

How Should We Worship? — Introduction

What is worship?

- A. Worship is *all* that the _____ owes uniquely and exclusively to the _____ . Worship encompasses *all* that humans owe uniquely and exclusively to the Deity – the only true God.
1. **Romans 1:25** — They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and **worshiped** [*sebazomai*] and **served** [*latreuo*] the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.
 2. **Matthew 4:10 (cf. Deut. 6:13)** — “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL **WORSHIP** [*proskyneo*] THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND **SERVE** [*latreuo*] HIM ONLY.’”
- B. “Worshiped and served” is a hendiadys – the expression of a single idea by two words connected with “and.”
1. Worship expresses at the most basic level, our whole _____ before God and the way that we’re called to relate to Him.
 2. One of the Hebrew words for worship is *hawa* which means literally, “to bow down.” One of the Greek words for worship is *proskyneo* which also means literally, “to bow down.”
 3. When a person bows down before God, this outward *posture* ought to be an expression of His inward *posture* – not just of praise and adoration, but also of unworthiness and confession, of dependence and petition, of submission and obedience, and of gratefulness and thanksgiving.
- C. **Exodus 20:2–6** — “I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not **worship** [*hawa*] them [bow down to them] or **serve** [*abad*] them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”

What is Sunday morning worship?

- What is it that sets this time _____ from all other times and even from all other gatherings of the church (prayer meetings, Bible studies, hymn sings, praise and testimony times, gifts and talents nights, etc.)?

The egalitarian error

- A. Contemporary egalitarianism isn’t so concerned with equal worth and value as it is with equal everything – equal roles; equal status; equal opportunities; equal outcomes.
- B. This egalitarian “spirit of the age” is seen in the church in the denial that there is any distinction between things that are “_____” (uniquely set apart by God) and things that are “_____”.
1. **Ezekiel 22:26 (cf. 44:23; Lev. 10:10)** — Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane [common], and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned [treated as common] among them.

2. Is there no longer any distinction under the New Covenant between the holy and the common? Egalitarianism says that all times, places, and things are alike and equal and therefore to be *treated* alike and equal.
 3. What are the implications of this spirit of egalitarianism for our approach to Sunday morning worship?
 - We may do some different things (e.g., a sermon), but there's nothing deeper down that sets this time _____ from all other times, and even from all other gatherings of the church.
- C. It's this egalitarian mindset that explains, in large part, why Sunday morning worship services can have such a radically different "look" and "feel" at different churches.
- It's also this egalitarian assumption that explains, in part, why for many Christians "church attendance" isn't the _____ priority that it should be.
- D. What is Sunday morning worship?
1. It's whatever we *do* on Sunday morning! It's gathering as Christians to glorify God and edify one another.
 2. But we still haven't answered the fundamental question: What _____ it? And therefore, *because* of what this *is*, what are we to *do* in this time and *how* should we do it?

Internal worship and external worship

- A. "Religious worship... may be viewed as either *internal* or *external*; the former [internal worship] consisting in that inward homage which we owe to God, such as loving, believing, fearing, trusting in him, and other elicit acts of the mind; the latter [external worship] consisting in the outward expression of that homage, by the observance of his instituted ordinances."
(Robert Shaw)
- B. "Internal worship" is, in a sense, _____.
1. **Romans 12:1-2** — Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship [*latreia*]. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
 2. **1 Corinthians 10:31** — Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
 3. Eating and drinking and all that we do ought to be worship insofar as these things are all expressions of that "inward homage which we owe to God."
- C. There is a sense in which vocational work is worship insofar as this work is an outward expression of that "inward homage which we owe to God." However, there is another sense in which work is _____ worship and must by all means be carefully distinguished from worship.
1. Work is not in and of itself (intrinsically) an _____ of worship.
 2. Prayer is the expression of that which the creature owes uniquely and exclusively to the Creator and so the act of prayer is *in and of itself* an _____ of worship.
 - **Matthew 6:9-13** — "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

- D. Because prayer is always, in and of itself, an act of worship, whenever someone prays to anyone but the one true God he is always guilty of an act of **idolatrous** worship.
1. **Isaiah 44:17** — The rest of [the piece of wood] he makes into a god, his graven image. He falls down before it and **worships**; he also **prays** to it and says, “Deliver me, for you are my god.”
 2. **Isaiah 45:20** — Gather yourselves and come; draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; they have no knowledge, who carry about their wooden idol and **pray** to a god who cannot save.
 3. **Isaiah 46:6-7** — Those who lavish gold from the purse and weigh silver on the scale hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god; they **bow down**, indeed they **worship** it. They lift it upon the shoulder and carry it; they set it in its place and it stands there. It does not move from its place. Though one may **cry to it**, it cannot answer; it cannot deliver him from his distress.”
 4. **Revelation 9:20** — The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to **worship** demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.
- E. When we pray to the one true God even though our hearts are far from God, we’re guilty of an act of **hypocritical** worship (because prayer is always, in and of itself, an act of worship).
1. **Psalms 51:16-17** — For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.
 2. **Amos 5:21-24** — I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; and I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
 3. **Matthew 15:7-9** — “You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’”
- F. Work is not intrinsically an external act of worship even though it may be—and should be—the outward evidence or expression of internal worship. We could say that in a very important sense work is not worship; only _____ is worship.
- G. “Internal worship” is _____ while “external worship” is set apart from all the rest of life as “_____.”
1. This distinction is essential to understanding the answer to the question: “How should we worship?”
 2. Internal worship has to do only with the *heart*. External worship assumes the heart, but has to do uniquely with *forms* and *activities* – with the outward expression of this homage by the observance of God’s _____.
- When we speak of “external worship” we’re speaking of those acts that are intrinsic acts of worship because they’ve been instituted and ordained as such by God.

External temple worship

- A. “Neither prayer nor any other part of religious worship, is now under the Gospel, tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed; but God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth; *as in private families daily, and in secret each one by himself; so more solemnly in the public assemblies...*” (LBCF 22.6).

- B. External worship may be engaged in in any number of different places or circumstances (“in private families” / “in secret each one by himself”).
1. **Matthew 6:6** — “But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”
 2. **Acts 10:30 (cf. 10:1-4)** — Cornelius said, “Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour; and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments.”
- C. There’s a special sense, however, in which “external worship” is associated with those times when God’s people are *gathered together* expressly for “the observance of [God’s] instituted ordinances” (“more solemnly in the public assemblies”).
1. This “external worship” in the context of the gathered assembly may be uniquely called external _____ worship because it’s that “more solemn” (or formal) worship that happens at the *temple* (1 Cor. 3:16-17; Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-9) or “*in church*” (1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19; 14:34; 1 Tim. 3:15) and generally on a specific *day* (the “Lord’s Day”; Rev. 1:10; Acts. 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2).
 2. “Worshiped and served” is a hendiadys summing up what our posture should be toward God in all of life. But these words also refer specifically to the “cultic” or religious *acts* of external worship connected with the _____.
 - a. **Psalm 132:7 (cf. Rev. 11:1)** — Let us go into His dwelling place; let us **worship** [*hawa*] at His footstool.
 - b. **Psalm 99:9** — Exalt the LORD our God and **worship** [*hawa*] at His holy hill, for holy is the LORD our God.
 - c. **Numbers 8:11 (cf. Num. 4:30; 7:5; 8:24; 18:4, 6, 23; 1 Chron. 6:48; 9:13; 23:24, 28, 32; 25:6; 28:20-21; 29:7; 2 Chron. 29:35; 30:22; 31:21; 35:2; Ezra 6:18; 7:19; Neh. 10:32; 12:45)** — Aaron... shall present the Levites before the LORD as a wave offering from the sons of Israel, that they may qualify to perform the service [*aboda*] of the LORD.
 - d. **Joshua 22:26-27** — “Therefore we said, ‘Let us build an altar, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice; rather it shall be a witness between us and you and between our generations after us, that we are to perform the **service** [*aboda*] of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings.’”
 - e. **2 Chronicles 35:16** — So all the **service** [*aboda*] of the LORD was prepared on that day to celebrate the Passover, and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD.
- D. When we ask the question, “How should we worship?” the worship we have in mind is external temple worship. The service we have in mind is the service of God’s people that’s uniquely associated with His New Covenant “temple” (the church gathered on the Lord’s Day for the observance of His instituted ordinances).
- We could say that this worship is doubly holy. Not only is it _____ worship, it’s external _____ worship.

Conclusion

- A. When we understand what external temple worship *is* under the Old Covenant and under the New Covenant, then we’ll understand *how* we should worship.
- When we really understand what Sunday morning worship *is*, then we’ll understand what we ought to _____—and even to a large extent _____ we ought to do it—during this time.
- B. Sunday morning worship is not “common” but uniquely and especially “_____.”
- May God teach us to approach this time biblically and joyfully so that we might offer to Him “acceptable service [*latreuo*] with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28-29).