

Varieties of Christian Worship

Text

Rev. 22:8-12 ⁸ Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹ Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”

¹⁰ And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. ¹¹ He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. ¹² And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”

Memory Verse

Rev. 22:9-10 ⁹ Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” ¹⁰ And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.”

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Introduction

To worship the only true God, as Jesus revealed, we need clear teaching and encouragement from one another. God designed us to depend on each other individually and as a body. That is why He tells us not to neglect meeting together, so that we can share His word and stay consistent in true worship (Heb. 10:25).

But we must also be careful. Not every gathering that uses Jesus's name is truly worshipping God. Jesus warned, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father." (Matt. 7:21-23)

John tells us to "test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1). Paul adds, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thess. 5:21-22 (KJV))

He also says "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge." (1 Cor. 14:29)

In other words, they should weigh carefully what is said.

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Objective

To highlight two varieties of Christian worship: individual and corporate, and to show how worship in the heart must be expressed through our hands.

Presentation

1. Individual Worship

Those who worship God in Spirit and truth are people God has saved from their old way of life into the life of God (Eph. 4:17-18). The Spirit of God leads them into a lifestyle that proves they belong to Christ (Rom. 8:9, 14).

Salvation is personal, not collective. The Bible speaks of individuals being saved, not groups:

Gal. 6:4-5 *But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.*

Phil. 2:12 *... Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

When two or three believers gather, God's presence and reward for service are promised (Matt. 18:20). But the true place of worship is in the spirit, in line with the New Covenant: "God is

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spirit, and true worshippers must worship Him in Spirit and truth.” (John 4:23-24)

Christians experience God’s presence anywhere and everywhere because of holy living (Heb. 12:14). Corporate worship is only acceptable to God when individual worshippers live holy lives. “Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does His will, He hears him.” (John 9:31)

We often hear of “family and community deliverance”, but the Bible never speaks of “family and community salvation of the soul”. Salvation is individual. “The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.” (Eze. 18:20)

2. Corporate Worship

Worship cannot be limited to one place, because God is Spirit and cannot be confined (Ps. 139:7-12; John 4:23-24). The upright lives of individual believers make the assembly God’s dwelling place in the Spirit (Eph. 2:17-22).

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Therefore corporate worship depends on the worship of individuals for God's acceptance. Be careful of ministries that promise family or community salvation. When your soul is saved through God's word in Christ, your body is sanctified too. "You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you." (John 15:3)

3. Worship from the Heart to the Hand

Worship in the heart is good, but it is incomplete without action. "What does it profit, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?" (Jam. 2:14)

(See also 1 John 3:17-19; 4:20-21; Job 29:15-16).

God enjoys worship from the heart, but He designed it so that mankind also benefits. Humanity is God's supreme concern (Heb. 2:5-8). So true worship must include service to others to receive God's full acceptance and reward (Luke 12:16-21; 16:12).

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Conclusion

Do not worry about where to worship God. Worry about why and how you worship Him. God is omnipresent and sees everywhere. He rewards accordingly. Also ask yourself: what is the evident impact of my worship? That is where the credibility of divine approval shows.

Evaluation Questions & Answers

1. Which are the two types of Christian worship discussed in this chapter?

- * Individual worship and corporate worship.

Individual:

Phil. 2:12 ... *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

Corporate:

Heb. 10:24-25 ²⁴ *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,* ²⁵ *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

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2. One type of Christian worship is dependent upon the other for divine acceptance. Which one is that?

- * Corporate worship depends on the holiness and sincerity of individual worshippers.

John 9:31 *Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does His will, He hears him.*

Eph. 2:21 *In whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.*

3. If worship can take place anywhere, what is the spiritual benefit of building halls?

- * Buildings are not required for God's presence, but they provide a place for believers to gather, encourage one another, and share God's word consistently.

Heb. 10:25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another.*

Matt. 18:20 *For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*

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4. Worship with the heart is good, but not perfected without its evidence at the hand. Explain.

- * True worship involves both inward devotion and outward action. If our heart worship does not lead to love and service for others, it is incomplete.

Jam. 2:17 *Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

1 John 3:17 *But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?*

Prayer

Father, thank You for the privilege of worship. Give us grace to worship You in Spirit and truth, both individually and together. May our worship have real impact on those around us. Amen.