

What is Worship – Part 2 Bowling Down Before God

Sermon Delivered on August 18th, 2024
AM Service

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Text:

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. 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: 9: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10: Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11: Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Introduction

Worship, real worship - what is it and how may I render it? If worship matters to God and if it will be our eternal joy and glorious occupation, then it is vitally important for us Christians to know and understand what constitutes biblical worship and that we would be the kind of worshipers that God Himself desires and deserves from His people. If in all eternity we are going to glorify God the way God wants us to glorify Him then why not do it while we are here.

Last Sunday we considered what worship is not. Worship is not about **location**; it's not about **getting**; it's not about **entertainment** and it's not about **escape**. In short, worship is not about me. It does not start with me. It does not start with my need. Worship is **not about what makes me happy**, what **makes me excited**, what **encourages me** or what **I feel good about doing**. May God deliver us from me-centered and man-centered worship.

If worship is not about me, what is worship then? **Worship is all about God!** Worship is **Bowing Down before Presence of God**, Worship is **Declaring the Worth of God**, and Worship is **Responding to Greatness of God**.

I - Worship is Bowing Down before God

The primary Hebrew word for worship is “**shachah**” which means “**to bow down**”. In Greek, it is “**proskuneo**” meaning to “**prostrate**”, “**to fall down**”. It carries with it the idea of subjects falling down to kiss the ground before a king or kiss their feet. There are many Scripture references where worship and bowing down or kneeling down are together.

Genesis 24:26 And **the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD**. 27: And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.

Genesis 24:51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken. 52: And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, **he worshipped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth**.

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.

Matthew 4:9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt **fall down and worship me**.

Even the devil recognizes that worship involves in bowing down and falling down before the object of worship.

1 Corinthians 14:25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and **so falling down on his face he will worship God**, and report that God is in you of a truth.

Psalms 95:6 O come, **let us worship and bow down**: let us **kneel before the LORD our maker**.

Now what is the significance of bowed head, prostrate body, and bent knees? Understand that physical posture be it a bowed head or bent knees, **does not necessarily mean that we are bringing true worship to God**.

It reminds me of a story about a mother who told her son to sit. And the child sat but he told his mother. *"Mother I am sitting on the outside, but I am standing in the inside"*. **The posture of the**

child's body did not match the posture of his heart. O, how often we bow and kneel on the outside yet stand up stiff and rigid in the inside.

So the physical posture is important only if it is an honest reflection of the posture of the heart. Worship of God does not require a certain physical position, but postures do give expression to the attitudes of our hearts.

What does the bowing of the head signify?

1. A Sign of Humility

One who bows before God conveys **an attitude of humility**. Bowing down or kneeling down is not necessarily a measure of our spirituality. But many times the posture of our bodies reveals the posture of our hearts. **There is something humbling about bowing down.** Bowing down to the ground, with bodies near to the earth, close to the dust is an appropriate way for a man to acknowledge that that's what all he is. **A creature of the dust**, and that's what he will be eventually when his breath is taken away.

Genesis 2:7 **And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground**, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Genesis 3:19 **In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**

The opposite of the posture of humility is to lift up your head high. This speaks of pride.

Proverbs 6:16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17: **A proud [high look] look**, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

Luke 18:9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11: The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13: And the publican, standing afar off, **would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven**, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Bowing before God is a symbol of humility. But what is humility? **Humility is essentially looking at ourselves in the mirror and really seeing what is there.** It is recognizing that God is God and I am not. Humility is to recognize who God is and to fall prostrate before Him in response. **It is about me recognizing that God is the Creator the All-mighty One** and I am the created one - frail and sinful who must approach Him with humility.

The problem is that **our senses has been so corrupted** that we don't naturally see what we really are. Sin has so deceived us that when we look at the mirror, **we don't see that we are men and women, boys and girls of the dust, who are dependent upon God** for the very breath we breathe. This is why the first requirement for worship is new birth, because in **the new birth our senses are being restored.**

Our text says...

Psalm 95:6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

Here is a call to worship God; to bow down and to kneel before the LORD our Maker. A call to worship is a call to humility. **To recognize that God is God; that God is the Creator and we are not.** A call to worship is a call to humble ourselves before Him. The psalmist humbled himself before the LORD and encourages others to do the same.

2. A Sign of Reverence

One who bows before God conveys **an attitude of reverence**. It is a humble sign of respect. As early as in ancient history, bowing was a symbol of respect and an important religious gesture. The Persians did this in the presence of their king, and the Greeks before a divinity. In some cultures like Japan and Korea, they express reverence and respect for one another by bowing down. **The deeper the bow, the greater the respect is shown by the person.**

This is the frequent response of the elders and living creatures in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 4:10 **The four and twenty elders fall down before him** that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Revelation 5:14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And **the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him** that liveth for ever and ever.

Revelation 11:16 And **the four and twenty elders**, which sat before God on their seats, **fell upon their faces, and worshipped God**, 17: Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

Revelation 19:4 And **the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God** that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. 5: And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

Now when we bow our heads before God we are showing honor, respect, and reverence. Worship is the bowing before God, kneeling before God and yet this bowing and kneeling before God is **not out of fear nor out of dread but out of love, adoration, and reverence.**

Psalm 2:11 Serve the LORD with **fear**, and rejoice with **trembling**.

Psalm 89:7 **God is greatly to be feared** in the assembly of the saints, and **to be had in reverence** of all them that are about him.

Hebrews 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may **serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:**

Fear of the Lord is used as synonymous with worship.

2 Kings 17:36 But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, **him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship**, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.

When the Bible speaks of the fear of the LORD especially in connection with worship, it's **not talking about that cringing dreadful fear**. Rather it speaks of that high and right regard for God. It's reverence and awe before Him.

Psalm 5:7 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.

Psalm 130:3 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4: But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

You don't think of cringing fear of dread at the thought of mercy and forgiveness. **As I recognize God's mercy and forgiveness, my response is fear not dread but awe and reverence.**

3. A Sign of Submission

One who bows before God conveys **an attitude of submission**. Kneeling before God provides a physical picture of submission to God's authority and sovereignty. Again this is the natural response of the elders and living creatures in the book of Revelation before the throne!

Revelation 4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down **before him that sat on the throne**, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Revelation 7:11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell **before the throne** on their faces, and worshipped God,

Revelation 19:4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped **God that sat on the throne**, saying, Amen; Alleluia. 5: And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

The "Throne" is the seat of **absolute power and authority**. It is **not a democracy**. It is not a government of the people, by the people and for the people. **It is a monarchy**. It is a government of the throne, by the throne and for the throne. These elders and living creatures recognize the One who sat on the throne has absolute power and authority and **they cannot help but prostrate before Him with the heart of submission**.

Falling down before the throne is a beautiful illustration of utter submission of the creature to the authority and power of God, the **Creator**, the **Law-Giver**, the **Judge**, and the **Redeemer**. He is

God with absolute right to rule, to govern me, to tell me anything about myself. **He made me, therefore He has the right to direct me.**

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...

Worship is **not a warm and fuzzy feeling** when singing but rather a **humble submission** to God. It is humble submission to God's **will**, His **word**, His **plan**, His **providence**. An excellent example of worship is **Job**.

Job 1:22 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and **fell down upon the ground, and worshipped**, 21: And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. 22: In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Even in the midst of great losses and affliction, he bowed down on the ground which reflects his attitude of submission.

Closing Exhortations

Many today refuse to bow down before God. They have made the choice to follow the religious people of Jesus' day where they said "*We will not have this man to reign over us.*" They refuse to bow down before God, **but one day every knee will bow before God**, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God.

But **we don't have to wait for that day**, right now we need to bow in humble adoration, reverence, and submission to the One who is worthy of worship.

If you are an unbeliever today, you can never worship Him acceptably, for one of the prerequisites for true worship is a posture of humility and submission. Pride and worship are incompatible. Pride and worship cannot exist at the same time. **The first step of humility is to repent and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

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: 9: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10: Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11: **Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.**

For those of us who, by the grace of God are true worshipers, the question is **how can we bring ourselves more and more to that posture of humility, reverence, and submission?** Only the Lord can bring us to that place but He uses certain means. **Continually meditate on Who God is and don't forget who you are.** The elders and living creatures and the saints in the book of Revelation bowed before God in worship because they have a true sight of who they were and who God is.

Revelation 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, **Great and marvellous** are thy works, **Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways**, thou King of saints. 4: **Who shall not fear thee**, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for **thou only art holy**: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

AMEN!