

Approaching God In Worship

(White Rock Series: Lessons From the Book Of Psalms)

Introduction:

In my studies, I look at several English translations for comparisons. In my preaching and teaching, I use the NKJV because some still use the KJV and others who do not will still be able to follow along relatively well.

Story: A husband and wife were walking out of the church building when the wife turned to her husband and said, “I hope you noticed that sermon was aimed directly at YOU!”

Story: Then there is the family who are walking into the church building when the boy said to his mother, “But Mom, I don’t want to sit next to Dad. He snores!”

We’ve placed a great deal of emphasis on our buildings. Certainly, when we look into the book of Psalms, we can see references to “the temple.”

Psalm 5:7 But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; In fear of You I will **worship toward Your holy temple.**

Psalm 138:2 I will **worship toward Your holy temple,** And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

In reaction to that, there are a number of our brethren who have preached for several years that “**all of life is worship.**” I do not have plans to rebut that at length. I will say that this lesson is based on the the understanding that **all of what we do in life affects our worship,**

Example: When Jesus spoke in the Sermon on the Mount about “murder,” he mentioned bringing a gift to the altar.

Matthew 5:23-24 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, **leave your gift** there before the altar, and go your way. **First be reconciled** to your brother, and **then come and offer your gift.**

That describes that there is a time and place where our intent is specifically **to** worship. It is also clear that what we do in our lives can interfere with our worship. We don’t want anything to separate us from God. We don’t want anything to hinder our prayers.

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, **that your prayers may not be hindered.**

So, How Do We Approach God In Worship?

1. Approaching God in Worship Requires Humility Before God

Psalm 95:6 Oh come, let us **worship** and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Psalm 96:9 Oh, **worship** the Lord in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth.

Psalm 99:5 Exalt the Lord our God, And **worship** at His **footstool**— He is holy.

In Psalms, “Worship” is synonymous with “bow down.” With that said, it is clear that approaching God in worship requires humility and respect. Because God is HOLY, we cannot be arrogant when approaching Him in worship. We are sinners and must be aware of that.

Luke 18:9-14 Also (Jesus) spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Do You Ever Wonder Why Our Bodies Are Made The Way They Are?

- We require sleep.
- We require the ability to rid ourselves of waste
- We require food and water
- We require air to breathe

Is It Possible That God Made Us This Way So That We Would Be Humble?

2. Approaching God in Worship Requires Hearing God

We know that the first century church met and worshipped in homes of various members.

Romans 16:5 Likewise greet **the church that is in their house.** (Priscilla and Aquilla)

Colossians 4:15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and **the church that is in his house.**

- The Terms Of Worship were NOT based on who owned the house!
- The church came together to worship God and edify each other in relationship to GOD

Psalm 132:7 Let us go into **His** tabernacle; Let us worship at **His** footstool.

Psalm 99:9 Exalt the Lord our God, And worship at **His** holy hill; For the Lord our God is holy.

Humility Before God, Submits to GOD’s Will and God’s Ways

Psalm 86:9-13 All nations whom You have made Shall come and **worship** before You, O Lord, And shall glorify **Your** name. For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God. Teach me **Your** way, O Lord; I will walk in **Your** truth; Unite my heart to fear **Your** name. I will praise **You,** O Lord my God, with all my heart, And I will glorify **Your** name forevermore. For great is Your mercy toward me, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

- The stories of Cain **Genesis 4:3-5;** and Abel and Nadab **Leviticus 10:1** and Abihu reveal that some worship is acceptable and some is not.
- It is obvious that if each person worshipping God unacceptably had humility before God, he would submit to **whatever** God wanted him to do!
- Too often People find worship that is acceptable to themselves instead of God!

Psalm 106:19-23a They made a calf in Horeb, And **worshipped the molded image.** Thus they changed their glory into the image of an ox that eats grass. **They forgot God their Savior,** Who had done great things in Egypt, Wondrous works in the land of Ham, Awesome things by the Red Sea. Therefore He said that He would destroy them,...

3. Approaching God in Worship Requires Holiness Before God

Once Again I Refer Back To Humility.

- It is not our OWN holiness that makes our worship acceptable.

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all like an unclean thing, And **all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags**; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

- We must bring an offering and come into His courts **Psalm 96:8**

Psalm 96:9 Oh, worship the Lord **in the beauty of holiness!** Tremble before Him, all the earth.

- (NASB) Worship the Lord **in holy attire!**
- The offering we bring is OURSELVES!

Matthew 16:24 “If you want to follow me, deny your self, take up your cross and follow me.”

Jesus Told A Story About A Wedding Feast In **Matthew 22:1-14**

- The King called in all those who were invited and they made excuses, so He had them destroyed.
- Then he sent messengers to invite as many as could be found and the wedding hall was filled with guests

Matthew 22:11-13 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on **a wedding garment**. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

- We know by Jesus’ other comments that this was not referring to physical clothing:

We Are Clothed With Holiness When We Are In Jesus Christ

- Even the Psalms prophesied Jesus would be crucified:

Psalm 22:1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? (**Remember these words?**)

Psalm 22:16-18 For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

- If we want to approach God in worship, we must be clothed with Christ!
- It is through the righteousness of Christ that we can be made holy.
- Without His righteousness we are “filthy rags” and “unworthy to be at the wedding feast.”

Galatians 3:26-27 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

(NASB, NIV rephrased it this way) “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have **clothed yourselves with Christ.**”

Simply stated, that says, if you believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, then “why do you wait, arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”