

Worshipping God

Text : **Psa. 22: 19-31**

INTRODUCTION :

A. The travels of God's people of old can be traced by the altars they left behind.

1. **Noah** built an altar when he came out of the ark. **Gen. 8: 2**
2. **Abraham** built an altar when God gave him the promise. **Gen. 12: 7** (many places)
3. **Isaac** built an altar when he found an uncontested place to dwell. **Gen. 26: 25**
4. **Jacob** built an altar when he was able to purchase a place to dwell. **Gen. 33: 20**
5. **Moses** built an altar when Israel defeated Amalek. **Exod. 17: 15**
6. **Joshua** built an altar when Israel defeated Ai. **Josh. 8: 30-31**

Note : It is interesting that God forbade men to build ornate altars.
 They could not cut the stones or elevate the altar so as to require steps.
 - The altars were quick, easy and cheap to build so anyone could build one.
 - The altars were so plain they would not become an object of worship.

B. Man is a worshipping creature.

1. Man does not always worship the one true God.
2. But, he always worships something.
3. Today most people in America worship themselves.
 - a. They place themselves and their family above all else. (**It's my life and I'll ...**)
 - b. People seek their own prosperity, comfort and pleasure.
 - c. Many lives are devoted to the accumulation of things. (**They seek security in \$.**)
Col. 3: 5- Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (cf - **Eph 5:5**)

Note : Anything one places above God becomes his idol.

4. Many Americans worship other people.
 - a. Spouse, children, grandchildren
 - b. Author and Actors ... *Europeans ridicule Americans for star worship.*
 ... **That's why they call it "American Idol."**
 - c. Sports stars (**pay \$75 for a T-Shirt \$5 w/ name on it**)

C. We serve a jealous God.

1. **Deut. 4: 24- For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.**
 - a. God will not share our affections with anyone or anything.
 - b. Jesus made this abundantly clear. **Matt. 10: 37-39**

2. The true God worshipper will be an outcast in modern society.
 - a. People do not like or trust those who are different from themselves.
 - b. Those who are different are pressured to conform. (**called peculiar, eccentric**)
 - c. Those that rise too far above the standard are treated with as much derision as those who fall too far below. (**called religious fanatics**)
3. God views those who compromise with the world as an unfaithful spouse.

Ezek. 6:9- Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations to which they will be carried captive, how I have been hurt by their adulterous hearts which turned away from Me, and by their eyes which played the harlot after their idols; ...

We serve an awesome God, one worthy of all praise, all honor, and all glory. He alone is worthy of our worship, of our adoration. David put it well in his psalm :

Psa. 29: 1-2 ... Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. ² Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in holy array.

I. David defines worship very well in his psalms.

A. There are many misconceptions about worship.

1. Many believe they worship merely by going through certain rituals. (**acts of worship**)
 - a. There are certain things we rightly do in the weekly memorial assembly, but one can do all of those things without worshipping. (**cf- Matt. 15:8**)
 - b. Jesus taught us that worship is an act of the heart: it truly expresses one's spirit.

John 4: 24- God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

*** Note :** This verse cannot be reduced to a proof text advocating proper rituals. It teaches us that true worship is an expression of the heart.
2. Many believe that worship requires an assembly of people.
 - a. Worship can be done together, **but** it can also be done alone.
 - b. In fact, **MOST** worship is private, very personal, and done individually.
 - c. Jesus often went off by himself to worship. (**Luke 9:18, John 6: 15, etc.**)
3. Many believe that worship must be done in a certain place.
 - a. Some church buildings are left open all the time so people can go there to pray.
 - b. The bible tells of people worshipping in many places : (**in burial places**)
 - 1) The servant of Abraham worshipped by the well. (**Gen. 24: 26 ... cf- 24: 12**)
 - 2) Jacob worshipped at the head of his bed on his staff. (**Gen 47: 29-31, Heb 11:21**)

4. These misconceptions and others stem from a misunderstanding of worship.

B. Worship is an act of the heart, not of the body.

1. The Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines "*worship*" as :
 reverence offered a divine being or supernatural power;
 also : an act of expressing such reverence
2. The original language of the bible (*proskuneo*) is defined as :
 - 1 to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence.
 - 2 among the Orientals, esp. the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence.
 - 3 in the NT by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication.

C. This attitude of Heart is well illustrated in the scriptures.

1. **Psa. 95: 6-7** Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. ⁷ For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. ...
2. **Exod. 4: 31** So the people believed; and when they heard that the Lord was concerned about the sons of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, then they bowed low and worshiped.
3. Satan desired Jesus to bow before him. **Matt. 4: 9-10**
4. All in Heaven will bow down to worship before our God :
 - a. **Rev. 4: 10-11 , 7: 10**
 - b. **Rev. 19: 1-6**

D. Thus, one worships when he :

1. Humbles himself before God.
2. Lifts up God to be exalted above all others.
3. Does things specifically for the purpose of expressing his adoration to God.

E. Though worship may involved specific actions, no act is worship in and of itself.

1. One may perform religious acts, **but** not by them accomplish worship.
2. Jesus told the Jews they worshipped in vain.
 Matt. 15: 8-9 This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.
 ⁹ But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.

II. True worship is often spontaneous and individual.

- A. Several of the previous examples of altars built were responses to blessings.

1. **Noah** survived the flood.
2. **Abraham** was blessed by God.
3. **Moses** had just been victorious when attacked.
4. **David** poured out the water brought to him by his men as an offering. **II Sam. 23:16**

B. James commands :

1. **James 5: 13-** **Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.**
2. These are individual acts of worship to be done outside the assembly.
 - a. When one is hurting, he doesn't wait for an assembly to pray.
 - b. A joyful person doesn't wait until Sunday to sing. (**"Make a note .. was happy Thur."**)

*** Note :** **This is an individual command so, if it is not done outside the assembly, individuals are commanded to sing about their individual joy in the assembly.**

3. God wants to be included in the daily events of our lives. (**whether joy or sorrow**)

C. Since worship is an outpouring of one's heart, it comes as the heart is moved.

1. When Jonah was entangled at the bottom of the sea, he silently cried out for help.
2. When the pray of Abraham's servant was granted, he fell on his face right there and then.
3. If God is part of our daily life, worship will occur daily. (**If not a part, change needed.**)

D. The outpouring of one's heart can be emotional and even loud.

1. If a man can't get excited about his relationship with God, what can excite him ??
2. David shouted praises to the Lord.

Read ... Psalms 98: 1-4 .

3. The sons of Korah shouted praises to God.

Read ... Psalms 47: 1-9

3. **Ezra 3: 11-** **They sang, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, saying, "For He is good, for His lovingkindness is upon Israel forever." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.**
4. **John 12: 13-** **took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel."**

** **"Decently and in order"** does not mean dead, lifeless or emotionless.

Praise is alive, it is vital and it is enthusiastic. It is emotion. (Some think anything they don't like is out of order.)

III. Worship involves things other than the five traditional “acts of worship.”

A. Remember the definition of worship :

1. “reverence offered a divine being or supernatural power; also : an act of expressing such reverence”
2. Thus, whatever we do as an expression of reverence to God is an act off worship.

B. Let us not confuse the assembly with worship.

1. We worship in the assembly, but most of our worship is done on a daily basis.
2. The traditional rules that we apply to our assemblies do not apply to all worship.

C. The New Testament commands us to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice to God.

1. **Rom. 12: 1-2** Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
2. When a Christians changes his way of thinking to please God, he worships God.
3. The act of surrendering one’s life to God is an act of worship. (**spiritual sacrifice**)

D. When a Christians does a good thing because of God, it’s an act of worship.

1. **Heb. 13: 15-16** Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. ¹⁶ And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.
 - a. When one thanks God, he praises God.
 - b. When one praises God he offers a spiritual sacrifice to God, **i.e., he worships God.**
 - c. The worship of thanksgiving is to be continual, **NOT** just in the assembly.
2. Doing good and sharing are both sacrifices to God.
 - a. Offering sacrifices is worship.
 - b. Therefore, doing good and sharing are acts of worship.
3. Christians are called out of the world to offer up spiritual sacrifices.

I Pet. 2:5- you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

 - a. Thus, Christians are called to a life of worship, a sanctified and holy lifestyle.
 - b. One’s calling is a **24/7** commitment to glorify God in all he says and does. **Col. 3:17**

CONCLUSION :

- A. The assembly is essential to one's relationship with God.**
1. It is not an optional thing. **Every Christians** must attend.
 2. Worship does occur in the weekly memorial assembly.
- B. However, we must expand our understanding of worship beyond the assembly.**
1. Whatever we do specifically to please God is a spiritual sacrifice ... is worship.
 2. Acknowledging God is worship ... **Thanking Him for what he has provided is praise.**
 3. Doing good in His name is worship. **Matt. 5 ... A shining light glorifies.**
- C. "Worship is important because it proclaims what a person values most."**
1. What do you value most ?
 2. Does God have a place in our daily thoughts ?
 3. Do we conduct our lives in conscious conformity to God's will ?
- D. When our lives are centered around anything other than God we worship an idol.**
1. Self
 2. People
 3. Things
- E. Let each of us commit ourselves this day to keeping God in the center of our thoughts each day and to conforming our lives to HIS purposes and HIS glory.**

TAKE TIME FOR JESUS EVERY DAY.

1. Pray
2. Read & meditate
3. Sing praises
4. Actively serve Him by serving others
5. Tell others what Jesus / God means to you.

INVITATION :