

Come, Let Us Worship

. . . and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand (Psalm 95:6–7).

“Come, let us worship”

God desires that we worship Him. In fact, He made us for that very reason—for the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:11–12).

But how can we worship Him?

Our generation knows variety in worship: from traditional to contemporary . . . from very formal to very informal . . . from very emotional to very stoic. With such a variety around us, we must learn from the Bible which worship pleases God. Let us understand the invitation of Psalm 95:6: *Come, let us worship and . . .*

. . . **bow down: let us kneel.** In the Old Testament, *worship* literally meant “to lie down in humility or submission before an honorable one.” People from that age bowed themselves down to worship. For example, when “the Lord appeared to Abram, . . . Abram fell on his face” (Genesis 17:1–3). The Lord consumed Elijah’s sacrifice on Mount Carmel, “and when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces” (1 Kings 18:39).

In the New Testament the word *worship* and its derivatives are translated primarily from the Greek word *proskuneo*. *Proskuneo* means “to fawn or crouch to; to literally or figuratively prostrate oneself in homage.” This word is found in the conversation Jesus had with the Samaritan woman. In that visit Jesus literally said, “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall [*prostrate themselves to*] the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to [*prostrate themselves to*] him.”

He who prostrates himself shows what he feels in his heart. He confesses to the one before him, “I acknowledge your greatness and my lowliness, and I yield myself to you.”

To truly worship, we must have these attitudes in our heart. That is bowing down in spirit and in truth. Some worshipers crave an emotional stir; others desire a philosophical study; but let us, in spirit and truth, *bow down* and *kneel* . . .

. . . **before the Lord our maker.** On the sixth day of Creation, God breathed into the nostrils of the man He had formed from the dust of the earth. Suddenly the dust became a living man—Adam. You and I are his descendants. Even “scientists” descend from Adam, no matter how much they speculate about our supposed evolution from monkeys. “God . . . created *all* things by Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9). Yes, the Lord is our Maker.

God is sovereign in all the universe. “God is the King of all the earth” (Psalm 47:7). No one threatens His power or His control. “The Lord is King for ever and ever” (Psalm 10:16). He controls the most powerful of men. He is King over all kings, God over all gods, Lord over all lords.

“I am Alpha and Omega [the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet], the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord” (Revelation 1:8). God is the first and the last; no god can put himself before Him or

behind Him. He fills everything; there is no place, in the universe or outside the universe, that another god can possess. He knows all things; there is no knowledge that can hide from God. He is all powerful; no other god can do anything of its own accord.

Who deserves our worship? Before whom do we bow down and kneel?

Before the Lord our maker . . .

. . . for he is our God. From the heart of God streams mercy and justice, benevolence and love. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). Those who taste of God find Him good. The person who believes that God is cruel or unjust obviously does not know Him.

God created a good world. When the sun shone for the first time on His finished creation, the world was very different from the world of today. That world was resplendent, without blemish, without suffering, without death.

During those first days, Adam and Eve experienced the mercy and love of their Father, God; and they worshiped Him. They knew that any disobedience would be punished, but soon they sinned. And because of that sin, death invaded the world. The world we see today is stained by sin and rotted by six thousand years of decay. We humans are to blame for the problems of today's world.

God's love moved Him to help us out of our problems. He sent His Son, Jesus, as a Man to earth. Jesus lived in fellowship with His Father. His goodwill flowed out to the sick, to the struggling, and even to His enemies. Through His death God opened the way for us to be restored to Himself.

For God desires that we know Him as *our* God, a personal God. He longs to see in our worship hearts that proclaim, *He is our God; and . . .*

. . . we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. A sheep must get sustenance and protection from its shepherd; in the same way, we also need our Shepherd. But we have forsaken Him (Isaiah 53:6). To worship God we must leave our wicked ways, return to His fold, and submit to His hand.

In the beginning, Adam bowed his spirit to God. He submitted to God from the heart and enjoyed fellowship with Him. And God illuminated his spirit. He was like a sheep content in his shepherd's fold.

Nevertheless, one day Adam chose to disobey God and take his own way. Immediately the life and light of the Spirit of God left him. Adam's spirit darkened and died. This same "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

People dead in their spirits cannot worship God *in spirit*. They need God's life within.

God sent Jesus to shepherd us into His life. Jesus gave His life for us, His sheep (John 10:11). To escape the power and darkness of sin, we must believe in Him and the power of His blood. Believing on Him means ceasing to believe in ourselves. To live in God we must die to our sinful will and follow the hand of our Shepherd, Jesus.

Jesus gives His Spirit to those who follow Him. His Spirit brings the Life and Light of God to their spirits. His followers, then, with their spirits aflame with His life, may worship in spirit.

Bowing our spirit includes

*bowing our *will* to God's. Our will is yielded and broken before the awesome will of God.

*bowing our *attitudes*. We become painfully aware of how small we are in comparison with God's greatness. We recognize that we are unworthy of His love, and we recognize our inability to meet His standards. We have a modest estimation of our abilities even when others praise us. We recognize that everything good comes from God.

*bowing our *aspirations*. The unconverted person's aspirations are bent toward himself; the aspirations of a person who worships in spirit are bent toward God. Everything we aspired to be or do we yield to God.

With Jesus as our Shepherd, we willingly accept the invitation . . .

. . . **come, let us worship.** Daniel faithfully prayed to God three times a day. Like him, we should designate a daily time to worship. Let us find a private place where we can meditate and submit our will to what God reveals to us in His Word. We should praise His greatness, seek His help, and share with Him the innermost portion of our heart through prayer.

This personal worship prepares us to worship with others who also worship in the spirit. The Bible tells us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25).

When we sing with others in worship, we receive encouragement and teaching. Moreover, God receives glory (Colossians 3:16). The songs should be in tune with our prostrate spirit. They should praise the greatness and the goodness of God. The music should help us focus on the majesty of God.

To worship in singing, sing humbly. Blend your voice with others. Sing each song as though it were new, seeking a new blessing and lifting it as a fresh offering to God.

God wants us to proclaim the Gospel through preaching. In public worship the preacher calls the unconverted to initial surrender and the converted to continued and deeper surrender. He probes the mysteries of grace and redemption and calls hearts to wonder and praise. Hearing such a message is worship when the listeners willingly bow in spirit to the truth they hear.

A collective burden and a collective conviction that God can lift the burden gives birth to collective prayer. When we pray together, we place ourselves under the burdens of our brother and help carry them through Christ to God. That joins us in heart and in worship. It brings us together before God's throne to plead His mercy. The prayers of the church also resonate with thanksgiving and praise. "With thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6).

When believers gather to worship, God Himself is present. He does not dwell in the meeting place like He did in the temple of the Old Testament. God, through the Holy Spirit, dwells in each believer's heart. Consequently, Christians have no need for a glorious place like Solomon's temple in which to meet for public worship.

Worship is not that emotion that steals over us when we view the beautiful stained glass windows of a giant cathedral or when we hear music that stirs our sentiments. Worship is not something that *happens* to us; it is something we do. We worship when God's truth prompts us to bow our spirits before Him.

The best environment for worship will not distract us from God and His truth. We can avoid a lot of architectural distraction by having a simple building, simply furnished. When women follow the Bible teaching of veiling their heads in worship (1 Corinthians 11:4–16), they do not distract others with their hair arrangements. When we wear simple, modest clothing, we avoid distracting others with our appearance. We also avoid the distraction of sitting next to someone of the opposite gender by having the men sit separately from the women.

In Paul's day the Corinthians were distracted from their worship by the confusion that reigned in the services. Too many people were speaking at once. Others spoke something the rest could not understand. Paul told them, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (1 Corinthians 14:33). To avoid confusion, we should "let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40) under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Our worship services should elevate God, not man. The program should produce an orderly service, avoiding both undue formality and a casual atmosphere.

God does not entertain us, and neither should we try to entertain each other in worship. We should come to church full of expectancy, confident that God will reveal Himself. We expect to find reason to bow before Him anew, to be awestruck once more by the great works of God, be they past, present, or future.

God wants you to worship Him. Unite with a congregation of Christians who extend the Biblical invitation:

O Come, Let Us Worship . . . and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand (Psalm 95:6–7).

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