

Hey everyone, I'm glad that you are here tonight for week two of our series on Worship.

What we're doing is taking 6 weeks to talk about the topic of Worship - what is worship? What does it look like for us during the week? What does it look like when we gather together on Sundays?

Last time we attempted to define worship - **who all was here for week 1? One of you who raised your hand - keep it raised and share one thing you learned last time.**

Well tonight we're going to begin to tackle the subject of worship from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

I was going through the material I had planned for tonight and just realized it was way way way too much to try to cram into one week, so this is going to be part one - we'll start this off this week and then Lord willing continue to talk about this next week.

But before we get started here, nothing I say at all will matter without God's help, so let's take a minute to pray together.

One of the most common questions Christians have - and I'm talking about little baby Christians and some of the most mature Christians you and I know - is how does the New Testament relate to the Old Testament? How do we understand them together? How does this book - 66 different individual books written by different authors from different places and different time periods - how does this whole thing hold together?

Now, obviously this is a big question - one that I think we'll likely need to spend some time on in a future series sometime, but I think one way to help us understand how the Old Testament and the New Testament work together is to take a topic like worship and trace it throughout the Bible. When we do that, we see how that topic is handled in books like Genesis, when man is created to worship God, to Exodus or Deuteronomy or Leviticus where the law is given and explained, as compared to the gospels, when Jesus breaks onto the scene and things radically change, all the way to Revelation when we see worshipers from every tribe and tongue gathered together to praise God.

So we're going to take a look at Worship from the Old Testament to the New Testament - now obviously we can't cover everything, but I think tonight we can start to get an understanding of how the Bible talks about worship as it moves from the Old Testament to the New Testament - and hopefully by the end of this we'll at least have some tools to help us understand how the Bible talks about this topic.

So for our purposes tonight, the phrase I want us to keep in mind is this: **Everything has changed, but nothing has changed.**

Everything has changed, but nothing has changed!

So next week I plan to talk more about what HAS changed, but this week I want to talk about how much has stayed the same. For all the differences between worship in the Old and the New Testaments, I want to show you from the Bible that the core of worship really hasn't changed all that much - now the expressions of worship when we gather together, yes much has changed, but if you remember from last time, worship is much more than JUST what happens in this place on Sundays. Ok, that is incredibly important, and we'll get there, but worship is something that happens ALL THE TIME. Our lives are an expression of worship.

Ok? So if you guys were here for week 1 you know that I'm going to be expecting some interaction with you here, so what we're going to do is look at a couple key passages from the Old Testament about worship, and then see how these still apply to us today.

Ok? Everybody Good?

Lets start with an easy question - what's the most obvious thing that has stayed the same from Old Testament to New Testament?

Has the object of true worship changed?

God hasn't changed at all! In other words, we worship the God that we see in the pages of the Old Testament! We worship the God that we see in creation. And on Mount Sinai. And in the wilderness and in the temple - this is the same God that we worship.

And in case you don't believe me...
(Malachi 3:6)

So God hasn't changed, what about the reasons we worship him? Have they changed?

The reasons we worship him haven't changed!

We still praise God because of 1. Who He is, and 2. What He's Done. **His name and his actions.** His character and his outworking of that character in human history - that's why we worship God - and has that changed at all? No! In other words, **we worship him because he is worthy of our worship.**

When you read through the Psalms this is everywhere! His name and his actions.

Let's look at Psalm 96 just as an example of this - and when you see this, you see it everywhere. His nature and his actions.

Psa. 96:1 Oh sing to the Lord a new song;

sing to the Lord, all the earth!

2 Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples!

4 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.

6 Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Psa. 96:7 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts!

9 Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth!

Psa. 96:10 Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."

Psa. 96:11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

12 let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

13 before the Lord, for he comes,

for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness,
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

So if God hasn't changed, and the reasons his people worship him haven't changed, **what has changed?** He's revealed more of himself to us! You and I have more of the word of God than the Israelites did. We stand at the vantage point of being able to look back on the greatest act of God in human history (What's that? - the cross) - and don't you think that we have great access to a much fuller expression of who God is than the Old Testament saints did?

So the object of true worship is the same, and the reason for true worship is the same, but as we move from the Old to the New Testament, **the lens is getting more and more focused** and we see him more clearly as he reveals himself to us.

Ok, now I want to ask another question and this one is a little trickier so try not to overthink it - **what about what God requires of us in worship? Has that changed?**

Let's look to Deuteronomy 10:12

Deut. 10:12 “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to **fear** the Lord your God, to **walk** in all his ways, to **love** him, to **serve** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³ and to **keep** the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I am commanding you today for your good?”

Ok, so what do you think - is this similar or different from what is expected of us today?

So we're going to spend some time here and what I want to establish here on the front end is that we often look back at all the rules and regulations of the Old Testament - we read Leviticus and we're just like man I'm really glad God doesn't expect that much of me.

We're going to talk about some of the particulars next week, but what I want to emphasize for us is that at the core of worship, God expects no less of us today than he did of Israel in the Old Testament.

If you notice, Moses gives 5 imperatives here- An imperative is a command - telling you what to do. **Daniel Block, in his book “For the Glory of God,” spells this out for us.**

Moses gives Israel 5 of them here - it's a teaching tool, one for each finger on your hand. Count them out with me - 1. Fear the Lord, 2. Walk in his ways, 3. Love him, 4. Serve him, 5. Keep the commandments

Ok so the first finger here - fear the Lord. Fear the Lord.

1. Fear the Lord

- We know that the Old Testament tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, right? This is basic - those who would worship God are to fear him. This is a holy fear, a reverent fear of his glory and power. I don't think this is fear in the sense of God is a boogie man, out to get us, but it is a real fear and **trembling in the presence of someone who's greatness and glory is so far beyond your own.**
- **Are we still expected to fear God today? Yes!**

Yes - we are. I think most of us would agree to that basic statement. But here's where I want to spend a little time applying this to us - **what does fearing God look like in your everyday lives?**

- **Fear of the Lord will be a witness to the world around us**

How is the fear of the Lord a witness to the world around us?

We operate with a different perspective than the world around us. Because remember - they also fear and worship their gods. When we look beyond the idols of this world and fear God in heaven, it stands out. This is the function of the church - we are to fear God and teach others to fear God.

Look with me to Acts 9:31 -

Acts 9:31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

- **Fear of the Lord is a motivation in evangelism**

2Cor. 5:11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others.

- **Fear of the Lord makes us sincere and diligent workers**

Col. 3:22 Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, **fearing the Lord**.

- **Fear of the Lord helps us grow in holiness**

2Cor. 7:1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

That's just a handful of examples, but you see the point don't you? All of these things together in our daily lives are worship, and they are rooted in the fear of the Lord.

Any questions here before we move to the second finger?

1. **Walk in his ways**

- I don't think we need to spend much time here, but Moses lists "walk in his ways" as an expectation of true worship - are we still expected to walk in his ways? Yes!

Ok all of these items that we're discussing can be given as answers to the question - what does it look like to live the Christian life? Because again, worship, broadly defined, is living the Christian life. What does it look like to live the Christian life? You fear God. You walk in his ways.

- **Eph. 4:1** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to **walk in a manner worthy** of the calling to which you have been called,

So what does Paul connect with walking in his ways? The Calling of God - OK, when God calls you to himself - this is talking about God saving sinners, when he does that, he doesn't just leave you alone. No, he calls you to worship him by walking in his ways in every facet of your life. We're called to walk in a manner worthy of the calling we've received.

Obedience is worship. And if God has called you to worship him then he's called you to walk in his ways in every aspect of your life.

Now, is this easy? NO. Do we do this perfectly all the time? NO.

But the general trajectory for the Christian - for the God worshiper - is growth. And the expectation that we should have for ourselves and for others in our church is that we would be growing and learning to walk in the ways of God.

- **1Th. 2:12** we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to **walk in a manner worthy** of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

Now you may be wondering, how in the world do I know how to do this? How do we know how to walk in the ways of God?

His word. His word.

- **In Colossians 1:10** Paul prays that the Colossians would understand the truth of God more.."so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

So he connects walking with God with what? With growing in knowledge of God. And we grow in knowledge of God by listening to him speak in his word. If we want to be people who walk in his ways, we need to be people devoted to this book - Amen?

Any questions here on the first two of these fingers?

Ok, third finger - what does God expect of us but to Love him!

1. Love him

I really don't have to spend any time here do I? Do we have to love God to worship him?

- Love the Lord with all your heart, mind, strength, and soul - Matthew 22:37 - Jesus quotes straight from Deuteronomy.

We talked about this last time, you can't worship God if your heart is far from him. Worship is an external display of an inward affection.

Any questions there? Let's keep rolling then.

1. Serve him

Ok, it seems obvious enough that this is expected of us today as well, right, **but what does it mean to serve the Lord?**

Let me ask it like this - can I serve the Lord on Sunday, and then serve my job on Monday, and then serve my football team on Saturday?

Not this type of serving. This term is all-encompassing - it demands all of you.

There's more here than it seems - servitude to someone or something is more than just an act, it's an identity. It's something that demands your entire self - **this is why Jesus says no one can serve two masters - you can't serve both God and money.**

And I want us to see how intense this is - If you are going to worship God, you have to serve God alone as your master.

And just so you believe me that this is expected in the New Testament as well, you know that I have some examples for you

Paul is talking about eating and drinking and a whole bunch of things and he concludes his point by saying this

Rom. 14:18 **Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.**

Rom. 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, **serve the Lord.**

Luke 4:8 - Again, Jesus quotes the Old Testament in Luke 4:8. Satan is tempting Jesus to bow down to him as his Master -

Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "You shall worship **the Lord** your God, and him only shall you **serve**."

Alright, so let's get some raised hands and I want you to tell me what serving the Lord can look like for you?

Does serving the Lord mean I shouldn't serve my wife? Or my kids? Or my church?

No, of course not. We're commanded to do all of these things - but all of them only function properly and only make sense if we fit them under the big idea that **we are ultimately serving the Lord in all things.**

last finger here -

1. **Keep the commandments**

Now this is a loaded one, OK, and we don't have nearly enough time to unpack this - but remember what we said at the beginning, OK - this book is progressive revelation, right? God reveals himself to Moses, he gives the law, and all of this is leading up to and climaxing with the coming of Christ and then BOOM! Everything changes! Now we have the advantage of looking back on the Old Testament, not as Old Testament believers, but as those who have the full revelation of God in scripture - so we look to the Old Testament through the lens of Christ - we understand what all of it was leading up to -

So we aren't accountable to obey every law in the Old Testament, but do we still have commands to obey?

Yes!

The book of 1 John is pretty clear about this. Go home this week and read the book of 1 John and then try to tell me that you don't have to keep God's commandments.

1John 2:4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not **keep his commandments** is a liar, and **the** truth is not in him,

So our keeping the commandments of God is evidence that we know God!

- **Do we earn our way to God by keeping the commandments?**
 - **No.**
- **Does our knowing God lead us to keep the commandments?**
 - **Yes.**

And I just want to say something here - there are some people that you'll probably interact with - Mike and I were just talking about this yesterday, there are some people who will say something along the lines of - BECAUSE I know Jesus, and HE fulfilled the law for me, then I don't have to keep the commandments of God.

Ok, are you following that - Jesus fulfilled the law, only he was perfectly able to keep it, his righteousness is credited to me, so I don't have to obey.

Folks, that is an absolute lie. It's an abuse of God's grace. And it's not what the Bible says about how we honor and worship God. **We don't honor God by embracing our sinfulness.**

We don't earn our entrance into heaven by our own righteousness - let's get that clear, but the love of Christ compels us to obedience. And as we grow in our knowledge and our love of him - as we've seen - we grow in our desire and ability to keep the commandments of God.

*1John 5:3 For this is **the** love of God, that we **keep** his **commandments**. And his **commandments** are not burdensome.*

One of the main differences for us in the age of the Holy Spirit is that we aren't meant to attempt to keep God's commandments in our own strength. We can't do it! We don't have the ability to obey a single word of God's law apart from his grace. One of the main functions of the law is to make it abundantly clear that God's requirements of holiness is way more than we can achieve on our own!

But this shouldn't lead us to just give up trying to be holy - its mean to lead us to stop trying to be holy in our own strength - we strive for holiness in the strength HE provides.

Let me pause here for any questions on this?

CONCLUSION:

If this is the core of what is honoring to God in both the Old and the New Testaments, then let me ask you this - **where is this done? Where do we fear him, walk in his ways, love him, serve him, keep his commandments?**

Everywhere! Everywhere! We're going to talk about corporate worship more in the coming weeks, but I really want us to understand that we are worshipers every moment of our lives.

SO I want you to ask yourselves - what does it look like for me to worship God at home?

- With my kids? With my husband or wife?

What does it look like for me to worship God amongst my neighbors?

What does it mean for me to worship God at work?

- How do I honor the Lord in the workplace? By not gossiping with others around me at lunch? Or by not cheating our employers out of the time they pay us for? By not working for selfish gain but working ultimately for the honor of the Lord?

And then what does it mean for me to worship God at church? How can I fear him, serve him, love him, obey him here in this place? **Because when you strip away everything else, that is what we are trying to do in this place. Amen?**

Let's pray