

Subject: *Elements of Biblical Worship – Part 2*

Scripture: *Psalm 103:1-22*

So far in this sermon series, we are talking about the public worship of God's people, but it's important to remember that our worship in public is fueled by our worship in private. Psalm 103 is a good example of personal worship. This psalm is the picture of a true worshiper of the one true God.

In our last message we began to look at basic elements of worship that we find in Scripture.

1. **Worship involves *prayer***
2. **Worship involves *praise***
3. **Worship involves *Bible teaching***
4. **Worship involves *silence and reverence***
5. **Worship involves *faith and repentance***
6. **Worship involves *baptism and the Lord's Supper***

Before we look at a few more elements of worship, let's think again about the importance of Bible teaching in our worship. Scripture is the basis of everything in worship. According to John 4, God is seeking true worshipers and the basis of all true worship is Scripture.

In Psalm 103 we see worship based on the truth of who God is and what He does for His people. True worship comes from a person (in this case it is David the psalmist) who is aware of God's blessings and therefore he wants to bless God. The better we understand God and the more we understand about God's blessings, the more we will want to worship.

Worship is ascribing worth or honor to God. This is another definition: "Worship is being preoccupied with God." In other words, we are truly worshiping God when He is the center of our attention. If we think little about God, there will be little focus on God, and if there is little focus on God, there is little worship of God. On the other hand, when we think much about God and when we think clearly about God, then we focus much on God, and therefore we truly worship God. How does God reveal Himself as the one who is worthy of worship? God reveals Himself in three main ways: 1) through creation (Ps. 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God...") 2) through Christ (Jn. 1:18, "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared (explained) him.") 3) through the Scriptures. Here we learn who God is and what God does.

The better we know God, the more understand and appreciate His infinite worth. In heaven all the angels and redeemed saints recognize God as the center of attention and the one who is worthy of all praise. We get two glimpses of worship in heaven:

Revelation 4:10-11¹⁰ *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*
¹¹ *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

Revelation 5:11-14 ¹¹ And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; ¹² Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. ¹³ And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. ¹⁴ And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Worship in heaven is focused on God who is seated on His throne. God is worshiped because He is the one who created all things and He is the one who redeemed His people through the blood of Christ as the Lamb. He is the eternal God who lives forever and ever.

7. Worship involves giving

Giving our tithes and offerings is not something added to our worship. It is at the very heart of our worship. Our money represents God's material blessing on our lives and families. We give back to God as a way to honor and recognize Him as the supreme giver. The Bible teaches that giving should be tithes (10%) and offerings over and above the tenth. Any person who resents giving at least 10% to God either doesn't understand or appreciate the 100%.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Proverbs 3:9 Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.

Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

We should give obediently, willingly, consistently, according to our ability, and joyfully.

1 Chronicles 29:9 Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

1 Chronicles 29:14 But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8. Worship involves sacrifice

From the earliest days of history, worship has always involved the act of sacrifice. It began with Abel's sacrifice that was acceptable to God. Noah offered sacrifice on the altar to God. Abraham offered sacrifice on the altar to God. Old Testament priests offered sacrifices in the Tabernacle and the Temple. All sacrifices were to be offered only to the one true God.

Exodus 22:20 *He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.*

Today we can approach God in worship only through Christ's perfect sacrifice. We no longer need blood sacrifices to approach God because Jesus laid down His life as the perfect Lamb of God. We don't need any more blood sacrifices to atone for sin. Christ's sacrifice was final and all-sufficient, and it is only through His blood that we can draw near to God.

Hebrews 9:12 *Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*

Hebrews 10:19-22 ¹⁹ *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,* ²⁰ *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;* ²¹ *And having an high priest over the house of God;* ²² *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

But there are other sacrifices we offer to God. The Bible calls them "spiritual sacrifices."

1 Peter 2:5 *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

What are the spiritual sacrifices we offer?

- We offer the sacrifice of *thanksgiving*

Hebrews 13:15 *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

- We offer the sacrifice of *helping others*

Hebrews 13:16 *But to do good and to communicate (share) forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

- We offer the sacrifice of *obedience*

1 Samuel 15:22 *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

- We offer the sacrifice of *personal dedication*

Romans 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (spiritual worship).*

These are the elements of biblical worship. These are the things God is seeking from His people. These are not things the pastor does or the music minister does, or the choir does.

We may lead in worship, but every believer should be involved in worship, and that doesn't mean to be involved as a spectator.

Worship is very specific and very personal. True worship is offered only to God and it is offered only by God's people. So the only issue is this: What does God want, expect, and deserve? The issue is not what we want, or even worse, what does the world want. The only thing that matters is what God wants and what is acceptable to Him. Worship is for an audience of ONE. God is our only attraction and God is our only audience.

Every element of worship is for God.

Prayer

Praise

Bible teaching

Silence and reverence

Faith and repentance

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Giving

Sacrifice

It's all about God and it's all for God.