



Worship Where Your Heart Is “Toward a deeper understanding”

By Chris R. Hansen

Words like Awesome, Worship and Hallelujah, words that God created for us to use specifically for Him have been prostituted and sold to the common place of human mediocrity. And the gates of hell are rejoicing.

The word “worship” has lost it’s meaning and has become so ambiguous, so bland. It really has lost its savor because of its overuse. Culture and paganism have used it to describe many activities from worshipping the sun to the trees; to the using it in romantic songs and books to describe love and commitment between two people. Even the church has injured and contributed to the flattening of the word. As a church musician I have heard phrases like “well, what do you have planned for worship this Sunday?” Or “Are we going to have good worship this Sunday?” Some people have said; “Well thanks for using the organ this week, I was really able to worship.” Or “That worship set by the band was really moving for me.”

We have relegated the word worship to “being about us.” “I only worship if I achieve my weekly emotional magical mystery tour.” Our attempts to honestly define worship with statements like, “Worship is all that I am -- giving all I have to God” can and do fall short of the depth that God had intended.

The Bible it self does not have a singular place where one can find what it means to truly worship God. Even God has limited Himself to one phrase that captures all of what it means for us to worship Him.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites were told “how to dress” for worship: Worship the Lord in Holy attire (1Chron 16:29 NASB); the attitude to use “Worship the Lord with reverence” (Ps. 2:11 NASB); “Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (1Chr 16:29; Ps 29:2; 96:9 NKJV). They were sometimes told “where” to worship God: “Come and worship the Lord in the holy mountain” (Is, 27:13 NASB); “I will worship the Lord in Hebron” (2 Sam. 15:8 NIV). And then sometimes “how” to worship. “Worship the LORD at his sanctuary with our burnt offerings, sacrifices and fellowship offerings. (Joshua 22:27 NIV)

The Old Testament often used prescribed formulas that were to be followed to the tee in order to successfully “worship God”. That was then; but, what about today? The bible does not encourage that same adherence to tradition. How do we then worship God today?

As we shall see true worship of God is not a matter of carrying out traditions and rites; at its core, worship has a lot to do with how you and I engage with God Himself.

Worship Challenge:

Write down on a piece of paper the top five things that bring you most joy and contentment. Take a few minuets and think about what makes you the happiest.

If our desire to know God is not at the top of our list we will have a very hard time successfully worshipping Him. Worship is in a sense all that we are. Proverbs 9:10 put it this way.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Prov. 9:10 (NASB)

God must be our treasure our deepest desire.

...for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matt 6:21 (NASB)

In seminary Gordon Borrer had a saying. “Worship is not a matter of the art, but a matter of the heart.” True worship starts with a desire, a yearning to know the Holy One, even if we don’t feel like it. We press on to know God, to understand Him to truly revere Him and fearfully respect Him. If you want to understand worship then your quest starts here.

