

When “Worship” Becomes “Worship”
Psalm 95
(A Look at the Biblical Words of Worship)

INTRODUCTION:

Several words of the Church are woven in our conversations continually as Believers in Christ. Some of them are: worship, praise, church and Christian. Looking at each of these we must go back to the original language to accurately define each of them. We will take a closer look at two today, Worship & Praise.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND IN WORSHIP AND WORSHIP LEADERS NETWORK:

Worship Leaders Network is a ministry committed to the following: “To equip and train the body of Christ in intentional Biblical praise and worship”

This ministry has a three-fold purpose:

- A. Providing worship leaders and teaching pastors with a Biblical and theological foundation for praise and worship
- B. Connecting worship leaders through networking opportunities
- C. Providing a worship leaders resource database

Brief History of the search for Biblical Worship Ministry

The search for Biblical Worship began at an early age, growing up in a denomination which included liturgical practices. College provided exposure to various Christian approaches to Worship. Still more opportunities came by being involved with an actual worship ministry called “Eternity”; a three year period of time focused on sharing Christ with the world through music and teaching. It wasn’t until my first full-time position with Grace Community Church in Tempe that I was exposed to a book called “Rediscovering the Missing Jewel” by Gordon Borer & Ronald Allen. This challenged my thinking and brought me to further studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas.

What do you think when you hear the word “Worship”?

Most people when they hear the word “Worship” immediately think of music, songs, maybe even a lifestyle? Questions you may consider: *1. Is there a difference between Praise and Worship? 2. What are some of the passages we use to talk about Worship? 3. What are some of the phrases / Rhetoric we hear in relationship to ‘Worship’?*

Let’s take a look at phrases we hear:

- A. “Worship Service”
- B. “Worship Center”
- C. “The Worship Environment”
- D. “Worship Culture”
- E. Worship Songs...Lifestyle....style....form....Etc.

Books/References/WEB...what do we find?

- A. GOOGLE: Numerous references to Worship...mostly about the expression
- B. Worship Leader Magazine:
 - 1. Engage With God – Deepen your passion
 - 2. Worship Wars

3. Life Changing Worship:

“Successful life-changing worship comes only from God, but God uses us to bring this about. Services of worship represent the divine partnership between God and man to bring about the renewal and restoration of His church – of His people.....See P6 wlm

(This article hints at truth – but assumes a non-Biblical use of “WORSHIP”

4. Essential Worship / the Performance

We can Agree in the quest for EXCELLENCE – In the Presentation of the Means of Expression

The following are common public thoughts on “WORSHIP” and “WORSHIP LEADING” = again – assuming a “Cultural” vs. Biblical understanding:

Author: Soren Kierkegaard: “Worship is a performance, not for the congregation, but for God. The worship Leaders are prompters of worship- rather like conducting an orchestra”....

1. The presence of the Spirit in the moment.
2. Worship Space;
3. Worship in the SHAPE of SCRIPTURE: finding scriptures that can acts and acts of worship and liturgy.
4. Worship Renewal
5. Worship Evangelism

Biblical Intentionality: Being “INTENTIONALLY BIBICAL”

A. When we use words and phrases....

1. “What is the “Worship” like?
2. How was the “Worship”?
3. Oh the “Worship” was
 1. Are they Biblical?
 2. Are they Rhetoric
 3. Are they something “I have studied from the “WORD”?
 4. Are they what someone else taught me?

NOTE: We will always have the “WORSHIP TERMS”

We will always have worship/culture words:

What is the answer? Change them or use them intentionally Biblical.

a. Psalm 95

b. John 1:20

B. In Psalm 95: Read through Psalm 95 with me.

a. Worship: Shachah

b. Bow Down: Proskuneo

c. Kneel: Karah

The Picture outline in Psalm 95: God / Man / Worship / Posture

C. “Worship is a VERB – NOT a NOUN

The church – for centuries – has been a people of “Just tell me what I believe “ and give me an assignment or a direction”. If I like it – I will follow it – if not – I will look for someone or some place that will suit me better.” We have become a culture of following rather than researching. We must be students of the Word who say “THUS SAYETH THE LORD”.

We (The church culture of today) are a people that QUOTE: THUS SAYETH...an author, such as John Piper, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Wayne Grudem and John MacArthur. None of these men would want to be quoted above the Word of God. We find ourselves quoting rhetoric as if it were chapter and verse. Take for instance Piper’s quote “ God Is Most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him.” Or the Westminster catechism: “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever”. Both of these are thought worthy but they are not Scripture.

How often have we heard Scriptures taken out of context such as Matt. 18:19&20 as Prayer: “Where 2 or more are gathered in my name, there I am in your midst.”

NOTE: WE MUST USE WHAT IS CALLED HISTORIC GRAMMATICAL and TEXTUAL CRITISISM in your hermeneutics: IF NOT – WE WILL HAVE FAULTY EXEGESSIS

SO WHAT DOES THAT ANY OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ME AND WORSHIP?

While studying the Scriptures most of us are at the mercy of the translations and commentaries as well as the lexicons and software. We trust the WORDS that are used and sometimes theological issues can be affected if the words have been changed. One of the strongest examples of this is in the area of the word “worship”. William Tyndale was the first to do an English translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek text. Using the latest manuscripts authenticated at that time, he used the Word “Worsshippe” from the old English to help Explain “Bowing down” as in submission and “Bowing down as to bow the body or to lay down prostrate with your face down”. Let’s look at the what the definition includes:

wor·ship

noun, verb, wor·shipped, wor·ship·ing or (*especially British*) **wor·shipped, wor·ship·ping.**

noun

1.

reverent honor and homage paid to God or a sacred personage, or to any object regarded as sacred.

2.

formal or ceremonious rendering of such honor and homage: *They attended worship this morning.*

3.

adoring reverence or regard: *excessive worship of business success.*

4.

the object of adoring reverence or regard.

5.

(*initial capital letter*) *British* . a title of honor used in addressing or mentioning certain magistrates **and** others of high rank or station (usually preceded by *Your, His, or Her*).

verb (used with object)

6.

to render religious reverence and homage to / **ASCRIBING WORTH**

7.

to feel an adoring reverence or regard for (any person or thing).

As we look carefully the Word "WORSHIP" that has been inserted deals with something that is DONE – PRACTICED.

Let's look at Psalm 95. The original language includes the following:

- A. Shachah: To bow down in surrender or obeisance vs.
- B. Karah: to bow down as to bend the body
- C. Barak: as to bless, praise, or to kneel in homage.

Tyndale thought this could be confusing so he used another word that was actually introduced when Wycliff in the mid 1300's did an English translation from the Latin Vulgate. Consequently we use the word and an act of Ascribing worth to – or paying homage but that however is PRAISE: Psalm 29/96. Herein lies the problem: Wycliff – AND MOST DEFINITELY William Tyndale took the liberty to use an An acronym for the word "worship. So, our concern is: Does this mean that the inerrancy of scripture is corrupt? NO!!! THERE IS PLENTY OF TEACHING THROUGH THE WORD TO UNDERSTAND GOD'S BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF WORSHIP? Here's what we have to look at and take into consideration - you are now using a lexicon that inserts this word "worshippe" as Biblical text. To give credit where credit is due William Tyndale in his prologue to his translation explained the original text and described what he was doing.

Even though the WORD of God does not change – it is immutable just as God, cultural words and concepts do change. If you have a cultural word or phrase that you use to describe or mean something – the use and meaning as well as the perception of that word can change. Take a look at the word "Wicked" in our culture...now it means "cool" or "popular". Consequently the church through liturgy and religious practices has brought corruption into the ranks, seeking its own fulfillment rather than a Biblical view of who God is and who we are (Psalm 95

Let's look at John 4:20-26

"Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you [Jews] say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. "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. "God [is] Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit" and truth." The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am [He]."

What is the Biblical View of God, Man and Worship in this passage?

Many will say "God is looking for worshippers" ...this is true but he is NOT making a priority statement for the church. Nowhere does Scripture refer to "Worship" in the context of:

- a. Paying homage
- b. Our Satisfaction
- c. Our Performance: Sincere – ECT. (PRAISE: SING SKILLFULLY>>>)
- d. Engaging the "Worshipper"
- e. My renewal: Renewal by involvement

Even in Amos 5: 21-23 the Lord states: "I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies. Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept [them], Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments." We can see that God is not looking for the excellence or sincerity of the "worship service" ...but Psalm 51:15-17 states what He is looking for: "O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart--These, O God, You

will not despise.” Even in Colossians 3:16 states: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*

Herein lies the problem - consumed with ourselves and OUR view of the “THINGS” of God rather than God Himself. We must let Scripture speak for itself rather than making Scripture speak for US. Intentional Biblical Worship is serving God and HIS truth rather than having God’s Word serve the church “culture”. Go back to John 4:23-24 and hear what Jesus said to the woman at the well? *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”*

We ask ourselves – Am I worshipping that which I do not know? Can we say the following:

1. WORSHIP – WHAT We do – offering ourselves in obeisance to the Lord
2. WORSHIP- HOW?– With Full surrender HIS way.
3. WE DO NOT WORSHIP BECAUSE WE PARTICIPATE IN THESE SERVICES BUT RATHER WE PARTICIPATE IN THESE SERVICES BECAUSE WE ARE WORSHIPPING!

What we call worship most times is an act of Praise. Praise is acknowledging and ascribing all worth and glory to God where as Worship is bowing in total obescience to the Lord in 100% surrender. Surrendering your/our will to God with all abandon. So when we “Worship” we can come before the Lord – By HIS grace and Mercy Only – Surrendering to HIM. It has NOTHING to do with the ACT – but the Surrender of the WILL. It is not the corporate gathering...it is not the ART – it is NOT the music or any expression. It cannot be measured by ANY means accept the LORD HIMSELF. IT IS NOT for our pleasure...fulfillment...ONLY HIS. The offering is only our surrendered lives.

The question then is when does “WORSHIP” = that which we refer to – become “WORSHIP” - that which God refers to. The answer: when “the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts is pleasing and acceptable to him” Ps 19: 14

Let's go back to the woman at the well. What is Spirit and in Truth? The Spirit is NOT any dependence or reference to the ACT or expression or gathering. The Truth is being BIBLICAL - WHO GOD says He is, WHO GOD says I am and WHAT GOD has said He wants.

When we come together with our eyes fixed and focused on Him – with brokenness (PSALM 51), To humbly bow before Him – With full surrender (Annais and Saphira – Acts 5) where we delight ourselves in Him (Psalm 37), Where we are loving God with all our heart, mind and soul/will and loving your neighbor as yourself (Matt 22:39).

We can have three different types of worship going on:

1. False Worship: Worshipping the wrong things with all our heart, mind & Soul
2. Vain Worship: Worshipping the right things the wrong way – our way
3. True Worship: Worshipping the God of the Bible HIS WAY

The song “Here I am to Worship” - go through the words and ask yourself can I sing this because I am here to worship God His way?

Here I Am To Worship

Verse 1

Light of the world
You stepped down into darkness
Opened my eyes let me see
Beauty that made
This heart adore You
Hope of a life spent with You

Chorus 1

So here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You're my God
And You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me

Verse 2

King of all days
Oh so highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above
Humbly You came
To the earth You created
All for love's sake became poor

BRIDGE

And I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross
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To see my sin upon that cross