 1.7, 1 Corinthians 1.2, Galatians 1.2).

2) So the local church takes root in the soil of its own community.

b. Each church reflects the community where it grows; language/s, clothes, forms of greetings, spatial distance, length of service, musical instruments.

2. Global - “all over the world”

- a. Each church is part of the Church worldwide (Colossians 1.6).
- b. We are part of the same Body of Christ with believers everywhere; across the street and around the world (1 Corinthians 12.12-14).
 - 1) No local church exists independently they are all inter-dependent; reliant on God and connected to one another (1 Cor 12.18-21).
 - 2) The ministry of the Church is only complete when each part of the Body is doing its work (1 Corinthians 12.4-7).
 - 3) What is most needed in the Church is love (1 Corinthians 13).
- c. Jesus' promise to build "His Church" is in effect today (Matthew 16.18).
 - 1) This does not mean that every local church will exist forever
 - a) Most of the churches from N.T. days are gone (Rev 2.5).
 - b) We cannot claim that our particular fellowship will remain until Jesus returns to earth (Rev 2.26).
 - 2) It means that God's truth, made known through His Church, will endure forever (Matthew 16.17, 1 Timothy 3.15, 2 John 2).

3. Heavenly - "citizens of heaven"

- a. Christian churches are located in this world but they really "in Christ" (Ephesians 1.1, Philippians 1.1, Colossians 1.2).
 - 1) Believers are saved because of their union with Christ: He is our righteous representative (Romans 5.15-19, 1 Corinthians 1.30).
 - 2) Paul uses the phrase "in Christ" more than 150 times in his 13 N.T. letters (Ephesians 1.1,3,4,6,7,9,11,12,13)
 - 3) We have been crucified with Christ (Galatians 2.20); we are now risen with Christ (Colossians 3.1); and we are already seated with Christ in heavenly places (Ephesians 2.6).
- b. Church members have a "dual citizenship" - on earth and in Heaven (Mark 10.29,30, Philippians 1.1, 3.20).
 - 1) Nothing in this world will last forever, including our churches (Isaiah 40.6-8, 2 Peter 3.10-13).

- 2) Anything in this world will always have a sense of imperfection and incompleteness (1 Corinthians 13.12, 2 Corinthians 5.2).
 - 3) Our primary focus in church ministry and worship is to be on things which last forever (Matt 10.26-28, Hebrews 12.27,28).
- c. One day we will gather with all believers, from every place, from all time, in the presence of God (2 Timothy 4.8, Revel 20.11-15).
- 1) We will gather together to worship God (Revelation 4 & 5).
 - 2) Even in heaven we will retain our creation / cultural distinctions (Revelation 7.9).
 - 3) Yet these will not hinder our common song of worship and praise to God (Revelation 7.10, 15.3)
 - 4) Every worship service on earth is a “practice session” for our eternal gathering in the presence of God (Revelation 1.10).
- d. Each local church should reflect the fact it is local, global, and heavenly in their life and worship now.
- 1) The church should display that racial barriers are broken in Christ (Galatians 3.28, Ephesians 2.13-18).
 - 2) The church should show concern for believers everywhere (2 Corinthians 8.13, Galatians 6.10).
 - 3) The church should be an “Embassy of Heaven” on earth (Matthew 18.20, Ephesians 3.10, Revelation 1.12,13).

B. Questions about Areas of Cultural Differences which can effect Worship

As we have studied many Biblical principles on worship it, it is good to apply them to some of the questions which we face as we lead our churches in worship, for example:

1. Individualism or Group Mentality

- a. Do we present various worship options; styles of music, times of day, days of the week, locations, languages, to reach the many kinds of people in the community? Or, is the community so much the same that one worship service will please everyone?
- b. How important is it to change some aspect of our worship because

one person complains about it; or does the fact that most people are happy mean things remain as they are?

2. International or Local

- a. Do the leaders of the church have to be from the same ethnic group?
- b. Can the church borrow worship forms and songs from abroad?
- ? c. Must the gospel always have an "international" dimension?

3. Worship Times

- a. Is it necessary that the church meet on Sunday? How about other days which may be more convenient for a particular culture (Islamic)?
- b. How do we determine the best time of day for worship services?
- ? c. How important is it to begin the service "on time"? What, exactly, do we consider "on time"?
- d. How long should the service of worship last?
- e. Should there be food which follows the gathering? If so, who is responsible to provide it and prepare it?

4. Learning Styles

- a. What is the best form of communication for our people to comprehend the message of God's Word; preaching, drama, song, poetry?
- ? b. How "literate" are our people? How much time do they have for reading? Do they have access to good lighting at night for reading?
- ? c. How much Christian material is available in their language? Affordable?

5. Musical Issues

- a. What kinds of music do the people of the secular community enjoy? What are the musical tastes of various age groups?
- b. How is music used in the society to communicate ideas?
- c. What kind(s) of instruments are available/affordable to your believers?
- d. Who among your congregation has musical abilities? How is their

walk with God? How are their leadership skills?

- e. Are there certain forms of music which would contradict instead of communicate the message of God's Word?
- f. How important is variety of musical styles/instruments to your people?
- g. What music has been produced by other believers, of different churches and Christian denominations, in your language?

6. Meeting Place

- a. Is the place you meet easy to find?
- b. Is the place you meet considered by the non-believing neighbors a place they would like to be in?
- c. Who is responsible for cleaning the meeting place, and how often is it done?
- d. How is the meeting room arranged? Who has made that decision?
- e. Is the room arrangement; i.e. method and places of seating (on the floor or in chairs), where leader is, where musicians are, etc., done in a way that is comfortable and familiar to the people of your location?
- f. Does everyone stay together all the time? Are there special facilities and programs for children?
- g. How will it be determined that it is best to find a new meeting place, should it become necessary?

7. Target Audience

- a. Who are the people you are trying to reach through your church? language? age groups? economic/social status?
- b. What specific ways have you structured the ministry to reach these people?
- c. What do the leaders of the church wear during services? Is their manner of dress expected to be the standard for the others?
- d. What would you be willing to change about your ministry in order to more effectively reach your target audience?

- 7
e. Are you so busy trying to reach people that you have forgotten that God Himself is our real "target" in worship?

Obviously these are big questions which are sometimes hard to answer. Different ministries and churches will have different answers. Yet, these questions will be helpful to discuss with your leaders in order to make your ministry more effective, and your worship more pleasing to the Lord. May He be glorified in all we do!

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