



Heart
of
Warship

Introduction

There is a lot of talk about worship in the church today.

Most of it rotates around the idea of “worship wars”. It is a conflict about the style and mode of music. I am sad to say that this has side tracked and diminished the real issue of “True Worship”.

That is what this series is about. We want to discover the essence and practice of Biblical worship. My prayer is that you listen intently and examine your own life to see if it is characterized by “True Worship”!



Definitions – Webster 1828

WORSHIP, verb transitive

1. To adore; to pay divine honors to; to reverence with supreme respect and veneration.
2. To respect; to honor; to treat with civil reverence.
3. To honor with extravagant love and extreme submission; as a lover.

WORSHIP, verb intransitive

1. To perform acts of adoration.
2. To perform religious service.



Definitions – Old Testament

Halal is the most common term expressing worship, used 122 times in the Old Testament. It means to be *clear* (in sound or in color), to *shine*, to *make a show*, or to *boast*. The implication is to make loud, clear sounds of praise. The Hebrew term also carries the meaning of being *clamorously foolish*, to *rave*, or to *celebrate*, thus to *halal* God means unbridled, exuberant praise. The English word "*hallelujah*" comes from a combination of the Hebrew words *halal* and *Yahweh* (or *Yah*).



Definitions – Old Testament

Yadah is another common Hebrew term for worship (used 101 times) as well as a related word *Todah* (used 30 times). Both of these terms come from the root *yad* meaning "hand," and are an expression of worship that involves the use of hands: to hold out one's hands, or to give thanks or revere with extended hands in thanksgiving, praise and adoration. It may also mean to use hands in confession or absolute surrender.



Definitions – Old Testament

Barak (used 80 times), comes from the root *berech* meaning "knee." Its use as an act of worship involves kneeling down before God. It can also mean to congratulate, salute, praise or thank. It implies giving reverence to God as an act of adoration.



Definitions – Old Testament

Shachah (used 66 times), means to *bow, stoop down*, or prostrate oneself as an act of submission or reverence; to make obeisance or to fall or bow down in reverence before God.



Definitions – Old Testament

Tehillah as a noun (related to the verb *halal*) is used 55 times. It means the offering of praise and celebration, specifically with hymns or songs of praise. It may also sometimes mean singing spontaneous new songs to God by adding words to a melody from the heart.



Definitions – Old Testament

Zamar, occurring 45 times, has the root Hebrew meaning of *touching* the strings or parts of musical instruments. Its use as an expression of worship was in the playing of instruments accompanied by voices, to *celebrate* or give praise with instruments and voices.



Definitions – Old Testament

Shabach (used six times), means literally to *address in a loud tone*, implying laud, praise or proclamation with a loud voice or a shout.



Definitions – Proskuneo

This is the most common word for “worship” in the Septuagint or Greek Old Testament.

Proskuneo carries the idea of a physical falling down in reverence before a visible majesty.

Though it is common in the Old Testament, it is rarely used in the New Testament.



Definitions – Proskuneo

It is used 26 times in the Gospels where people bowed down and worshipped Jesus.

It is used 21 times in Revelation with regard to worship before the throne.

It is never in the writings of Peter, James or John and only used once in the the writings of Paul.

1 Corinthians 14:25 speaks of an unbeliever who under the power of prophecy “falls down on his face ... and will worship God.”



New Testament Worship

Between the Ascension of Christ and His 2nd Coming, He is not here to worship in this manner. The Temple in Jerusalem has also been destroyed. This produces a radical change in worship for the New Testament.

Worship is INTERNALIZED and DELOCALIZED.



New Testament Worship

This intensification of worship as a nonlocal inner experience of the heart is seen in Jesus' words in John 4. He states that the hour is coming and now is when worship will not be located in Samaria or Jerusalem but will be "in spirit and in truth".



New Testament Worship

We see the inward intensification of worship in Matthew 15:8-9. Jesus states,

“These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”

Worship that does not come from the heart is empty and not authentic worship.



New Testament Worship

To see more clearly how radically delocalized and nonevent oriented the New Testament view of worship is, consider what Paul does to some of the other words related to Old Testament worship.

The Greek word *latreuo* translates the Hebrew word *abad* 90 times in the Septuagint. It is normally translated “serve”. Exodus 23:24 states, “You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them.”



New Testament Worship

Paul goes out of his way to make sure that we know he means not a localized or outward form of worship, but that it is an inward spiritual experience.

Romans 1:9a

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son.

Philippians 3:3

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.



New Testament Worship

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service (Act of worship).

Do you see that worship cannot be reduced to some action we do on Sunday morning. It is who we are!

Our entire life should be an act of worship.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.



So What...

Let me close with this important thought.

Everything you do is worship. The question is what are you worshipping?

It is so easy to get sidetracked. We can worship the music or even performing the music. Remember Matt Redman's story.

We need to remember that worship is in the heart. Let us focus on Jesus this coming week and seek to bring glory to Him (worship) in all we do.

