

Pathway to Worship | “Forms and Expressions of Worship”

Week 2: Understanding Personal and Corporate Worship and Avoiding Preference-Driven Views of Worship

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Objectives to Understanding

- Worship is primarily about God’s worthiness, not our preferences.
- Both personal and corporate worship are commanded and necessary.
- Scripture provides principles for worship that transcend culture, style, and personal taste.
- We should evaluate worship according to God’s Word rather than our preferences.
- Discuss: When worship is over, what is our first question?
“Did I enjoy it?” “Did I get anything out of it?” “Did God receive the worship He deserves?”

What is Worship?

- Worship begins with God’s worthiness, not man’s preference. (Revelation 4:11; Psalm 95:1-7)
- Psalm 95 teaches about: Invitation to worship / Reasons for worship / Humble submission before God
- Biblical worship is not first about our feelings; it is first about God’s character.

Personal Worship

- Corporate worship cannot replace personal worship. (John 4:23-24; Psalm 63:1-5; Romans 12:1)
- Characteristics of personal worship in Spirit: Genuine / Heartfelt / Spirit-led
- Characteristics of personal worship in truth:
 Grounded in Scripture / Centered on God’s revelation / More than emotion
- Worship is not merely something we attend. It is a life we live, surrendered to God.

Corporate Worship

- God designed believers to worship together. (Hebrews 10:24-25; Colossians 3:16; Acts 2:42; Psalm 122:1)
- The early church continued steadfastly in: Doctrine / Fellowship / Breaking of Bread / Prayer
- Corporate worship exists to glorify God and strengthen His people.

The Danger of Preference-Driven Worship

- God evaluates worship according to His standards, not ours. (Isaiah 29:13; Mark 7:6-9; I Samuel 15:22)
- Preference-driven worship says: “I like it.” “I don’t like it.” “It fits my taste.”
- Biblical worship asks: “Is God the focus?” (Psalm 115:1), “Is scripture obeyed and truth proclaimed?” (John 17:17), “Is Jesus exalted?” (Colossians 1:18), “Are believers edified?” (I Corinthians 14:26), “Is God honored with order and reverence?” (I Corinthians 14:40)

Final Reflection

- Personal worship is daily, heart-centered, Spirit and truth, and a surrendered life.
- Corporate worship is commanded by God, encourages believers, centers on God’s Word, and builds up the church.
- Preference-driven worship makes self the standard, elevates taste above truth, and risks replacing God’s commands with human desires.
- Biblical worship exalts God, submits to Scripture, honors Christ, and edifies believers.
- Worship is not about finding what pleases us most; it is about offering to God what honors Him most – both privately and together as His people.

