

# **Exalting Christ In Word-Fueled, Spirit-Inflamed Worship**

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# **WORSHIP ACCORDING TO CHRIST, Part 1 – John 4:20-24**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- A. This Passage Is The Primary Text In The New Testament On Worship.**
  - B. There Is An Absence Of Any Reference In The Passage To Ceremonies, Place, Architecture, Instruments, Or Style Of Music.**
  - C. Christ Goes Beneath The Form To The Essence Of Worship Apart From Which Any Form Of Worship Is Meaningless: He Focuses On The Heart And The Truth.**
- I. THE CONTROVERSY OVER WORSHIP WHICH WAS THE OCCASION FOR CHRIST'S TEACHING ON WORSHIP. THE WOMAN SAID TO HIM, 'SIR, I PERCEIVE THAT YOU ARE A PROPHET. OUR FATHERS WORSHIPED IN THIS MOUNTAIN, AND YOU PEOPLE SAY THAT IN JERUSALEM IS THE PLACE WHERE MEN OUGHT TO WORSHIP" (vv. 19-20).**
- A. The Reference To Worship Was A Result Of The Woman's Recognition That Jesus Was At Least A Prophet. The Woman Said To Him, "Sir I Perceive That You Are A Prophet" (v. 19).**

Since she changed the subject her words, perhaps, were an evasion and avoidance of a discussion about her sinful life that Jesus had brought up in verses 16-18.

**B. She Recognized That The Authorization And Appointment Of A Place Of Worship Was Defended Differently By Jews And Samaritans From The Old Testament (Deuteronomy 12:5).**

- 1. The Samaritans, who accepted only the Pentateuch, said the place to worship was Shechem which was where the blessings were declared (Deuteronomy 11:29-30).**

*29) It shall come about, when the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, that you shall place the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 30) Are they not across the Jordan, west of the way toward the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh? (Deuteronomy 11:29-30).*

- 2. The Samaritans wrongly read Deuteronomy 12:5 as "has chosen." The Jews based on the meaning "will choose" took the place to be the future temple site in Jerusalem.**

*But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the LORD your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come. (Deuteronomy 12:5).*

**II. THE CHANGE IN WORSHIP ACCORDING TO CHRIST WAS THAT THE ESSENCE OF WORSHIP DOESN'T REQUIRE A PLACE. JESUS SAID TO HER, "WOMAN, BELIEVE ME, AN HOUR IS COMING WHEN NEITHER IN THIS MOUNTAIN NOR IN JERUSALEM WILL YOU WORSHIP THE FATHER. YOU WORSHIP WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW; WE WORSHIP WHAT WE KNOW, FOR SALVATION IS FROM THE JEWS" (vv. 21-22).**

**A. He Minimizes The Debate Between The Samaritans And The Jews Since Both Places Will Become Obsolete. Jesus Said To Her, “Woman, Believe Me, An Hour Is Coming When Neither In This Mountain Nor In Jerusalem Will You Worship The Father” (v. 21).**

**B. He Makes An Indirect Statement That Israel’s Worship Is True. You Worship What You Do Not Know; We Worship What We Know, For Salvation Is From The Jews (v.22a).**

Christ states here that Israel had received revelation from God on how and where to worship. He says that they, unlike the Samaritans, know what they worship.

**C. The Measure Of True Worship Is That It Is A Response To The Truth And Knowledge Of God Received By Revelation. For Salvation Is From The Jews. But An Hour Is Coming, And Now Is, When The True Worshipers Will Worship The Father In Spirit And Truth (vv. 22b-23a).**

**1. It is revelation based, or truth-centered worship.**

Revelation of truth from God determines true worship (1 John 5:19-20). Man on his own, with his self-conceived ideas of God, always corrupts worship. True worship is a response to, and regulated by, God’s revelation of Himself in Scripture and how He says He must be worshiped.

*And we know the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, guard yourselves from idols (1 John 5:20-21).*

**2. It is redemptive-centered worship.**

God must be worshiped in response to the truth of the knowledge of His attributes which are demonstrated in the accomplishment of salvation. Christ says, "We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews." This clearly indicates that revelation from God, centered in the saving work of God accomplished in Christ, is the focus of true worship.

**3. It is redeemer or Christ-centered worship.**

Truth by which we worship the Father is centered in what Christ calls "an hour." This refers to when Christ will glorify God by His death. This is the ultimate focus of true worship. Christ refers to the 'hour' which is coming in John 12:23, 27, 28. This looks forward to His death and the sending of the Spirit. True worship will be centered around what God has done in Christ. In Colossians Paul calls the truth, "the word of truth, the gospel." *Because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you have previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel (Colossians 1:5).* In Philippians Paul says, it is worship based on the grace and mercy of justification accomplished by Christ on our behalf. *For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:3).*

**III. THE CORE AND ESSENCE OF WORSHIP IS THE SPIRIT OR HEART RESPONDING IN PRAISE AND ADORATION TO THE TRUTH OF THE GLORY OF GOD REVEALED IN THE GOSPEL. FOR SUCH PEOPLE THE FATHER SEEKS TO BE HIS WORSHIPERS. GOD IS SPIRIT, AND THOSE WHO WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH (vv. 23b-24).**

**A. Seeking Out Of True Worshipers Is The Father's Pursuit Among All Peoples. For Such People The Father Seeks To Be His Worshipers (v. 23b).**



**B. The Spirit Or Immaterial Nature Of God Determines The Essence Of Worship: We Must Worship In Spirit. God Is Spirit And Those Who Worship Him Must Worship In Spirit (v. 24).**

**1. God is a being who in His essence consists of spirit.**

Because God is spirit, or immaterial, true worship must be from the immaterial or inner man. Externals and locality are not significant in worship. Christ delocalizes, deinstitutionalizes and dematerializes worship. Spirit, in this text, is used of the immaterial part of man, as in the verse "holy both in body and spirit" (1 Corinthians 7:34). Christ is referring to the immaterial essence of true worship. Neither the place nor external rituals determine true worship. It is the spirit or the immaterial part of man, specifically the heart that determines true worship.

**2. God is worshiped from the heart, not in a mere outward form (Matthew 15:8, 9).**

In His rebuke of the Pharisees, Jesus rejected a mere place or empty ritual as being true worship. He emphasized instead the importance of the heart. He said, *This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. But in vain they do worship Me. Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.* (Matthew 15:8, 9). This is a restatement and elaboration of what he said in John 4 about worship in spirit.

**C. The Self-Disclosure Or Self-Revelation Of God Is the Basis Of The Response Of The Heart: We Must Worship In Truth. Those Who Worship ... Worship In ...Truth (v. 24b).**

**1. It is the revelation of God in His saving work through Christ.**

**2. It is the revelation of God accomplished primarily in the hour that is coming (John 12:20, 26).**

**D. The Requirement Of The Father For True Worshipers Is Non-negotiable; "They Must" Worship Him This Way.**

- 1. Christ presupposes that no one is a true worshiper until they become a true worshiper at conversion (see 1 Thessalonians 1:9).**
- 2. The purpose of a church and of missions is to make worshipers.**

The enterprise of missions, which is the church's main responsibility in the world, is to call out sinners from all peoples who bow the knee to Christ and become worshipers. This is clear from Revelation 5:9-14.

# **WORSHIP ACCORDING TO CHRIST, Part 2 – John 4:20-24**

## **INTRODUCTION**

**I. CHRIST SET ASIDE A PLACE OF WORSHIP AS OBSOLETE AND INCONSEQUENTIAL TO TRUE WORSHIP. JESUS SAID TO HER, “WOMAN, BELIEVE ME, AN HOUR IS COMING WHEN NEITHER IN THIS MOUNTAIN NOR IN JERUSALEM WILL YOU WORSHIP THE FATHER” (v. 21).**

**A. The Place Of Worship Cannot, In And Of Itself, Guarantee True Worship.**

The place of worship when it is void of the spirit and truth cannot contribute to true worship.

**B. The Primary Term For Worship In The New Testament Does Not Stress Location.**

**1. The emphasis of the word used for worship (proskuneo) in the gospels (as in John 4) or in Revelation was on posture and physical presence.**

a. A leper before Christ (Matthew 8:2).

b. They held His feet and worshiped Him (Matthew 28:9).

c. The elders fell down and worshiped (Revelation 5:14).

**2. The emphasis of the word used for worship (latreuo) after the ascension does not emphasize posture or place, but the service of worship that includes all of life.**

- a. Paul declares this is the essence of worship on two occasions (Acts 24:14 27:23).
- b. Paul declares that his life is a service of worship in the Spirit (Romans 1:9; Philippians 3:3), in the gospel.
- c. Those cleansed by the atonement worship in their service (Hebrews 9:14, 10:2).
- d. The practice of those in heaven is the worship of service (Revelation 22:3).
- e. Our lives are dedicated to the service of spiritual worship (Romans 12:1-2).
- f. Praise and thanksgiving is the service of worship (Hebrews 13:15). (This is a different yet related word)
- g. Giving is an act of the service of worship (Philippians 4:18). (This also is a different word)

**C. Christ Prescribes And Mandates The Two Nonnegotiable Components Of True Worship. God Is Spirit, And Those Who Worship Him Must Worship In Spirit And Truth (v. 24).**

**1. There is the response of the spirit which refers to the inner person of the heart: Heartless worship is unacceptable – “worship in spirit”.**

- a. It is parallel to God’s essence which is non-material.
- b. It is the heart and affections as moved and affected by the truth. The intellect is already mentioned in the reference to the “truth.”

**2. There is revelation of the truth of the person and work of the triune God: Mindless worship is unacceptable – “worship in ... truth”.**

- a. It is starting point and basis of true worship (1 Corinthians 2:11-12, 14). Apart from revealed truth men worship in ignorance. They worship God based on their own self-conceived corrupted ideas (Romans 1:21-23).
- b. It is the specific truth that God has made known about His person and work as Savior (Romans 3:26, 15:9; John 1:1-14, 3:16, and work John 12:32).

**II. CHRIST SPECIFIES EXPLICITLY THAT TRUE WORSHIP IS BASED ON TRUTH. THOSE WHO WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP IN ...TRUTH (v. 24).**

**A. He Roots True Worship On God’s Self-Disclosure Of Himself And How He Says He Must Be Worshiped.**

**B. He Rejects Worship, However Sincere, That Disregards The Truth Of What God Has Revealed On How He Must Be Worshiped.**

**1. He prohibits images and forms and pictures in worship (Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 4:14-19).**

It is a comprehensive ban of, “any likeness or anything” to aid in worship. Likenesses and images diminish and obscure His glory. It deceives by giving false ideas of God. They fail to tell the truth about God. This would include mental images as when people say, “I like to think of God as ...”

**2. It prohibits worship of the true God the wrong way: This is deviant worship.**

- a. The golden calf (Exodus 32:2-6).
- b. Uzzah and the Ark. He trained all his life to protect it.

There was specific revelation on how to carry the Ark (Numbers 4:5-6, 15). His act, though sincere, was self-willed and was judged (2 Samuel 6:3-7).

- c. The sons of Aaron (Leviticus 10:1-3).

Nadab and Abihu showed an utter disregard for what God required in worship. God had revealed how He was to be worshiped, and they totally disregarded it and were judged.

- d. Incense for worship was to be made in a certain way with a certain recipe (Exodus 30:34-38).

*I know how difficult it is to persuade the world that God disapproves of all modes of worship not expressly sanctioned by His Word. The opposite persuasion which cleaves to them, being seated, as it were, in their very bones and marrow, is, that whatever they do has in itself a sufficient sanction, provided it exhibits some kind of zeal for the honour of God. But since God not only regards as fruitless, but also plainly abominates, whatever we undertake from zeal to His worship, if at variance with His command, what do we gain by a contrary course? The words of God are clear and distinct, "Obedience is better than sacrifice." "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (1 Sam. xv. 22; Matth. xv. 9). Every addition to His word, especially in this matter, is a lie. Mere "will worship" (ἔθελοθησηγεία) is vanity. ...*

*Having observed that the sword of God is the test which discriminates between his true worship and that which is false and vitiated, we thence readily infer that the whole form of divine worship in general use in the present day is nothing but mere corruption. For men pay no regard to what God has commanded, or to what he approves, in order that they may serve him in a becoming manner, but assume to themselves a*

*license of devising modes of worship, and afterwards, obtruding them upon him as a substitute for obedience. If in what I say I seem to exaggerate, let an examination be made of all the acts by which the generality suppose that they worship God. I dare say scarcely except a tenth part is not the random offspring of their own brain. What more would we? God rejects, condemns, abominates all fictitious worship, and employs his Word as a bridle to keep us in unqualified obedience. When shaking off this yoke, we wander after our own fictions, and offer to him a worship, the work of human rashness, how much soever it may delight ourselves, in his sight it is vain trifling, nay, vileness and pollution.*

John Calvin, *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*, pp. 7, 11





# **WORSHIP AND THE EMOTIONS – John 4:20-24**

## **INTRODUCTION**

A.W. Tozer said the following about emotions and true worship:

*We should never forget that God created us to be joyful worshipers, but sin drew us into everything else but worship... 'You have been forgiven and restored,' God reminds us. 'I am your Creator and Redeemer and Lord, and I delight in your worship.' I don't know, my friend, how that makes you feel – but I feel that I must give God the full response of my heart. I am happy to be counted as a worshiper. Well, that word 'feel' has crept in here and I know that you may have an instant reaction against it. In fact, I have had people tell me very dogmatically that they will never allow 'feeling' to have any part in their spiritual life and experience. I reply, 'Too bad for you!' I say that because I have voiced a very real definition of what I believe true worship to be: worship is to feel in the heart! In the Christian faith, we should be able to use the word 'feel' boldly and without apology. What worse thing could be said of us as the Christian church if could be said that we are a feelingless people?*

*Whatever Happened to Worship, p. 58*

## **We Can Note Four Things By Way Of Introduction About Christ's Instruction On Worship:**

- A. Christ Personally And Lovingly Speaks With A Social Outcast About True Worship.**
- B. It Is The Primary Teaching About Worship In The New Testament.**
- C. Christ Presents The Essence And Basic Elements Of True Worship.**
- D. Christ Puts No Emphasis On Place, Architecture, Or Ceremony In True Worship.**

## **Two Things Stand Out In The Text About Christ's Teaching On Worship:**

- I. FIRST, CHRIST SANCTIONS AND AUTHORIZES AS TRUE WORSHIP ONLY THAT WHICH IS BASED ON DIVINE REVELATION, YOU WORSHIP WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW; WE WORSHIP WHAT WE KNOW, FOR SALVATION IS FROM THE JEWS. (4:22).**

The truth of God's person and redemptive work, revealed in Scripture and centered in Christ is the foundation and fuel of worship. *Those who worship Him must worship in ... truth* (v.24)

- A. He Rejects All Self-Conceived Worship No Matter How Sincere. You Worship What You Do Not Know; (v.22) ... Must Worship In Spirit And Truth (v.24).**

Conjecture and self-originated ideas always distort who God is and are not acceptable in true worship. God even rejects the worship of the right God, the wrong way.

- B. It Is Revelation From God About God That Is The Only Basis Of True Worship. We Worship What We Know (v.22).**

The truth about God is known by objective revelation and direct communication from God. It is now permanentized in written form in Scripture. All true worship is based upon and regulated by God's revelation. It regulates who we think God is in our worship, as well as how He is to be worshiped. We can't go beyond Scripture even if it seems right to us, because in our minds we think it helps us worship (things such as lighting candles, or pictures). Scripture gives us many examples that the right God can be worshiped the wrong way (Exodus 32:2-6). Man is not given the liberty to devise ways of worship not revealed in Scripture.

**C. Redemption Is The Focus And Subject Matter Of The Truth Revealed That Is The Basis Of Worship. For Salvation Is From The Jews (v.22).**

It reveals Christ the redeemer in the glory of His person as the eternal Son and His infinite self-humiliation in becoming a man. It also reveals all His glorious perfections demonstrated in His atoning work.

**D. The Redeemer By Whom Redemption Is Accomplished Is The Center Of Revelation And Worship.**

The knowledge of salvation is from the Jews. This is the knowledge of Christ and His redemptive work revealed in the types and prophecies of the old testament. This would include the sacrificial system and prophecies such as Psalm 22, 69 and Isaiah 53. The truth about Christ is the fuel and the basis of true worship. The woman focused on the place and completely neglected the Person who is the center and object of worship. The Christ-centeredness of worship is seen by the worship of Christ in heaven.

*5) And one of the elders said to me, "Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome to as to open the book and its seven seals." 6) And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. 7) And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8) When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9) And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10) You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." 11) Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12) saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." 13) And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." 14) And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped. (Revelation 5:6-14).*

## **E. The Reality Of The Living God Is Encountered And Experienced In The Word, By The Word: His Word Is Inseparable From Himself (Hebrews 4:12-13).**

*12) For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and of spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13) And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (Hebrews 4:12-13).*

*13) It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, and He shall be your dread. 14) Then He shall become a sanctuary; But to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, and a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem ... 19) When they say to you, "Consult the mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter," should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living? 20) To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn. (Isaiah 8:13-14, 19-20).*

### **1. We hear His voice in the written Word.**

*Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY, IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME" (Hebrews 3:7-8a). The writer quotes Psalm 95 and calls it the present voice of the Spirit! The Spirit right now, in this present time, speaks through the written word.*

### **2. The Spirit works through the Word to bring us to God.**

*5) For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. 6) You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 1:5-6).*

**3. Christ says His Words are inseparable from Himself.**

*47) If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48) He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. (John 12:47-48).*

**F. We Are To Read And Preach The Word In Public Assembly Because By It God Draws Near To Us (1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:2-3).**

**1. The apostles commanded the reading of the Word in all the churches.**

*Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. (1 Timothy 4:13).*

**2. We are to preach and teach the Word in public assembly for those old enough to understand (2 Timothy 4:1-2).**

*1) And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had given Israel. 2) Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, and women and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. 3) He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law. (Nehemiah 8:1-3).*

**3. There is to be an environment that enables people to be attentive to the reading and preaching of the Word (1 Corinthians 14:12, 23, 26).**

**4. Things are to be done so that there is decency and order to bring edification (1 Corinthians 14:40).**

**II. SECOND, CHRIST SANCTIONS AND AUTHORIZES AS TRUE WORSHIP ONLY THAT WORSHIP WHICH COMES FROM THE HEART. THOSE WHO WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT (v. 24).**

**A. The Spirit, Which Refers To The Inner Man And Heart, Indicates The Expression Of Emotion In Worship.**

*What does it mean to worship in spirit? The word spirit in verse 24 refers to the human spirit, the inner person. Worship is to flow from the inside out. It is not a matter of being in the right place, at the right time, with the right words, the right demeanor, the right clothes, the right formalities, the right music, and the right mood. Worship is not an external activity for which an environment must be created. It takes place on the inside, in the spirit.*

John MacArthur, *The Ultimate Priority*, p. 116-117

**B. The Spirit Refers To The Nonmaterial Part Of Man Which Parallels God's Immaterial Nature Which Is "Spirit," And The Primary Element Of The Inner Man Is The Affections Of The Heart.**

**C. The Emotions And The Affections Of The Heart Must Be Present In Worship, Or It Is Unacceptable And Vain**

*8) This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. 9) But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men. (Matthew 15:8-9).*

*Without the heart it is no worship; it is a stage play; an acting a part without being that person really which is acted by us: a hypocrite, in the notion of the word, is a stage-player... We may be truly said to worship God, though we [lack] perfection; but we cannot be said to worship him, if we [lack] sincerity.*

Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God*, p. 225-226

## **D. The Emotions Are Part Of What Is Affected By The Spirit In A True Conversion.**

Regeneration gives us more than a new mind. It gives us a new heart with new emotions as well. We are now able to love God, to delight in and adore God with our affections and emotions. God has replaced the heart of stone with a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26).

### **1. There is the joy of the Holy Spirit.**

*You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 1:6).*

### **2. The expression of the emotion of joy is a part of the normal experience of the Christian's life.**

*And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, an though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory (1 Peter 1:8).*

### **3. The exuberant display of emotion characterizes worship in heaven. (Revelation 5, v. 9 a new song; v. 12 a loud voice; v. 14, kept saying).**

*The love and the joy that the saints have there is exceeding great and vigorous; impressing the heart with the strongest and most lively sensation of inexpressible sweetness, mightily moving, animating, and engaging them, making them like a flame of fire. And if such love and joy be not affections, then the word affection is of no use in language. ... Hence, therefore, the religion of heaven, consisting chiefly in holy love and joy, consists very much in affection; and therefore, undoubtedly, true religion consists very much in affection. The way to learn the true nature of anything is to go where that thing is to be found in its purity and perfection.*

Edwards, *Religious Affections*, p. 3

## **E. The Emotion Of Joy Mixed With Reverence Is A Core Component Of The Singing Of Praises.**

### **1. They are to be sung in an expressive and energetic way in response to God's person and work.**

*1) Sing for joy in the LORD, O you righteous ones; praise is becoming to the upright. 2) Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings. 3) Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy. 4) For the word of the LORD is upright, and all His work is done in faithfulness. (Psalm 33:1-4).*

*1) Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; 2) sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious. 3) Say to God, "How awesome are your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will give feigned obedience to You. 4) All the earth worships You, and will sing praises to You; they sing praises to Your name." Selah (Psalm 66:1-4).*

### **2. They may be sung with clapping.**

*1) O clap your hands, all peoples; shout to God with the voice of joy. 2) For the LORD Most High is to be feared, a great King over all the earth. 3) He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet. 4) He chooses our inheritance for us, the glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah 5) God has ascended with a shout, the LORD, with the sound of a trumpet. 6) Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. 7) For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a skillful psalm. (Psalm 47:1-7).*

### **3. We are exhorted to sing joyful praises when we come into His presence in public meetings.**

*1) Oh come, let us sing for joy to the Lord, let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation. 2) Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. 3) For the LORD is a great God and a great King above all gods. (Psalm 95:1-3).*

*1) Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. 2) Serve the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing. (Psalm 100:1-2).*



*And the duty of singing praises to God, seems to be appointed wholly to excite and express religious affections. No other reason can be assigned, why we should express ourselves to God in verse, rather than in prose, and do it with music, but only, that such is our nature and frame, that these things have a tendency to move our affections.*

Jonathan Edwards, *On Religious Affections* ( pp. 38-39)

**4. We are exhorted to use loud instruments in the singing of praises.**

*Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty expanse. Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with harp and lyre. Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe. Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 150).*

**5. They are to be sung to exalt His glory**

*He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; and to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God. (Psalm 50:23)*

*11) You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness, 12) that my soul may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever. (Psalm 30:11-12).*

*Surely, it is no argument that the minds of person are not under the influence of God's Spirit, that they are very much moved: for indeed spiritual and eternal things are so great, and of such infinite concern, that there is a great absurdity in men's being but moderately moved and affected by them; and surely it is no argument that they are not moved by the Spirit of God, that they are affected with these things in some measure as they deserve, or in some proportion to their importance.*

Jonathan Edwards, *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of The Spirit of God*, p. 262

## CONCLUSION

There is a danger of identifying emotions with emotionalism and rejecting any display of emotions outright. This is going to extremes. Emotions when guided and fueled by the Word of God are a necessary component of true worship. Emotions in that case are demonstrated in the Word-centered, Christ-exalting, expressive, energetic singing of praises.

*We may hence learn how great their error is, who are for discarding all religious affections, as having nothing solid or substantial in them. There seems to be too much of a disposition this way prevailing at this time. Because many who, in the late extraordinary season, appeared to have great religious affections, did not manifest a right temper of mind, and run into many errors, in the heat of their zeal; and because the high affections of many seem to be so soon come to nothing, and some who seemed to be mightily raised and swallowed with joy and zeal for a while, seem to have returned like the dog to his vomit: hence religious affections in general are grown out of credit with great numbers, as though true religion did not at all consist in them. Thus we easily and naturally run from one extreme to another. A little while ago we were in the other extreme; there was a prevalent disposition to look upon all high religious affections as eminent exercises of true grace, without much inquiry into the nature and source of those affections, and the manner in which they arose. If persons did but appear to be indeed very much moved and raised, so as to be full of religious talk, and express themselves with great warmth and earnestness, and to be filled, or to be very full, as the phrases were; it was too much the manner, without further examination, to conclude such persons were full of the Spirit of God, and had eminent experience of his gracious influences. This was the extreme which was prevailing three or four years ago. But of late, instead of esteeming and admiring all religious affections, without distinction, it is much more prevalent to reject and discard all without distinction. Herein appears the subtilty of Satan ... the devil sees it to be for his interest to go another way to work, and to endeavour to his utmost to propagate and establish a persuasion, that all affections and sensible emotions of the mind in religion, are nothing at all to be regarded, but are rather to be avoided, and carefully guarded against, as things of a pernicious tendency. This he knows is the way to bring all religion to a mere lifeless formality, and effectually to shut out the power of godliness and every thing spiritual. For although to true religion there must indeed be something else besides affection; yet true religion consists so much in the affections, that there can be no true religion without them. He who has no religious affection, is in a state of spiritual death, and is wholly destitute of the powerful, quickening, saving influences of the Spirit of God upon his heart. As there is no true religion where there is nothing else but affection, so there is no true religion where there is no religious affection.*

Jonathan Edwards, *On Religious Affections* (Part 1, pp. 43-45)

# **THE WORD OF GOD, THE SINGING OF PRAISES, AND THE GLORY OF CHRIST – Colossians 3:16-17**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- A. He Is Exhorting Us To Be In Practice What We Have Become In Our Nature – By The Recreation Of The New Birth – A New Man (vv. 10, 12).**
- B. The New Man Is Displayed In A Christlikeness And Godlikeness Because The New Man Was Created After God's Likeness (v. 10b).**
- C. A Dominant Element Of The New Man Is The Singing Of Praises To God.**

**The singing of praises is a component of worship, since, for the believer, worship is all of life (v. 16).**

- D. He Shows How The Singing Of Praises Are The Direct Result Of The Word Of Christ.**

## **He Says Five Things About The Singing Of Praises:**

**I. FIRST, THERE IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SINGING OF PRAISES, THE WORD OF GOD AND THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, LET THE WORD OF CHRIST RICHLY DWELL WITHIN YOU (v. 16a).**

**A. The Emphasis Is That The Written Word Of God Exalts And Centers On Christ, Let The Word Of Christ.**

**1. He has already declared Christ's supremacy (1:15-18), and the satisfaction He made by His sufferings that accomplished a complete reconciliation (1:21-22). Then he declared His sufficiency (1:28-29, 2:7).**

**2. It was announced right from the beginning of Scripture that Christ is the theme of Scripture.**

*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel (Genesis 3:15).*

**3. The revelation and content of the gospel centers on the person and work of Christ (Colossians 1:5, 25-28).**

**4. Christ asserted that He is the theme of all the Scripture (John 5:39; Luke 24:27, 44-45).**

*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me (John 5:39).*

27) Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. ... 44) Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45) Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:27, 44-45).

## **B. There Is An Empowering, Controlling Influence In The Word Of God: It Dwells In Someone With A Governing Control And Influence, Richly Dwell In You.**

The term "dwell in you" stresses a controlling influence from within (see Psalm 119:11). It is the same term used in the following Scriptures which emphasize something that controls, governs, and influences by an indwelling presence.

*So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me (Romans 7:17).*

*11) But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. 12) So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh – 13) for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:11-13).*

## **C. The Effects Of The Word Are Seen In A Person's Life In Practical Life-Changing Ways, With All Wisdom Teaching And Admonishing One Another (v. 16b).**

- 1. It relates to all areas and needs. It gives "all wisdom" so that it supplies strength and wisdom for all people and all circumstances (see 2:2-3).**
- 2. We share with others by teaching and admonishing what we have learned and experienced from the power of the Word in our lives.**

ILL: The woman who soaked herself in sermons and books on the sufficiency of Christ that sustained her in the loss of her husband.

**D. The Evidence Of The Spirit's Presence And Power Is Manifested When The Word Produces Singing And Thankfulness.**

- 1. It is a parallel statement to Ephesians 5:18-21 which attributes singing and thankfulness to the Spirit.**
- 2. It produces the same results as the Spirit in Ephesians 5:19-20, because the Spirit works in us through the Word.**

**E. The Effect Of The Word Of Christ Dwelling In The Heart Is Manifested In The Singing Of Christ-Centered Praises.**

- 1. The Spirit works through the Word to compel the writing and singing of Christ-exalting praise. It is singing that expresses the "Word of Christ."**
- 2. The structure of the phrase ties singing directly to the "Word of Christ."**

There is one verb, "dwell in you," with three modifying participles. The first emphasizes that when the Word of Christ dwells in us the result will be the composing and singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

- 3. The Scripture emphasizes that new songs are the result of a heart gripped by the truth of Christ's glorious person and work.**

*A hymn of praise or the singing of praises is a typical manifestation either of the Spirit of God in His present activity ... or of God Himself (1 Corinthians 14:25). This will include free compositions ... and also new Christian songs.*

DNTT, Vol. III, p. 672.

**4. The source of the singing of praise, as with all worship, is the truth (John 4:24).**

*1) O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. 2) The LORD has made known His salvation; 3) He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God (Psalm 98:1-3).*

*1) Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. 2) Sing to the LORD, bless His name; proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. 3) Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples (Psalm 96:1-3).*

**II. SECOND, THERE ARE CATEGORIES OF SONGS WITH DIFFERING FOCUS IN THE SINGING OF PRAISES, WITH PSALMS AND HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS (v. 16c).**

**A. There Are Songs About God's Person And Works Sung Accompanied By Instruments, "Psalms." This Term Is Used In The Headings Of 49 Psalms.**

**1. The emphasis and meaning of the term "psalm" is to sing a song about God's person and work that is accompanied by musical instruments.**

*In secular Greek psallo is used from Homer onwards, originally meaning to pluck (hair), to twang a bow-string, and then to pluck a harp, or any other stringed instrument. The noun psalmos refers in general to the sound of an instrument, or the actual production of the sound.*

DNTT, Vol III, p. 671

*Let our lord now command your servants who are before you. Let them seek a man who is a skillful player on the harp;... that he shall play the harp with his hand, and you will be well. (1 Samuel 16:16).*

It was a common term in the Greek world for a song accompanied by instruments. It was used, for example in Psalm 69, of the songs sung by drunkards who mocked Christ. *Those who sit in the gate talk about me, and I am the song of the drunkards. (Psalm 69:12).*

## **2. The exhortations of Scripture are to use instruments.**

*1) Sing for joy in the LORD, O you righteous ones; praise is becoming to the upright. 2) Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings. 3) Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy. 4) For the word of the LORD is upright, and all His work is done in faithfulness. (Psalm 33:1-4).*

## **3. It enhances the joy and festive nature of worship (Psalm 33:2-3).**

*1) Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty expanse. 2) Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness. 3) Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with harp and lyre. 4) Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe. 5) Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with resounding cymbals. 6) Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 150:1-6).*

## **4. The example of songs written and sung with instruments for the people of God is the book of Psalms. Today, there are to be new songs that express the Word of Christ (Romans 15:9; Psalm 18:49).**

In other words, when Christ takes hold of a heart through His word there will be new songs written and sung. One source says, "*Such songs are also mentioned in the famous letter of the younger Pliny, who writes (Epistle 10, 96, 7) that the Christians met "to sing a song [carmen = hymnos] antiphonally to Christ as to a God"*

DNTT, Vol. III, p. 672



## **B. There Are Songs Sung With Joy That Extol Specific Attributes And Works Of God And Christ, “Hymns.”**

- 1. The emphasis of the word “hymn” is to sing a song to celebrate, tell or recite a specific attribute or work of someone.**

It was a common term used in the Greek world. It was used of lauding or praising the gods. It focused on the content of the song, not the style of music. For example, it was used of the song the Philistines sang to praise their god Dagon (Judges 16:23-24).

*23) Now the lords of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice, for they said, “Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hands.” 24) When the people saw him, they praised their god, for they said, “Our god has given our enemy into our hands, even the destroyer of our country, who has slain many of us.” (Judges 16:23-24).*

### **2. The examples in Scripture of hymns.**

- a. The songs sung to celebrate God’s attributes and work.

*1) Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; 2) sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious. 3) Say to God, “How awesome are Your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will give feigned obedience to You. 4) All the earth will worship You, and will sing praises to You; they will sing praises to Your name.” Selah (Psalm 66:1-4).*

*Moreover, King Hezekiah and the officials ordered the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David and Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with joy, and bowed down and worshiped (2 Chronicles 29:30).*

*The heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers opposite them, to praise and give thanks, as prescribed by David the man of God, division corresponding to division (Nehemiah 12:24).*

- b. The song that Christ sang to the Father praising God's redemption through His death.

*I will proclaim Your name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise (Hebrews 2:12; Psalm 22:22).*

- c. The songs sung in a celebratory manner by Paul and Silas in prison and at the enthronement of Joash.

*But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them (Acts 16:25).*

*She looked, and behold, the king was standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the captains and the trumpeters were beside the king. And all the people of the land rejoiced and blew trumpets, the singers with their musical instruments leading the praise (2 Chronicles 23:13).*

- d. The song sung with thanksgiving by Israel that glorified God for their restoration.

*3) Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation. 4) And in that day you will say, 'Give thanks to the LORD, call upon His name. Make known His deeds among the peoples; Make them remember that His name is exalted.' 5) Praise the LORD in song, for He has done excellent things; let this be known throughout the earth. 6) Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 12:3-6).*

- e. The song sung in celebration of the return of the Ark.

*8) Oh give thanks to the LORD, call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples. 9) Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; speak of all His wonders. 10) Glory in His holy name; let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad (1 Chronicles 16:8-10).*

It clearly refers to songs sung to recite God's works and attributes.

## **C. Songs Sung That Extol God For The Experience Of His Personal Provision, Protection And Deliverance, “Odes.”**

Many of the Psalms were odes as indicated by the headings (36 times from Psalm 18-134). It pointed out the fact that the Psalm focuses on the author's own experience of God's attributes and works towards him.

### **1. Songs of provision and protection.**

*16) From there they continued to Beer, that is the well where the LORD said to Moses, “Assemble the people, that I may give them water.” 17) Then Israel sang this song: “Spring up, O well! Sing to it! 18) The well, which the leaders sank, which the nobles of the people dug, with the scepter and with their staffs.” And from the wilderness they continued to Mattanah (Numbers 21:16-18).*

*Now when the wall was rebuilt and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites were appointed (Nehemiah 7:1).*

### **2. Songs of deliverance.**

*1) Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, “I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; the horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. 2) The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise Him; my father's God, and I will extol Him. 3) The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is His name. 4) Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; and the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea” (Exodus 15:1-4).*

(See 2 Samuel 6:5 – David singing and dancing before the Ark)

**NOTE:** An ‘ode’ would use the personal pronouns of “I” and “my.” The biblical writers didn’t consider the personal reference man-centered, if it was used to extol God’s person and works on their behalf.

**III. THIRD, THERE IS A CONSCIOUS DIRECTING OF OUR SINGING OF PRAISES TO GOD, SINGING WITH THANKFULNESS IN YOUR HEARTS TO GOD (v. 16d).**

**A. There Is An Acknowledgment And Adoration Of God, Sung To God Because Of Who He Is And What He Has Done.**

In the song of Revelation 5:9-14, there is a conscious directing of praise to God for His redeeming grace. They sang “worthy is the Lamb who was slain.” They directed their praise to Christ attributing their redemption to Christ who was in their midst.

**B. There Is An Anticipation Of God’s Presence And Drawing Near To Us In And Through The Singing Of Praises.**

*14) Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! 15) The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. 16) On that day it will be said to Jerusalem: “Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. 17) The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you in His love; he will exult over you with loud singing (Zephaniah 3:14-17, ESV).*

Zephaniah seems to indicate that when God’s people sing praise to God, God Himself is in their midst and He sings with them! This is seen as well in Psalm 22:3 which says, *Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel (Psalm 22:3)* Christ is called Immanuel “God with us.” His presence is with us in a special sense in the Christ-glorifying, singing of praise.

### **C. We Are To Address One Another In Song As We Sing Praises.**

Since we are singing to one another as we sing to God, congregational singing must not be drowned out by the instruments. The instrumentalists are not to be the focus, they are not entertainers or showmen. They are not to be the main thing – congregational singing to God is. The musicians accompany and assist in the praise.

### **D. It Is With A Joyful Reverence That Aims To Please God, Not Man.**

#### **1. The reverence is manifested in the fact that singing isn't done in a flippant or casual overfamiliar way as if God is our buddy (Hebrews 12:28, 13:15).**

*Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe (Hebrews 12:28).*

*Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name (Hebrews 13:15).*

*We ought especially to praise God in the exercise of our religion. Whenever the assemblies of God's people meet, there should be much holy joy. Some people are so afraid of joy, that one might suppose to labor under the delusion that all who are devout must also be unhappy. If we worshiped Baal, to lance ourselves with knives were most fitting, if we were worshipers of Juggernaut or Kalee, self-inflicted tortures might be acceptable; if we adored the pope, it might be proper for us to wear a hair shirt and practice flagellation; but as we worship the ever blessed God, whose delight is to make His creatures happy, holy happiness is a part of worship, and joy in the Lord one of the accepted graces of the Holy Spirit. Brethren, let us be happy when we praise God. I have noticed with pain the way in which people will get rid, if they can, of happy words out their hymns. The hundredth Psalm for instance, runs thus:*

*'All people that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice, Him serve with –'*

*What? Well, they modernize it into –*

*‘Him serve with fear.’*

*But, as I believe, the older form is –*

*‘Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell, Come ye before Him and rejoice.’*

*I wonder some other scribe did not cut out the word “cheerful,” and put in –*

*‘Sing to the Lord with doleful voice.’*

*In this way the Psalm might have been “improved” until there would not have been a grain of worship left in it. I mean to sing it, ‘Him serve with mirth;’ and with a glad and merry heart will I praise my God. If you are His child, rejoice in your Father’s presence; if you are pardoned, rejoice in the mercy that washed away your sins; even if you are tried and troubled, yet rejoice your afflictions are working together for your good. Rejoice in Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.*

C.H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit: Vol. XVI, p. 70*

## **2. The reverence of God is compatible with an exuberant lively joyful singing of praises.**

Psalm 2:11 combines exuberant rejoicing with reverence. Psalm 2:11 reads; *Worship the LORD with reverence, and rejoice with trembling.* The compatibility of exuberant joy and reverence is seen throughout Scripture. Joyless reverence is not true reverence. How can it be? It minimizes, or excludes, the joy that comes with Christ in the gospel. For example, Paul says in Philippians;

*1) Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. ... 3) for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:1, 3).*

The singing of praises is expressed with a joy that is often energetic accompanied by loud instruments and clapping.

*1) Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty expanse. 2) Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to His excellent greatness. 3) Praise Him with trumpet sound; praise Him with harp and lyre. 4) Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; praise Him with stringed*

*instruments and pipe. 5) Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with resounding cymbals. 6) Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 150:1-6).*

*1) O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. 2) Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. 3) Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You. 4) So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name (Psalm 63:1-4).*

*1) O clap your hands, all peoples; shout to God with the voice of joy. ... 5) God has ascended with a shout, the LORD, with the sound of a trumpet. 6) Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. (Psalm 47:1, 5-6).*

- 3. It requires that the heart and mind are focused on God, not on who or what is around us.**

**IV. FOURTH, THE SINGING OF PRAISES COME FORTH IN A HEART MOVED WITH EMOTION AND A HEAD ENLIGHTENED BY GRACE, IN YOUR HEARTS TO GOD (v. 16e).**

**V. FIFTH, THE SINGING OF PRAISES ARE CHARACTERIZED BY A GRATEFULNESS TO THE FATHER THAT GLORIFIES HIM FOR ALL WE HAVE IN CHRIST, WHAT EVER YOU DO IN WORD OR DEED, DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, GIVING THANKS THROUGH HIM TO GOD THE FATHER (v. 17).**

**A. It Is Praise That Is A Response To His Name Which Refers To The Glories Of His Person And Work (Isaiah 48:10-11).**

Name and glory are synonymous and interchangeable terms as can be seen in Isaiah 48:10-11.

10) *Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.* 11) *For my own sake, for My own sake, I will act; for how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.* (Isaiah 48:10-11).

**B. It Is A Personal Response To The Father For Giving His Son To Be All We Need As Helpless Sinners.**

- 1. He is the infinite Son who became a man and reconciled us to God in His body through suffering (1:15 - 17, 22).**
- 2. He provided a full pardon by His atoning death (2:13).**
- 3. He made us alive and recreated us so that we have an entirely new identity and existence (Colossians 2:13, 3:10).**
- 4. He provides for all we need in wisdom and strength (Colossians 1:9, 2:2-3, 3:11).**

**C. It Is Part Of A Thankfulness That Characterizes The Whole Life.**

**ILL:** Ferdinand and Isabella, "The Spanish conqueror would claim a new land, small or large, in the name of the majesties of Spain."



# **WORSHIPING GOD IN THE SPIRIT – Philippians 3:1-3**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Paul Has Just Restated The Great Truth Of The Gospels Of Grace Centered In The Self-Humiliation And Death Of Christ (2:5-9).**

Paul first declares the glory of Christ as an eternal being equal with God the Father. Second, He declares His great descent into human form in order to die the death of the cross (2:5-8). Paul makes it clear that all that Christ did in His self-humbling and death was in the interest of others (2:4). His obedience, an obedience to the point of death of a cross was done for others. It was substitutionary and atoning. Specifically, it was done to provide a justifying righteousness for others who have none themselves! (Romans 5;18-19). This is the great reason for the believer's joy mentioned in verse 1.

### **B. Paul Rejoices That He Has Been Given The Privilege To Suffer For God's People So They Can Experience All That God Has Done For Them In Christ. He Reminds Us That We Must Rejoice As Well (2:18-19).**

### **C. Paul Now, In Chapter 3 verse 1, Reminds Us By Way Of A Command That We Are To Rejoice In The Lord And The Gospel Of Grace And The Simplicity Of Our Worship Of God.**

## **Paul States Three Things About The Believer's Worship Of God.**

**I. THE ESSENCE OF WORSHIP IS A JOY AND GLADNESS OF HEART THAT RESPONDS TO THE GOSPEL OF GRACE. FINALLY, MY BRETHREN, REJOICE IN THE LORD. TO WRITE THE SAME THINGS AGAIN IS NO TROUBLE TO ME, AND IT IS A SAFEGUARD FOR YOU. (v. 1).**

**A. It Is A Realistic Joy, Not A Superficial Cheerfulness.**

**B. It Is A Real Joy And Gladness That Comes From Christ And From All That He Has Done For Us In The Gospel.**

We have joy because we boast in Christ (v. 3). We are justified and accepted by His righteousness alone (v. 9).

**C. He Repeats The Command To Have Joy.**

Because joy is commanded it means Christ can give it to us. We can joy in Christ. For Paul, preaching Christ brings joy (1:12-18). Pouring out his life for Christ's glory brings joy. (2:18, 27). We too can experience joy. Christ Himself gives His people joy (John 15:11).

**D. The Reason For Our Joy Is Christ. He Gives It! His Grace Is The Basis Of Our Joy (3:3).**

**II. THE EVIL WHICH HINDERS WORSHIP BY ROBBING US OF OUR JOY. BEWARE OF THE DOGS, BEWARE OF THE EVIL WORKERS, BEWARE OF THE FALSE CIRCUMCISION. (v. 2).**

**A. The Seriousness Of The Threat To Our Joyful Worship Is Stressed By His Outburst About False Teachers. Three Times He Says Beware!**

**B. They Are Seen As Dogs Or Outsiders Who Corrupt The Gospel With Works.**

Those who teach circumcision is necessary for acceptance are dogs. Those who teach works for acceptance are outsiders. They do not understand the grace of the gospel.

**C. They Subvert The Gospel By The Addition Of Works.**

They mutilated the gospel by the addition of circumcision and works of the law. The evil is that it robs people of the confidence that they are accepted before God and the joy it brings (Romans 10:3-4; Galatians 3:10). This in turn hinders true joyful glad-hearted worship

**III. THE EXPRESSION OF WORSHIP CHARACTERIZES THE ENTIRE LIFE. FOR WE ARE THE TRUE CIRCUMCISION, WHO WORSHIP IN THE SPIRIT OF GOD AND GLORY IN CHRIST JESUS AND PUT NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH (v. 3).**

**A. We Are Renewed People (the true circumcision) Who Are Now Able To See And Enjoy The Person And Works Of God With An Attitude Of Worship. For We Are The True Circumcision (v. 3a).**

- 1. There is an emphatic “we.” All true believers are circumcised in their hearts.**
- 2. All the ones who worship God as a way of life glory in Christ. They boast in Christ for their justifying righteousness (v. 9).**

**3. There is an extensive renewal indicated by “true circumcision.”**

The “true circumcision” refers to a cutting away of the pollution of sin in our natures. In addition righteousness is implanted in our nature so that we are radically recreated. (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 2:12, 3:10).

**B. We Respond In A Worship Of Service That Marks Our Entire Existence. Who Worship (v. 3b).**

The concept of the term “worship” (*latreuo*) comes from the Old Testament where it indicates the worship of service in the whole of life.

*Latreuein was rarely employed in Greek literature until the translators of the Septuagint gave it special prominence, using it to refer exclusively to the service rendered to God or to heathen gods, and especially service by means of sacrifice or some other ritual. ... By New Testament times this word-group had come to be used predominately for religious or cultic duties.*

Peterson, *Engaging With God*, p. 64

**1. It involved serving (Exodus 3:12, 4:23, 8:1, 9:1) and sacrifice (5:3, 8, 8:18).**

**2. It was motivated by a love and fear of God for all the blessings we have received from Him (Deuteronomy 6:12, 10:20).**

*12) Then watch yourself, that you do not forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 13) You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. (Deuteronomy 6:12-13).*

*You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name (Deuteronomy 10:20).*

**3. It involved allegiance in all of life (Deuteronomy 6:13-14; Joshua 22:5, 24:14-24).**

*13) You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. 14) You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you (Deuteronomy 6:13-14).*

When we meet corporately on Sunday, we continue to do what we have done all week. However, there is a different dynamic because we do it together as an assembly. We worship together as we hear the Word preached and sing praises together to Him from our hearts.

- C. Our Response Of Worship Is Compelled By The Spirit Whose Supreme Passion Is The Worship And Exaltation Of Christ (1:19; John 16:14-15). Who Worship In The Spirit Of God (v. 3b).**
- D. Our Response Of Worship Is A Result Of A Heart Gripped By The Knowledge And Experience Of The Redemption Accomplished For Us In Christ. And Glory In Christ Jesus (v. 3c).**
- E. Our Response Of Worship Is Compelled In The Fact That, Although We Have No Personal Righteousness For Acceptance Before God, Christ Has Become Our Justifying Righteousness. And Put No Confidence In The Flesh (v. 3d).**

Paul's statement that he is one of those who "put no confidence in the flesh" clearly anticipates verse 9 where he says, "and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith." This can be seen by the fact that Paul begins in verse 4 to explain that if anyone could have confidence in His own works for a justifying righteousness it was him, yet he renounces it all as utterly useless and inadequate for a righteous standing before God (vv. 7-8). His climatic statement of where he puts his confidence for his justifying righteousness is verse 9. But the point of verse 3 is how this boast in Christ for our justification

is the basis and fuel of true worship. A believers worship flows from a free and final justification. Remove this and you remove the basis of joy (v. 1) and cut the nerve of glad-hearted genuine worship. This is the reason for Paul's outburst of indignation in verses 2 and 3.