

Reference: VARIOUS

Church: GRACE

Date: WEEK 6

## The Character of Our Worship

Purpose: To consider how our worship should reflect the worship of heaven and the character of our God.

### 1. Introduction

We have seen what worship is

We then studied first four commandments to understand it better  
 God as creator and the One true God entitled to receive worship  
 He desires that we worship Him as He commands, not as we want  
 Our worship must give due honor to His Name – not misuse it  
 Not treat God as our “pal” or “the Boss” – a heavenly CEO  
 All our lives are worship but He set a pattern of one day a week  
 For us to abstain from work etc., meet with His people and worship

This week, develop two points on the character of our worship  
 Saw one of them last week but didn't have time to develop.

- 1) Our worship should reflect the character of God
- 2) Our worship should reflect the worship in Heaven

This is obvious when you think about it.

Approach President, King, Queen on earth in light of their position  
 Should follow with God

And those who are with Him in heaven and have no sin will best  
 worship Him as He desires

*Practically, this means that anyone walking in to our services  
 should know what God is like by observing our worship of Him.  
 They should have a sense of what heaven is like at the same time.*

### 2. Our Worship Should Reflect God's Character

People judge our God by looking at us

True in all life (which is worship)

Also true in public worship

Need to be careful to give the right impression of Him

Where is this taught in the Bible?

Several places. General examples:

Romans 2:17-24 But if you bear the name “Jew” and rely upon the Law and boast in God, 18 and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, 21 you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? 24 For “**the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,**” just as it is written.

2 Peter 2:1-2 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. 2 Many will follow their sensuality, **and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;**

Now work out this principle by looking at other passages

#### 2.1. **Worship in spirit, not in flesh**

John 4:19-24 The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.<sup>20</sup> “Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.”<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.<sup>22</sup> “You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.<sup>23</sup> “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.<sup>24</sup> “**God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.**”

God is Spirit, so our worship must reflect this

What does this mean?

- 1) Our worship is no longer physical (bound to place etc)

It is no longer outward, ceremonial, typical

Now it is inward, spiritual worship –reality rather than shadow

- 2) It is of the spirit as opposed to being of the flesh

God is spirit and we must worship Him in spirit

We cannot do outward, flesh-pleasing things and call it worship!

Some did this in Colosse:

Colossians 2:23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in **self-imposed religion**, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

There is spiritual no value here

Outwardly impressive (perhaps) but spiritually useless

Such “worship” does not show what He is like

3) It is in the Spirit, who gives life

Philippians 3:3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,  
John 6:63 “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

2 Corinthians 3:6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Our worship must be alive, not dead!

We do not worship a dead God but one who is the fountain of life

## 2.2. *Worship in the Truth*

“I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life....”

What does this mean?

1) Reality as opposed to type and shadow. Christ is the true manna, ministers at the true tabernacle etc. (John, Hebrews)

This is the truth in which we worship – the reality that all the OT types pointed to.

2) Truth as opposed to error.

There must be nothing contrary to Scripture in our worship

We must understand the truth, grasp sound doctrine

No mistake or error in Christ – must reflect this in worship

3) Truth as opposed to fallacy and deceit

There is no lie in Him

There must be nothing deceitful or misleading in our worship

Is He the Truth? - worship in truth!

Anything less will not reflect His character

Worship in spirit and in truth

We must succeed in both respects

Only then will our worship reflect our God

## 2.3. *Worship with reverence and fear*

Hebrews 12:28-29 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 **for our God is a consuming fire.**

Why should we worship God with reverence and awe?

Because He is a consuming fire!

Our approach is governed by His character

When people come loosely and with familiarity (Pal, Boss)

What does this say about their god?

Is he a consuming fire? Is He the God of the Bible?

## 2.4. *Orderly Worship*

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

1 Corinthians 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

Why was this important?

What impression was the Corinthian worship likely to give?

Would this have been true? Safe? Why not?

Our God is a God of order, not chaos

We cannot reflect the character of God if our worship is a shambles:

There has to be decency and order in worship

Because that is what He is like

To do anything else is to insult Him

And to assassinate His character

## 2.5. *Worship in Holiness*

Psalms 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. (in the splendor of holiness)**

Holiness is the beauty of the Lord

Is He holy? Worship in holiness!

Should mark our worship

What will this mean in practice?

Separation, Cleansed of sin

Cannot bring our offering if there is sin in our midst

## 2.6. *Any other attribute*

Extend the principle by looking at other attributes of God:

What should our worship be like in the light of God's:

Grace? Love? Mercy? Patience? Faithfulness? Justice?

Righteousness? Hatred of sin? Goodness? Omniscience?

Omnipresence? Omnipotence? Eternity?

Do these have anything to say about our approach to God?  
(Or – what should our worship be like if a visitor is to gain a correct view of God, bearing in mind his attributes)

### 3. Our worship should conform to that in heaven

#### 3.1. *Focused on God and on Christ*

Revelation 5:8 When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

Revelation 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, 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 might and honor and glory and blessing." 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.

**Revelation 7:9** After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches *were* in their hands; 10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and *around* the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, *be* to our God forever and ever. Amen." 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" 14 I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 "For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. 16 "They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

Why not on the Spirit?

### 3.2. *Reverent*

Isaiah 6:1 In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. 2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory." 4 And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

Revelation 4:9 And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

### 3.3. *Joyful*

**Psalm 16:11** You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Isaiah 25:6 The Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine. 7 And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken. 9 And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 2 because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her." 3 And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever." 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" 5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great." 6 Then I heard *something* like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. 7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."

### 3.4. *Spiritually Abundant*

Psalm 36:7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. 8 They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the

**river of Your delights. 9 For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.**

Psalm 65:4 How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts. **We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple.**

Isaiah 25:6 **The Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.** 7 And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken. 9 And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

Jeremiah 31:12 **"They will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion, And they will be radiant over the bounty of the Lord— Over the grain and the new wine and the oil, And over the young of the flock and the herd; And their life will be like a watered garden, And they will never languish again.** 13 "Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance, And the young men and the old, together, For I will turn their mourning into joy And will comfort them and give them joy for their sorrow. 14 "I will fill the soul of the priests with abundance, And My people will be satisfied with My goodness," declares the Lord.

### ***3.5. Sung worship and spoken worship***

Revelation 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. 3 **And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders;** and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.

Revelation 15:2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. 3 **And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb,** saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! 4 "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For all the nations will come and worship before You, For Your righteous acts have been revealed."

## **4. Conclusions**

Can you see how closely all these things weave together?

Worship is about a person

About His character and about His worthiness

He has revealed Himself to us in His Word

His Law expresses His character and is a useful guide to worship

Whatever else is true about Him must work out in our service  
Not really new – obvious when you think of it  
And those who see Him and know Him in heaven reflect His character in their worship

These are also useful tool to examine the worship of others –  
What kind of god is reflected by their approach?

Is it the God of the Bible?

Next week begin to look at the elements of worship in the light of these principles