Chapter Seven

Worship

**Our worship to God is done in many ways. Worship is an act of homage towards someone or something. A definition is “To give reverence due.” There are several ideas about worship and how it is to be done. It seems that every person has their own way to worship God or their particular deity. Some will meditate motionless for hours before an idol. Some will carry their cross with them. Some will stand in the marketplace or public places to be seen by men. Some keep it simple and inside of themselves.**

**To be Christians, we need to find the form of worship that God is pleased with.** **If God goes to the trouble to explain how to worship Him, we should learn how to do it right.**

**The Bible is filled with examples of people who worshipped in error. Some worship out of ignorance and some out of obstinance or rebellion.**

1 Chronicles 16:29 (NKJV) Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!

Psalms 29:2 (NKJV) Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Revelation 4:11 (NKJV) "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

**We must give to God this glory. We do this by humble obedience. We do this when we learn of Him and His will. We do this when we obey that will. This is a continuous process. Our lives have been dedicated to His service. Worship must involve our very being. Worship is not just the organized assembly service that we attend every week. The assembly is just one aspect of worship. The assembly of saints is based upon a pattern, which we have in the New Testament. We know that there are actions required by God based upon command or example of the early church. The apostles who were directed by the Holy Spirit guided the early church.**

John 4:24 (NKJV) "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

**If we are to worship God, it must involve these two items.**

**The spirit mentioned is the emotional side of us. We are to worship Him with all of out heart, soul, and might. This is where our conscience is affected and motivated. To know in your mind, that God is pleased with you and your actions. The intellect of man must recognize this Deity and humble himself.**

**The truth mentioned is the physical side of us. It conveys the ideas of the content of worship and how it is done. The truth is God's way. Since God is truth and since Jesus is truth, and since the Holy Spirit is to guide into all truth, we conclude that when we obey the truth, it is acceptable. But then we come up with the question that Pilate asked, "What is truth?” Many people in this world have their own ideas about the truth. That is why we have thousands of different religions and religious bodies. There are thousands of groups of so-called believers in Christ who have differences in name or practice. This is not right. The Bible tells us there is but one God. The Bible tells us there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us there is but one Spirit. The Bible tells us there is but one church. The Bible sets the pattern of worship. The Bible gives us the examples of the early church. When, and if, our practice is the same as then, we can be acceptable. It is because the truth does not change. Man changes.**

**Man appears to decide what is acceptable worship to him. The truth is that only God can tell us what acceptable worship is. We have to know that God is not pleased with all of the religious differences.**

**The truth cannot be spoken of in general terms either. Many will claim that they are believers, but they act differently from what the Bible teaches. One argument is that as long as you are sincere, then the form of worship does not matter. Then how would we feel if God might decide that the form of reward does not matter? How would you feel about that? It should make a difference to you. I'm sure that you would prefer heaven to hell. If we were to decide that the reward is important, we would want to make sure of our salvation. How do we make sure that heaven is our destiny? Christ promised Heaven to those who would follow His will. His will is revealed in the scriptures. Our souls are too valuable to trust to human organizations or doctrines. We must live as the Bible teaches us to live. We cannot live on emotions alone. We must live and worship God in spirit and truth. You cannot separate them and be pleasing to God.**

**Not only does worship require reverence; it also includes a form of public expression. Under the old law, before Christ, this was done by sacrifices.**

Leviticus 7:11-12 (NKJV) 'This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the LORD: {12} 'If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil.

**How can we offer public expressions and be acceptable to God? Jesus talked about the people who worship God in public, and to beware of them. Their problem was that they were trying to receive glory for themselves and not for God. Jesus said that they have their reward; "the praises of men". The truth is that we cannot worship God without public expressions. We must do His will, His way.**

**In Heb. 11:4 we read that by faith, Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. We cannot read in Genesis where God instructed Adam how to worship. We must infer and reason that sometime before this event, God had given instructions to Adam about acceptable worship. Cain decided that the elements were not important and changed what God had commanded. God rejected Cain's sacrifice to teach us a lesson about changing God's worship. God has always revealed Himself and what He considered acceptable worship. The events surrounding Abel and Cain give us a lot of information by necessary inference. How did they know to sacrifice? How did they know that blood had to be shed? God told them. How do we know that our worship can be acceptable? By living and worshipping according to the scriptures. We follow the pattern. We obey the commands. We follow the examples of the Holy Spirit guided people of the first century.**

**Our worship also involves service. This service is a controlled action. We go through particular activities all of the time. We try to do this in such a way that it always has meaning. We do the same things every week without trying to fall into a routine. As old-timers might say it; "we get into a rut". This is one of the hardest parts of worship. To do the same things week-in and week-out and still maintain spirituality.**

Deuteronomy 8:19 (NKJV) "Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV) Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV) Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Psalms 100:2 (NKJV) Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

Ephesians 5:19 (NKJV) speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

1 Corinthians 11:23-28 (NKJV) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; {24} and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." {25} In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." {26} For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. {27} Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. {28} But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV) So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

**The elements of our public worship are easily identified. The acceptable actions are not so easily demonstrated. Briefly look at the elements.**

* **Prayer**
* **Singing**
* **Observing the Lord's Supper**
* **Giving of our means**
* **Public preaching (reading of scriptures)**

**How we do each of these activities is really up to individual congregations. Just so long as they are done each first day of the week. What we must remember, is that we have examples and commands to follow. When we change things from the way that they were done in the first century, we must be careful not to go beyond the truth. If we go beyond the truth, we are wrong. Remember that the truth never changes.**

**We are commanded to participate in the organized worship service. But our worship to God is not limited to the public worship service. It should be reflected in our lives that we live every day. The spiritual service must be a part of our everyday lives.**

Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. {2} And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**We need to also learn the reason for worship. First of all, God commands it. If we look to the scriptures, we see that when God manifested Himself to people, they responded accordingly.**

2 Chronicles 7:3 (NKJV) When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever."

Matthew 4:10 (NKJV) Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

Exodus 20:3-10 (NKJV) "You shall have no other gods before Me. {4} "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; {5} you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, {6} but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. {7} "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. {8} "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. {9} Six days you shall labor and do all your work, {10} but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

Deuteronomy 27:15 (NKJV) 'Cursed is the one who makes a carved or molded image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen!'

**From the first breath that Adam took, until the end of time, all people are subject to God. We must give Him the honor due Him. If we are to have a hope of the glory that He has promised, we must obey Him. We must do this in our lives. We cannot do this after we die.**

Philippians 2:10 (NKJV) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

**We have a choice. This is called our free will, or free agency. God gave us a mind by which to reason. God gave us a mind capable of handling emotions. God gave us a mind that is able to plan and devise. He made us where we can make choices. In the spiritual realm we have to make choices. We recognize that the choices we make have consequences, good or bad. We must humble ourselves before Jesus, who has all authority, and confess His name before mankind. We can do this in our life. On the great judgement day, everyone will acknowledge Jesus; some by force. Those who have done so in this life, will enter heaven. Those who have not done this in this life will enter hell.**

**God deserves our worship. Look at the following passages and see the reasons of why the people worshipped God.**

Psalms 100:4-5 (NKJV) Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. {5} For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations.

Exodus 4:31 (NKJV) So the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped.

Psalms 99:5 (NKJV) Exalt the LORD our God, And worship at His footstool; He is holy.

Psalms 99:9 (NKJV) Exalt the LORD our God, And worship at His holy hill; For the LORD our God is holy.

Exodus 34:5-8 (NKJV) Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. {6} And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, {7} "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." {8} So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.

Acts 9:3-6 (NKJV) As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. {4} Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" {5} And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." {6} So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

Revelation 1:17 (NKJV) And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

**Moses, Paul, and John all were compelled to bow down in worship. Man learns that he needs to worship God. This is the answer to the age-old questions of; “who am I?” and, “why am I here?” We all wonder if we have a purpose in life. We would all like to think that we are important to some degree. This gives us a sense of belonging or purpose. Our life is not a waste. When we serve a living God, we do serve a purpose, and we know it.**

Psalms 115:4-8 (NKJV) Their idols are silver and gold, The work of men's hands. {5} They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; {6} They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell; {7} They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat. {8} Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them.

Revelation 7:9-12 (NKJV) After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, {10} and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" {11} All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, {12} saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

Colossians 3:24 (NKJV) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

Acts 17:23 (NKJV) "for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:

Philippians 3:3 (NKJV) For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

Hebrews 1:6 (NKJV) But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him."

Revelation 14:7 (NKJV) saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

Revelation 15:4 (NKJV) Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested."

**We must worship God. There is a meaning for it. There is a reason for it. We must express it. When we study the process of living the Christian life, worship will take an important part in that area. We must learn all about worship. Not just the organized program of "church", but the entire aspect of service to God. Our life is worship to God. We must be sure that God is pleased. God knows all and sees all. We must constantly ask ourselves if we are acceptable. Accepted based upon the truth, and not just our emotions. Let your life be a continuous service to God.**

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