

Studies in Christianity Christian Worship #1

S#1.

What Is Worship ?

S#2.

Text : **Psa. 122: 1-9 , Gen. 4: 1-8**

A. Worship is something that everyone does, but many don't realize it.

S#3.

1. Many in this country worship sports or sports stars.
2. Others worship fame or fortune ... movie stars, those who are rich
3. Multitudes are in the season to worship political power.

S#4.

B. Archeologists have never unearthed a civilization that didn't worship something.

1. The ancient Egyptians worshipped the sun, the moon or the stars.
2. The ancient Chinese worshipped Flying snakes and dragons.
3. Greeks had so many they made an extra idol just in case :

Acts 17: 22 – So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, " Men of **S#5.**
Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. **23** For
while I was passing through and examining the objects of your
worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN
GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

C. Why is it that men everywhere worship .. even if their worship is illogical ?

1. Worship is within the nature of man. *It is a felt need.*
Fredric Robertson wrote : It is not a thing which man can decide .. whether **S#6.**
(*British theologian 1800s*) he will be a worshipper or not, but a worshipper he
will be. The only question is what he will worship
2. Man is unique among God's creation. (*No other animal worships*)
3. Only man was created specifically to worship God.

D. I will quote A.W. Tozer repeatedly during this lesson.

1. Until his death in 1963 Mr. Tozer was a denominational preacher.
2. He served the same (M.A.) church in Chicago for the last 30 yrs of his life.
3. Tozer published about 50 compilations of his sermons, at least 10 books
and numerous booklets, but gave most of the royalties to the poor.
4. I find his writings on worship particularly wholesome, e.g., he wrote :
We were created to worship. Worship is the normal employment of moral
beings. It is normal, not something stuck on or added like listening to a
concert or admiring flowers. It is something built into human nature.

S#8.

I. The dictionary definitions of worship are :**S#9.****A. Worship as defined by Merriam-Webster : (verb)****#10.**

1. to honor or show reverence for as a divine being or supernatural power
2. to regard with great or extravagant respect, honor, or devotion

B. Kneel : Gonu : Fall on one's knees, to bow, prostrate self before, humble. #11.

1. **Phil. 2:10** – so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, **S#12.**
 2. **Eph. 3: 14** – For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every ...
- ** The one who worships, must acknowledge the superiority and the authority of the one being worshipped. How do you show it ?**

B. Worship : Proskunein : Closest to English “to worship”, bow down to S#13.

1. Originates from the word “to kiss.”
 - a. Ancient Greek custom of honoring the deities of the earth by kissing the ground.
 - b. This act necessitated one bend, kneel or prostrate himself all of the way down.
 - c. **Thus**, to worship by prostrating one's self in an act of reverence.
2. When giving the Law of Moses, this act was forbidden to do for idols. **S#14.**
Exod. 20:5 – You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God,
3. This is what God seeks ... **true worship**
John 4: 24 – God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

**** Worship flows from the heart and motivates the surrender of one's will.****C. Serve : Latreuo : Serve (acts done) with no thought of reward.****S#15.**

1. One who surrenders to a deity worships him and also serves that deity.
 - a. To worship and to serve are two different things ... worship is part of service.
 - b. People who serve are called servants.
 - c. Servants do things to benefit another, not just worship, i.e., just express devotion.
2. People who serve God cannot serve the things of this world. **S#16.**
Exod 20:5 – You shall not worship or serve them for I the Lord your God am a jealous
3. **Deut. 10:12-13** - Now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul,¹³ and to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?

3. **Josh. 24: 14-15** ... Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity **#17.** and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. **15** If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites .. but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

4. The prophetess Anna worshipped **and** served. **S#18.**
Luke 2: 37 – She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers”

**** The actions one takes BECAUSE of his surrendered (loving and worshipful) heart is his service to God. It is done to please and glorify God.**

D. When we worship or serve God, He is looking at our hearts.

1. **Matt. 15: 8** – This people honors Me with their lips, **S#19.**
 But their heart is far away from Me.
2. The world pulls us down, but assembly restores the joy to our worship and service.
Psa. 122: 1 – I was glad when they said to me,
 “Let us go to the house of the LORD.”

II. Worship is a theme that flows from Genesis through The Revelations. S#20.

A. Adam and Eve fell from grace because they stopped worshipping God.

1. **Gen. 3** .. They were glad to see Him when He arrived, **but** when He was out of their sight, they rebelled against His rule.
2. Today there are some who will be someone totally different in the assembly than they are Monday thru Saturday.
3. Like children who obey their parents ONLY when the parents are around.
4. For those of such character, worship is just going to church.

B. The book of The Revelation ends with all of God’s people united in in Heaven joyously worshipping and serving God together.

1. There is nothing else on earth that so closely resembles Heaven as the assembled worship of the church.
2. Israel was required to assemble the whole nation for worship 3 times annually.
 - a. **Exod. 23: 14** – Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me. **15** "You **S#21.** shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread; ... And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. **16** "Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you

sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field. 17 " Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord God.

b. Compare : **Exod. 12: 16** , **Num. 28: 16-18** , **Lev. 23: 4-8**

3. We gain great strength from the energy generated by large gatherings of saints.

C. David had trained his spirit to have a worshipful attitude before God.

1. Praise was David's favorite pastime, highest honor , and greatest joy.

2. **Psa. 122: 1** – I was glad when they said to me, **S#22.**
 "Let us go to the house of the Lord." (*I can't go; I gotta go to church.*)

III. Not all worship is acceptable to God.

S#23.

A. In the very first worship service half the worshippers were rejected.

1. Abel was accepted and Cain's worship was rejected.

Gen. 4: 4 – Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. **S#24.**
 So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.

2. Two of the first priest of Israel were destroyed because of polluted worship.

Lev. 10: 1 – Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. 2 And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. **S#25.**

B. The nation of Israel drifted off into "vain" worship.

1. God rebuked them through His prophets :

a. **Isaiah 1: 13** – Bring your worthless offerings no longer, incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies — I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. 14 I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. **S#26.**

2. **Malachi 1: 7** – You are presenting defiled food upon My altar. But you say, 'How have we defiled You?' In that you say, 'The table of the Lord is to be despised.' 8 "But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? ... Reference : **Rom. 12: 1** ... *Is our sacrifice...* **S#27.**

C. Jesus made reference to these prophets as he taught the Jews.

1. Jesus applied the teaching of the prophet Isaiah to His day.

2. **Matt 15: 7** – You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: **8** 'This people **S#28.** 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.'

3. These references are just as rightly applied in churches today
As A.W. Tozer put it : *Worship is the missing jewel in modern Christianity.*

IV. Worship is a forgotten virtue in today's society.

S#29.

A. The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

1. Too often we just entertain each other.
2. True worship is a giving experience **NOT** done in order to receive benefit.
3. It is an opening of one's heart to the Lord.

B. Worship is to unashamedly acknowledge God for what He is,

S#30.

1. David trained his heart to openly express the reality of God. (**Psalms**)
2. There are examples of true worship in the N.T.
 - a. **John 20: 28** – Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" **S#31.**
 - b. **Rev. 1: 17** – When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, **18** and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

C. Worship is not for the benefit of the worshipper, but he does benefit.

1. It answers a deeply felt need.
2. Worship engenders contrition for sin.
3. It strengthens our allegiance to God and separates us from this dark culture.
4. As worship binds us to God, the assembly binds us to each other.
5. Worship creates within us a desire to be like God and to draw others into Him.

CONCLUSION :

A. Satan seeks your worship, but you were made to worship God.

S#32.

Luke 4: 7 – Therefore if You worship before me (Satan), it shall all be Yours."
8 Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord
your God and serve Him only.'"

B. Worship is a heart to heart experience with God.

S#33.

C. It's an experience that I urge all to enjoy every day.

S#34.

INVITATION :

Lesson Text :

Psalms 122: 1-9

1 I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord."
2 Our feet are standing
Within your gates, O Jerusalem,
3 Jerusalem, that is built
As a city that is compact together;
4 To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord —
An ordinance for Israel —
To give thanks to the name of the Lord.
5 For there thrones were set for judgment,
The thrones of the house of David.
6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
"May they prosper who love you.
7 "May peace be within your walls,
And prosperity within your palaces."
8 For the sake of my brothers and my friends,
I will now say, " May peace be within you."
9 For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek your good.

Gen. 4: 1-8

1 Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord." 2 Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. 4 Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. 6 Then the Lord said to Cain, " Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 " If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." 8 Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.