

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. When we worship God, our hearts should be very near to God.
  - 1. Our worship is an expression of adoration and reverence for God.
  - 2. Worship is also a service that is intended to please God by His own design and specification.
  - 3. To succeed in these expressions and services, our hearts must be focused on the majesty and the will of Almighty God.
- B. How can we put our hearts fully into our worship toward God? We will seek to answer that question in this lesson.

## II. PUTTING THE HEART INTO WORSHIP

- A. The New Testament has three primary meanings for “worship” in the original Greek.
  - 1. One meaning of worship (προσκυνέω, *proskyneō*) is an overt act that expresses reverence and adoration toward God.
    - a. This meaning is compliant with our typical concept of worship (i.e., singing, praying, etc.).
    - b. Jesus talked of this kind of explicit and dedicated act of worship when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well in John 4:20-24, saying,  
<sup>23</sup>“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.  
<sup>24</sup>God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”
  - 2. Another meaning of worship (σέβω, *sebō*) is an attitude of reverence toward God.
    - a. This meaning could be called piety or devoutness.
    - b. Jesus used this meaning in Matthew 15:7-9 when He said to the Pharisees and scribes,  
<sup>7</sup>“You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: <sup>8</sup>“This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. <sup>9</sup>But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.”
  - 3. A third meaning of worship (λατρεύω, *latreuō*) is the act of serving or working for God.
    - a. This meaning indicates that a worshipful person does everything in reverence to God.
    - b. Paul used this meaning to describe a Christian’s way of life in Romans 12:1-2:  
<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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.
- B. In every sense of worship, our hearts must be fully engaged in order to please God.
  - 1. We cannot worship God in spirit and in truth without giving our hearts to Him (John 4:23-24).
    - a. Worship that is in spirit and truth must employ the unseen spirit of man and the objective truth of God. If we offer worship that is correct in form but lacks the heart, then we cannot be true worshipers of God.
    - b. For example, in Ephesians 5:18-19 we are commanded, “[B]e filled with the Spirit, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.” Regardless of the beauty of the words or the music, our singing is of no value without the melody of our hearts.
    - c. Consider David’s words to God concerning the sacrifices of worship in Psalm 51:16-17:  
<sup>16</sup>For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it;  
You are not pleased with burnt offering.  
<sup>17</sup>The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.
  - 2. We cannot have reverence toward God without bringing our hearts near to Him (Matt. 15:7-9).
    - a. The Pharisees made a show of their religion, putting on an appearance of piety for the sake of men (Matt. 6:1-18; 23:1-7). If we do the same, then our worship will be vain, for our hearts will be far from God.
    - b. Consider David’s words to his son Solomon in 1Chronicles 28:9:  
“As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands

- every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.”
- c. These words remind us of James 4:8, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”
3. We cannot serve Him daily without committing our hearts to Him (Rom. 12:1-2).
    - a. For our bodies to become living sacrifices, our hearts will have to lead the way. The transformation must begin inside, where the mind (heart) is to be renewed.
    - b. Consider two passages of the Old Testament that answer the same question: What does the Lord require of you? In both passages, the answer demands heartfelt service to God.
      - i. Deuteronomy 10:12-13 – <sup>12</sup>“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, <sup>13</sup>and to keep the LORD’S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?”
      - ii. Micah 6:6-8 – <sup>6</sup>“With what shall I come to the LORD and bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? <sup>7</sup>Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? <sup>8</sup>He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

### III. MORE THAN EMOTION

- A. Modern man mistakenly equates the heart to emotion, but emotional worship is not necessarily worship from the heart.
  1. Contemporary worship services are often designed to provoke emotions with elaborate music, drama, and even lighting and videos. The idea is to create an experience that feels religious.
  2. However, emotions are fickle and are a poor foundation for worship.
    - a. Emotions are easily aroused and manipulated, and their effect is temporary.
    - b. If worship depended upon emotion, then worshipers who were not feeling religious could not worship properly. As it is, God has not made worship dependent on such things.
    - c. Worship that is based on emotion is focused on the worshiper rather than the God who is to be worshiped. This is the wrong focus.
  3. Certainly, worship often does involve emotions, but emotion is not the primary measure of the heart.
    - a. A heart is not less fit to worship just because it is not overflowing with emotion.
    - b. Likewise, a heart that is overcome with emotions is often not well-suited to worship because it is too distracted.
- B. All of the passages of Scripture cited in this lesson indicate that worship by the heart involves a reverent adherence to God’s will.
  1. Worship by the heart must be in spirit and in truth according to God’s will (John 4:23-24).
  2. Worship by the heart must be brought near to God according to His will by practicing the doctrines of God, not of men (Matt. 15:7-9).
  3. Worship by the heart is made acceptable by being renewed according to the will of God (Rom. 12:1-2).

### IV. CONCLUSION

- A. As we consider our own worship and service to God, let us take heed to the words of the prophet Samuel, who said to Israel, “Only fear the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you” (1Sam. 12:24).
- B. Certainly, God has done great things for us. Therefore, worship should come naturally to us, for it is abundantly obvious that He deserves eternal praise, service, and devotion from our hearts.