

Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down

Introduction

“Psalm 95 Worship Intro” video

Key Text:

Psalm 95:1-11

(1) Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! (2) Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! (3) For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. (4) In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. (5) The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. (6) Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! (7) For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you hear his voice, (8) do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, (9) when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work. (10) For forty years I loathed that generation and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they have not known my ways." (11) Therefore I swore in my wrath, "They shall not enter my rest."

[Pray]

If I asked you to define worship in one or two words, what might you say? [*Pause and let the congregation respond.*] I think the majority of the definitions given were related to music or singing.

Let's look a bit closer at our key text for today. Did you notice all the actions in Psalm 95? I think the idea of worship (our topic this morning) is best captured in verses 6 and 7. [*Read verses 6 and 7*]

In those verses, we see the idea of worship connected with the actions of bowing down and kneeling. In fact, in the Hebrew the word translated as our English word *worship* is *shaw-khaw*. It literally means *to bow down or prostrate oneself*. There are many words translated in our English Bibles as *worship* and all of them without exception are bodily actions.

What is the common thread behind all those words? What is the essence of worship? I would like to suggest to you today that the common thread is that they are all a response.

Main Idea:

Worship is a response [*pause and repeat the first part*] to God for who He is and what He's done especially in light of who we are and what we've done.

True worship engages the entire being--the mind, will, and emotions.

- Emotions (v 1) - Singing, shouting, thanksgiving, extol with music and song
- Will (v 6) - Bowing, kneeling
- Mind (v 7-8) - "Hear his voice", "Don't harden your hearts"

Sometimes we need to understand what a word truly is, we have to understand what that word is not.

Examples:

- The opposite of hot is cold.
- The opposite of fast is slow.
- The opposite of big is little.
- The opposite of spicy food is bland, tasteless food that is hardly worth eating.

Sometimes we are color blind when it comes to worship; we can't tell the difference between true and false worship. So let's first begin by looking at what worship is not.

1. What worship is not...

- a. Worship is not passive; it engages the entire being.

Isaiah 29:13-14

(13) And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men, (14) therefore, behold, I will again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden."

i. Worship is not just about words

1. Saying one thing yet doing another - If true worship engages the entire being, why is there no transformation?
2. Knowing the right words - How often do we mindlessly sing worship songs with no emotion?

ii. Worship is not about having the right template or tradition

Zechariah 7:1-14

(1) In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislev. (2) Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and their men to entreat the favor of the LORD, (3) saying to the priests of the house of the LORD of hosts and the prophets, "Should I weep and abstain in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years?" (4) Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me: (5) "Say to all the people of the land and the priests, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month and in the seventh, for these seventy years, was it for me that you fasted? (6) And when you eat and when you drink, do you not eat

for yourselves and drink for yourselves? (7) Were not these the words that the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous, with her cities around her, and the South and the lowland were inhabited?" (8) And the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, (9) "Thus says the LORD of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, (10) do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart." (11) But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears that they might not hear. (12) They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the LORD of hosts. (13) "As I called, and they would not hear, so they called, and I would not hear," says the LORD of hosts, (14) "and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and the pleasant land was made desolate."

iii. Worship is not free of cost; it requires us to give up something

1. 1 Chronicles 21:1-30

(1) Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel. (2) So David said to Joab and the commanders of the army, "Go, number Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, and bring me a report, that I may know their number." (3) But Joab said, "May the LORD add to his people a hundred times as many as they are! Are they not, my lord the king, all of them my lord's servants? Why then should my lord require this? Why should it be a cause of guilt for Israel?" (4) But the king's word prevailed against Joab. So Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came back to Jerusalem. (5) And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to David. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword, and in Judah 470,000 who drew the sword. (6) But he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to Joab. (7) But God was displeased with this thing, and he struck Israel. (8) And David said to God, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done this thing. But now, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly." (9) And the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, (10) "Go and say to David, 'Thus says the LORD, Three things I offer you; choose one of them, that I may do it to you.'" (11) So Gad came to David and said to him, "Thus says the LORD,

'Choose what you will: (12) either three years of famine, or three months of devastation by your foes while the sword of your enemies overtakes you, or else three days of the sword of the LORD, pestilence on the land, with the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.' Now decide what answer I shall return to him who sent me." (13) Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is very great, but do not let me fall into the hand of man." (14) So the LORD sent a pestilence on Israel, and 70,000 men of Israel fell. (15) And God sent the angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but as he was about to destroy it, the LORD saw, and he relented from the calamity. And he said to the angel who was working destruction, "It is enough; now stay your hand." And the angel of the LORD was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. (16) And David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. (17) And David said to God, "Was it not I who gave command to number the people? It is I who have sinned and done great evil. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand, O LORD my God, be against me and against my father's house. But do not let the plague be on your people." (18) Now the angel of the LORD had commanded Gad to say to David that David should go up and raise an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. (19) So David went up at Gad's word, which he had spoken in the name of the LORD. (20) Now Ornan was threshing wheat. He turned and saw the angel, and his four sons who were with him hid themselves. (21) As David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David and went out from the threshing floor and paid homage to David with his face to the ground. (22) And David said to Ornan, "Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to the LORD--give it to me at its full price--that the plague may be averted from the people." (23) Then Ornan said to David, "Take it, and let my lord the king do what seems good to him. See, I give the oxen for burnt offerings and the threshing sledges for the wood and the wheat for a grain offering; I give it all." (24) But King David said to Ornan, "No, but I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings

that cost me nothing." (25) So David paid Ornan 600 shekels of gold by weight for the site. (26) And David built there an altar to the LORD and presented burnt offerings and peace offerings and called on the LORD, and the LORD answered him with fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt offering. (27) Then the LORD commanded the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath. (28) At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. (29) For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon, (30) but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

- b. Worship is not about us; it's about God
 - i. Lucifer as an example

*Emphasize all the personal pronouns of these passages.

1. Ezekiel 28:12-19

[The prior verses (1-11) were talking about the prince of Tyre, an actual earthly ruler. The king of Tyre refers to the power behind the earthly ruler, Satan.]

(12) "Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

(13) You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering [*Lucifer was very beautiful*], sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. [*The KJV renders this verse as follows: "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created."* The usage of the words *tabrets* and *pipes* indicates that Satan was created by God a musician who not only was not only able to lead others but also was himself a living orchestra.]

(14) You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. (15) You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till

unrighteousness was found in you. (16) In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. (17) Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. (18) By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. (19) All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever."

[Not talking about commercial trade. Trade comes from the Hebrew that means to go up and down as a tale-bearer or secret agitator. Today we call it campaigning or lobbying. Elsewhere in Scripture, the word is has the connotation of slander and flattery.]

2. Isaiah 14:12-15

(12) "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! (13) You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' (15) But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.

c. Worship is not primarily about music; it is all of life

i. Romans 12:1-2

(1) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (2) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

[The Message Bible translation. All of life should be a response.]

ii. Some common complaints about "worship" are actually about music

1. Volume - too soft/too loud
2. Style - classical/country/rock/rap
3. Instrumentation - organ/piano/guitar/drums

d. Worship is not a setup for the main thing: the sermon

2. What worship is... [*Read Psalm 95 again*]
 - a. A response to God
 - i. For who He is. (Who is He?)
 1. Redeemer (the Rock of our salvation) (v 1)
 2. Our God (not god-great King above all gods) (v 3)
 3. Our LORD our Maker (Jehovah asaw) (v 5,6)
 - ii. For what He's done. (What has He done?)
 1. Created the world and us
 - a. Exodus 20:8-11

(8) Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Work six days and do everything you need to do. (10) But the seventh day is a Sabbath to GOD, your God. Don't do any work--not you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your servant, nor your maid, nor your animals, not even the foreign guest visiting in your town. (11) For in six days GOD made Heaven, Earth, and sea, and everything in them; he rested on the seventh day. Therefore GOD blessed the Sabbath day; he set it apart as a holy day.
 2. Redeemed us
 - a. Revelation 4 - Worship of God as Creator
 - b. Revelation 5 - Worship of God as Redeemer
 - b. In light of who we are and what we've done. (Who are we? What have we done?)
 - i. God's creation (v 6)
 - ii. Likened unto sheep (v 7)
 - iii. Disobedient (v 8)
 - iv. Prone to wander (v 10)

Conclusion

1. Closing Illustration

Imagine a woman who has inherited a piece of jewelry. It's a brooch from her mother and she got it from her mother. It's been around in the family for a few years and nobody quite knows where it came from. Nobody knows what it's worth and half the time, they don't even know where it is. One day the woman finds it and says, "Oh yeah. That old thing. I think I'll go get it appraised."

So she takes it to a jeweler and he gets his loupe (the magnifying device that jewelers use). He puts the loupe up to his eye and he begins to examine the brooch. As he looks at the brooch, he starts to notice some of its characteristics. He notices the way the facets refract the light. He notices colors. He notices texture. Bit by bit, he's looking at it, thinking about it and taking in all the aspects of the brooch. All of a sudden, after several minutes of this, the loupe pops out of his eye. The jeweler starts to have labored breathing and he begins to feel faint. He realizes that this is not just an ordinary piece of jewelry. It's a lost, ancient, unique, piece of jewelry. The craft with which the brooch was made

has vanished from the face of the earth. Nobody even knows how to do it anymore. This is unique in its beauty. It's priceless. The reason that his mind, will, and emotions are all engaged is because he realizes the value of what he has in his hand. He realizes in his hand is something more valuable than all the jewels in his shop--all the jewels he's ever had in his shop for thirty years.

When the woman comes to understand the true value of the brooch, she's astounded and thunderstruck. She realizes she has not been living in accordance with the value of what she had. Because she didn't understand the true value of it, she wasn't living at all the way she ought to be living. Her entire life has changed now that she sees the value of it.

The psalmist is calling us to do exactly what the jeweler does. It starts rationally. It starts with thinking. It starts with looking at who He is and what He has done. It enumerates, it inventories, it goes through until it dawns on you the value and the beauty of who God is.

Application Questions

1. Sins to confess, forsake, and avoid
 - a. Passivity
 - i. How do I respond to God?
 - ii. Do I respond with my mind, will, and emotions?
 - iii. Do I think about the words I sing?
 - iv. Do I believe the words I sing?
 - v. Am I moved by the words I sing?
 - vi. Do I live out the words I sing?
 - b. Pride
 - i. Do I think about my preferences more than what God desires?
 - c. Idolatry
 - i. What do I ascribe ultimate worth to?
2. Promise to believe or condition to meet in order to partake of the promise
 - a. Is all of my life an offering of worship or just Sunday mornings?
 - b. Am I being conformed to the pattern of this world or am I being transformed?