

Understanding Acceptable Worship

SCRIPTURE READING: Psalms 145:10-13

INTRODUCTION.

- A. In our previous lesson, we began a study of Understanding Acceptable Worship.
- B. In the first lesson, we showed how acceptable worship...
 - 1. Is based on God's Word.
 - 2. Begins in the heart.
- C. In this lesson, we will show that acceptable worship praises the Lord.

I. ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP PRAISES THE LORD.

- A. From the beginning, people have praised the Lord.
 - 1. We see that during the days of Seth, *"men began to call upon the name of the Lord."* (Genesis 4:26) Many see this as a reference to offering up worship, praising the Lord.
 - 2. We see this in Abraham as well. (Genesis 12:8; 13:4)
 - a. *"And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD."* (Genesis 12:8)
 - b. *"And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the LORD."* (Genesis 13:3-4)
 - 3. During Moses' song of deliverance, Moses said, *"I will sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him."* (Exodus 15:1-2)

- B. Consider the example set by David.
 - 1. Consider Psalms 145, one of six psalms intended to praise the Lord. (cf. Psalms 145-150)
 - 2. In this psalm, we read that...
 - a. David would “**extol**” the name of God. David spoke highly of God’s great name, declaring His mighty works.
 - b. David would “**bless**” the Lord and His name. David often expressed his deep personal affection and adoration for the Lord.
 - c. David would “**praise**” the Lord and his name. David would boast of the great things the Lord had done.
- C. When we worship the Lord, we follow the same pattern.
 - 1. We **extol** the name of the Lord by speaking highly of His great name and lifting up His mighty works.
 - 2. We **bless** the Lord, expressing our deeply felt affection and adoration for Him.
 - 3. We **praise** the Lord for the great things He has done.
- D. Consider how this is seen during the assemblies of the saints today.
 - 1. When we partake of the Lord’s supper, we are proclaiming Jesus’ death until He comes again. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
 - a. The proclamation can be seen as a declaration of our confidence that Jesus will come again. We are declaring His victory.
 - b. When we partake of the Lord’s supper, we are “extolling” the finished work of Christ.
 - c. We continue this public declaration until Jesus comes again.
 - 2. We sing spiritual songs and hymns written to praise the Lord.
 - a. The Hebrew writer referred to the “sacrifice of praise to God” being the “fruit of our lips.” (Hebrews 13:15) When we sing songs and hymns to the Lord, we are offering up as praise the words that come from our heart and pass over our lips.

- b. Jesus and His apostles sang a hymn and went out from the garden.
(Matthew 26:30)
 - c. Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God while in prison. (Acts 16:25)
 - d. Paul told the Christians in Ephesus to “*...be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (Ephesians 5:18b-20)
 - e. Paul told the Christians in Colosse to “*let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*” (Colossians 3:16-17)
 - 1) Many of the psalms they would have sung would have been songs of praise as we saw in Psalm 145.
3. When the assembly prays together, we praise the Lord for the great things He has done.
- a. After Peter and John were released from jail, they returned to the brethren and prayed together to the Lord. (Acts 4:23-31) They began the prayer with praise.
 - b. Praise can be associated with prayers of thanksgiving. We are giving thanks for the great things God has done. We acknowledge those great things. (cf. Philippians 4:6; Colossians 1:3; 4:2)
 - c. Paul told Timothy that “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.” (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
4. When the assembly listens to the Word with reverence, they are “extolling” the wisdom of God over the wisdom of men.

- a. Paul told Timothy to “preach the word.” (2 Timothy 4:2-5)
 - b. By receiving the word of God, we are willingly submitting to hearing His message. We recognize that God’s thoughts are higher than our thoughts.
 - c. We are showing respect and reverence for God’s words and instructions.
- E. Acceptable worship praises the Lord, not man.
- 1. Worship services to not seek man’s approval.
 - 2. Worship services must not seek to entertain the members.
 - 3. Worship services are for the Lord, for praising Him and blessing His holy name.
 - 4. We bring the “sacrifice of praise” to Him and not to ourselves.

CONCLUSION.

- A. When we assemble to worship the Lord, let us, with one mind and purpose, offer up praise to our heavenly Father.
- 1. Paul wrote, *“Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
(Romans 15:5-6)
 - 2. Let our hearts be humbled before the Lord.
 - 3. Let our thoughts be focused on praising the Lord.
 - 4. Let our words proclaim the great things He has done..
- B. In the final lesson, we will show that acceptable worship edifies the brethren and involves our participation.

Understanding Acceptable Worship – Part 2

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