

## Worship in Spirit and in Truth - 3 Worship in Spirit

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AM Service

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

### Text:

John 4:19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. 20: Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. 21: Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22: Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23: 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. 24: God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

### Introduction

Worship, what is it and how may I render it? Someone has perceptively said, “*Worship is the activity of the human soul.*” Worship is a **personal activity** where I am consciously and deliberately active. **Worship is not like breathing**, for breathing is done unconsciously. When we breath we don’t have to think about it. We just breath naturally. We breath without any conscious effort on our part. But worship, unlike breathing, is a **conscious deliberate activity**. Worship is a conscious activity where the whole being is engaged. **That’s what we see in the Scripture**. Whenever you see creatures worshipping God, those creatures are **totally engaged** in worship. Their whole being is involved in the holy activity of worship. This is what worship is. **Worship is the response of all that we are to all that God is and does**. It is the response of the whole person to God for who He is and what He does. The whole person which is the **body, soul, and spirit** are all engaged in worship.

This morning, I invite you to look more closely what is involved in true spiritual worship. If true worship is the response of the whole person to God then it involves the **body**, the **mind**, the **will**, the **emotion** of the man.

### I – Worshiping God with Our Body

If I am to truly worship God, I must worship Him with my body. The body is the physical part of a person and in true worship the body is engaged. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Romans urges his readers in,

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that **ye present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore **glorify God in your body, and in your spirit**, which are God's.

The **body of the Christians** is **God's temple**. By His Holy Spirit, God actually lives in the believer's body, and He can use that body to accomplish His work and glorify His name.

Philippians 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also **Christ shall be magnified in my body**, whether it be by life, or by death.

Paul prayed that Christ might be magnified in his body.

As I have said at the outset, whenever you see creatures worshipping God, those creatures are totally engaged in worship. Their whole being which includes their body is involved in the holy activity of worship.

Let me give you passages that supports this.

Exodus 4:29 And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: 30: And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. 31: And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then **they bowed their heads and worshipped**.

Nehemiah 8:6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, **Amen, Amen**, with lifting up their hands: and **they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD** with their faces to the ground.

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and **fell down upon the ground, and worshipped**,

Matthew 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and **fell down, and worshipped him**: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Luke 17:15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16: And **fell down on his face at his feet**, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. 17: And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

These are the physical activities we see when creatures before God are worshipping. They fall down, they bow their heads, they bend their knees, they shout and sing praises to God with their mouth. **Their physical activity is simply a physical demonstration of what is going on in the soul**. Seeing their unworthiness and the greatness of God, the natural response is to bow the head, the bent the knees, and to shout Amen and sing praises to God.

Now what is the significance of their physical activities are **important only if they are the honest reflection** of the posture of the **innermost being**.

Psalm 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2: Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. 3: For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4: In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. 5: The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. 6: O come, let us **worship and bow down**: let us **kneel before the LORD our maker**.

Our **physical expressions should draw people's attention** not to ourselves but **to the reality, greatness, and goodness of the God** we worship.

## II – The Worshiping God with Our Mind

True worship not only engages the physical body but also the mind. The mind is our thinking faculty. If we are to truly worship God, the **mind** must be **active, not passive**.

One day our Lord was asked what is the great commandment of the law?

Matthew 22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and **with all thy mind**. 38: This is the first and great commandment.

As Christians, God calls us to **love Him with all our mind**. That's why worshipping God must engage our minds and understanding. In order to truly worship God your mind must be active. You must **deliberately direct** your **minds** to the **things that will fuel worship**. Contemplate on who God is and what He has done.

Please turn to [Psalm 100](#) which gives us a classic example on how God's people worship God.

Psalm 100:1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2: Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3: **Know** ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4: Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. 5: For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Here is a call to worship; an invitation to make a joyful noise and to sing unto the LORD. But these **cannot be done in a vacuum**. Worship **cannot be done** with an **empty head**. In order to truly worship God, you **must know something about God**. You must know that He is God, that He is the Creator of all things, that He is good, and His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.

Let me focus on one particular aspect of our worship, which is singing. When we sing the first hymn, you **turn your minds actively to those words**. You set yourself to think of them as you sing and then you give yourself **consciously and volitionally to singing**.

Psalm 66:2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

Sing to the glory and honor of His Name. Recognize His glory in your praise of Him.

Psalm 98:4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Worship God in your singing. Give yourself to worship God with whole volume and it **will help dispel the half-hearted spirit** in you. Giving yourself wholeheartedly in singing will also **prepare** your heart **to receive God's word**. But in order to do this, you will have to know something. For **what you know will affect how you sing**.

*“Vagueness about the object of our praise inevitably leads to making our own praise the object. Praise therefore becomes an end in itself, and we are caught up in our own ‘worship experience’ rather than in the God whose character and acts are the only proper focus.”* – Michael Horton, A Better Way

**Passionate action without intelligence is fanaticism.** We are to love God with the mind as well as with the heart ([Luke 10:27](#)). Body is not enough; to be in the right place is not enough; to be engaged in the right activity is not enough; the **mind is active in the contemplation of God**. Think deeply about God, His being, His work, His benefits. Let your mind run out actively in these directions.

Psalm 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth: **sing ye praises with understanding**.

1 Corinthians 14:15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and **I will pray with the understanding** also: I will sing with the spirit, and **I will sing with the understanding** also.

The mind must be active as we sing, as we pray, as we listen to the preaching or there will be no true worship.

### **III - Worshiping God with Our Will**

In worship, not only must we worship God with our body and with our mind, we must also worship with our will. Mainly, **the mind controls the body**, and **the will controls the mind**. The will is the chooser. To choose and to refuse are both decisions and functions of the will.

Worship involves our will.

Psalm 95:6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. 7: For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice. 8: Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

The words “**Come**,” “**bow down**,” and “**kneel**” indicate that in worship we are **making a deliberate and decisive choice to submit** to God as the Lord of our lives. Part of worship is submitting our will to God's will. We see this in the Lord's prayer,

Matthew 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10: Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done** in earth, as it is in heaven.

Psalms 5:1 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation. 2: Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee **will I pray**. 3: My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning **will I direct my prayer** unto thee, and **will look up**. 4: For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. 5: The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. 6: Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man. 7: But as for me, **I will come into thy house** in the multitude of thy mercy: and **in thy fear will I worship** toward thy holy temple.

Psalms 108:1 O God, my heart is fixed; **I will sing and give praise**, even with my glory. 2: Awake, psaltery and harp: **I myself will awake early**. 3: **I will praise thee**, O LORD, among the people: and **I will sing praises** unto thee among the nations. 4: For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds. 5: Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth; 6: That thy beloved may be delivered: save with thy right hand, and answer me.

In true worship the will is engaged. Just listening and learning and understanding is **not worship if it does not affect our will** to submit to God's will. This submission to God's will is a humble and wholehearted submission. It is a submission of the will that is **born of love and admiration and trust** in the One being worshiped.

#### **IV - The Worshiping God with Our Emotion**

Worship engages every part of our being and that also includes the emotion. **God created us as emotional beings**. So, part of loving God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength must include our emotions.

Mark 12:28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? 29: And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

Emotions are an **important part of any relationship**. If the husband said, *"I love you and I am committed to you, but I don't have any particular feelings for you,"* do you think that the wife would be satisfied? Of course not! **Unfeeling and emotionless love** is a **questionable love**. The wife would not be satisfied with that kind of love and so is God. **There must be expression of emotion** toward God. In fact, the Bible is filled with the expression of emotion toward God. Consider the strong emotions expressed in these Psalms:

Psalms 42:1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, **so panteth my soul after thee, O God**. 2: **My soul thirsteth for God**, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Psalms 84:1 How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! 2: **My soul longeth**, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Most of us have a fear of being controlled by our emotions and that is understandable because we realize that **our emotions can mislead us**. As Vaughan Roberts notes, *“Many people who come to church are looking for an experience. They do not want to think; they want a direct encounter with God. They want to feel His presence with them. And when they do, or at least when they think they do, they call that ‘worship’. For them, worship is primarily to do with the feelings rather than with the mind. But the Bible will not allow us to divorce the two. True worship will certainly involve our emotions, but it does not begin with them.”*

Worship is **not based on feelings**, but on truth. We worship God **because He is worthy**. We worship Him regardless of how we feel. We worship Him because He deserves it, **not because it makes us feel a certain way**. If you are worshipping God because you just love that “worshipful” feeling then you are worshipping for the wrong reason.

**But cold, unfeeling worship is just as bad**. Worship devoid of feeling is not somehow more “pure” or spiritual. In fact, it is less so. How can we stand and speak or sing of God’s greatness and His amazing love, and feel nothing? How can we not respond to His love by loving Him in return? **Our worship needs to have a proper emotional response to God.**

### **Closing Thoughts**

Warren Wiersbe defines worship this way, *“Worship is the believers’ response of all that they are—mind, emotions, will, and body—to what God is and says and does ... It is a loving response that’s balanced by the fear of the Lord, and it is a deepening response as the believer comes to know God better.”*

Worship involves every part of our being. *“Hear, O Church; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.”*

We need to ask ourselves, *“Do we come on the Lord’s Day, seeking to engage our whole being in worship? Do we reverence and adore Him from the deepest part of our minds and souls and heart?” Do we lovingly respond to who God is and what He says?”* To give our God the honor of which He is worthy, we must approach Him “in spirit and truth.” Anything less is unacceptable! And if we truly love Him and care for His glory we will not settle for anything less!

**AMEN!**