

Tea Tree Gully Community Church

Worship (part 4) Wrong Worship vs Right Worship

Psalm 29 v 2

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

Psalm 35 v 9 & 10a

...my soul will rejoice in the Lord and delight in his salvation. My whole being (spirit, soul and body) will exclaim, "Who is like you, O Lord?"

Previously stated in Worship pt 1, was that worship is more than thanksgiving and praise. It involves an engaged heart and affected heart. However, real worship will involve thanksgiving and praise.

Let's define to the most irreducible simplicity what worship is and then expand it from there.

Definition of Worship

Worship is:

"Our response (our minds attention and our hearts affection) both in personal and corporate settings to God – for who he is and what he has done, expressed in and by the things we say and the way we live."

Let's explore this, break it down into the following 4 points.

1. It involves acts of worship and a life of worship.
2. It includes private and corporate worship.
3. It has vertical and horizontal relationship outcomes.
4. It involves all three areas of our being – spirit, soul and body.

1. Acts of worship and a life of worship.

Our worship is made up of;

- Specific acts or expressions (private and public – devotion and celebration) where we come before God intentionally to worship (cover in more detail in point 4) and

- An ongoing life of worship and service and witness unto him.

Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Heb 13:15 - 16

This reflects a heart of worship which involves our being and our doing.

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. Ps 24:3-5

Clean hands talks about our doing and a pure heart talks about our being. Our being is reflected in our speech. As Jesus said: **The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. Luk 6:45**

As we are transformed by the renewing of our mind and grow in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ there should be an outward sign (fruit) of this in how we speak and what we do. Things such as thankfulness, gratitude, graciousness, love expressed by word and deed should be evident as we are refined and matured in love by the Holy Spirit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Gal 5:22-23a

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant,.... he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! Therefore, my dear friends,....continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. Php 2:5-13

We should be an evident work in progress, becoming like who we behold (worship), bearing Christ-like fruit that honours the Lord.

Conversely our hearts can be poisoned by bitterness, un-forgiveness, idols and evil desires and indifference. Our worship will be directly affected by the state of our heart and can act as a good indicator of our heart.

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

Pro 4:23

2. Private and corporate worship.

We walk with the Lord during the week in personal devotion and a life lived in worship through all that we do and we meet corporately for celebration.

So our mind set when we come to worship corporately should be that "I'm going worshipping to Church" rather than "I'm going to church to worship"

Our corporate worship should be an extension of our personal life of worship not a separate detached activity from the rest of our life.

Questions:

- How prepared are we personally to enter into worship when we arrive to meet for corporate celebration?
- Did we get up early enough to not arrive rushed in our spirits?
- What have we been feeding on during the week?
(all the more important with the dust of a media drive world).

3. It has vertical and horizontal relationship outcomes.

And he (Jesus) answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." Luk 10:27

Heb 13:15-16 above also applies here.

Mat 5:23 - 24 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Quote: Gary Kinnaman pg 67, The Beginner's Guide to Praise & Worship

Worship is not a private affair, and if I understand Jesus correctly here (**Matt 5:23-24**), God doesn't want our religion unless it transforms our relationships with others. This sounds a lot like the Great Commandment: **"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbour as yourself"** (**Luk 10:27**). I heard someone say one time that the true test of our faith is if we love one another as much as we love Jesus. That's just a more radical way to say, **"If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen"** (**1 Joh 4:20**)

Worshipping God and relating in a godly way to his people are mutually inclusive.

It's part of fellowship and community.

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Eph 4:31-32

4. It involves all three areas of our being – spirit, soul and body.

There is little said in relation to worship in the NT. We need to understand that the whole area of worship with its requirements and forms in the OT was an entrenched and familiar part of Hebrew life. There was no need to explain the things under the law that were fulfilled by Christ as distinct from explaining what Christ had accomplished. This is the reason why we need to have a good understanding of the significance of the ways of worship in the OT to fully appreciate the incredible provision and situation we now have in the NT through Jesus Christ. Our basis for what we do in worship should not be based on some modern day trends or fads or cultural rituals or traditions. There is plenty of scriptural foundation for how we should worship.

ASIDE: A quick overview / summary of Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus helps paint a picture here.

In Genesis we see man ruined, in Exodus we see man redeemed, and in Leviticus we see man worshipping.

In Genesis we see the man of worship, in Exodus we see the place of worship, and in Leviticus we see the manner of worship. In Exodus the Tabernacle is described and constructed while in Leviticus the prescribed sacrificial offerings (including tithes and offerings) and the ministry of the priesthood is introduced and outlined.

It's not possible to cover everything linking OT and NT facets of worship here. That is a whole study in itself. Suffice to say that it should alert us to the incredible privilege we now have in the NT and that we need to come to fully appreciate what we have in Christ. Hebrews chapter 9 gives a summary of the significance of this.

Heb 9:1-2a & 5b, 6b-15, 23-26 Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. (2a) A tabernacle was set up. (5b)But we cannot discuss these things in detail now. (6b) the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. (7) But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. (8) The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. (9) This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. (10) They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order. (11) When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. (12) He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. (13) The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. (14) How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (15) For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal

inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

(23) It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. (24) For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. (25) Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. (26) Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming - not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Heb 10:1

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Eph 3:12

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1Pe 2:9

Now that the priesthood of all believers has been established by Christ's fulfillment of the law we are all able to come into God's presence to worship and offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.

Psalm 100 describes NT worship with OT imagery (gates, courts, most holy place). There is a progression into God's (manifested) presence.

Read: Psalm 100

Worship begins with thanksgiving. We either go forward or we go back at this point. In Romans 1:21-32 we see people going backwards, spiraling downwards

- **Verse 21** - ceased to thank God
- **Verses 22-25** - practiced idolatry, "substitute worship"
- **Verses 24-31** - immorality
- **Verse 32** - rebellious

In **Psalm 100** we see how to go forward and upward

- **Verse 2** - coming into his presence with singing
(**Ps 95:2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.**)
- **Verse 4** - thanksgiving
- **Verse 4** - offering up praise
- **Verse 4** - blessing his name (worship)

Sacrifices of thanksgiving (**Ps 50:23, 116:17**) and praise (**Heb 13:15**) may well be sacrifices because we don't feel like doing it. But, ultimately as gratitude rises in our hearts and awe and joy and fascination are released as we are changed in his presence our outward expressions should be an expression of our heart of worship.

Our experiences can often be described by the phrase;

"It begins with an act of the will and ends in a desire (an expression) of the heart"

Worship emanates / flows out of a disposition of heart and mind that is displayed externally by visible and audible acts / expressions (body and voice).

Expressions of praise

Listed briefly, these topics can be expanded on at another time but provide a summary of way we can worship acceptably.

- Singing, speaking. Making a joyful noise, praying;
- Crying aloud, shouting, laughing;
- Playing instruments; **2 Sam6:5** – lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, cymbals **Dan 3:5, Ps 150** – trumpet etc
- Lifting up hands, waving our hands; to confirm our trust in God, reaching out for God, surrender, vulnerability, opening up to God, and accepting his capacity to protect. We bless with uplifted hands. **Ps 134:2, 141:2, 63:4, 143:6, 1 Tim 2:8, Heb 12:12-13**
- Clapping, clap offerings;

- Speaking in tongues; **Acts 10:46, 1 Cor 14:2, 16-17**
- Singing in the Spirit; **1 Cor 14:14-15**
- Dancing – individually, corporately, in chorus;
- Presenting of our lives to God; **2 Sam 24:24, 1 Ch 21:24, Heb 13:15-16**
- Presenting material sacrifices to God;
- Bowing down, bending of knees, falling down;
- Marching; **Josh 6, Ps 68:24-26** This can denote glory and victory

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.... Heb 12:28

Story: An example of the power of praise and worship to transform us.

Robertson McQuilkin's Act of Worship

(Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes, pg 814)

Robertson McQuilkin, former president of Columbia International University of Columbia, South Carolina, wrote this testimony:

Life was heavy on me. My dearest friend and intimate companion, my delightful wife Muriel, was slipping away, one painful loss at a time, as Alzheimer's disease ravaged her brain. Just as the impact of what was happening to us hit home, the life of Bob, our eldest son, was snuffed out in a diving accident. Two years later, to care for Muriel, I left my life work at its peak. I was numb. Not bitter, let alone angry. Why should I be? That's the way life is, life in a broken world. But the passion in my love for God had evaporated, leaving a residue of resignation where once had been vibrant faith.

I knew that I was in deep trouble, and I did the only thing I knew to do – I went away to a mountain hideaway for prayer and fasting. It took about 24 hrs to shake free of preoccupation with my wounds and to focus on the excellencies of God. As I did, slowly love began to be rekindled. And with love came joy.

I wrote God a love letter, naming 41 of his marvelous gifts to me, spotlighting 11 of his grandest acts in history, and exulting in 10 of his characteristics that exceed my imagination.

Surely he enjoyed my gratitude – who doesn't appreciate gratitude?

But I discovered something else. Something happened to me. I call it the reflex action of thanksgiving. My love flamed from dying embers, and my spirit soared. I discovered that ingratitude impoverishes – but that a heavy heart lifts on the wings of praise.