

If you recall this morning we considered the first two of four headings concerning public worship, its nature and activities—concerning the [1] the nature of worship I suggested three things—[a] it takes place within the church, [b] it knows God’s special presence, and [c] it is to be regulated by Scripture—concerning the [2] main heading [the activities of worship], I suggested five things essential to new covenant, corporate, worship—reading, praying, singing, preaching, and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Table...”—this brings us to our latter two headings...

- I. Its purpose
- II. Its attitude

- I. The purpose of worship

- A. Glorification

1. I trust it goes without saying, that the foremost purpose or reason behind worship is the glorification of our Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...
2. Lev.10:3—“by those who come near me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified...”
3. It must be remembered that first and foremostly, worship is a means to give to God and not get from God...
4. Ps.96:7-9—“Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Give to the LORD glory and strength. 8 Give to the LORD the glory *due* His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts. 9 Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth...”
5. Notice three times within this passage we are told to give something to God—“give to the Lord...give to the Lord glory and strength...give to the Lord the glory due His name...”
6. To give to the Lord “glory and strength” is to acknowledge God as glorious and mighty, v8—“give to the LORD the glory due His name...”—that is, due His glorious being...
7. How do we give glory to God in worship, notice two ways—[a] we can give Him glory outwardly—that is, by verbal and tangible expressions of praise...
8. Ps.69:30—“I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving...”—that is, I will verbally or outwardly give Him glory...
9. Notice [b] we can give God glory inwardly—by which I mean, we can glorify God throughout the service within our hearts...
10. 1Pet.3:15—“sanctify the Lord God in your hearts...”—that is, treat Him as holy, or give Him the honor due Him in your hearts...
11. Every single act done within the worship service must be done for the express purpose of giving glory and honor to God...
12. For example, it might that during the prayers, reading, preaching, or singing, that we offer up to God a sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart...
13. Such a sacrifice may or may not be visibly seen, but either way, when offered in sincerity, it brings glory to God...
14. John Murray—“When we come together it is to worship God. Everything else really rests upon this. Whatever we may do, in worship, if it is not directed to the worship of God, no matter how good and embellished our exercises may be, it is not worship...”

- B. Edification

1. Here of course I refer to our own edification and the edification of the saints—worship not only brings glory to God but good to us...
2. John Broadus [a 19<sup>th</sup> century early southern Baptist] said—“Why ought we to worship God? Because it is due to him; and because it is good for us...”
3. Thus in 1Cor.14 in sorting out the confusion taking place within the corporate worship, the apostle says in v26—“let all things be done for edification...”

4. Whatever was to take place, prophesying or reading Scripture, is to be done for the purpose of mutual edification...
5. Historically we make a distinction between the “public” and “private” means of grace—“private” referring to those activities done in private [such as reading, meditating, and praying]...
6. Thus by “public means of grace” is meant the public worship of God wherein the people of God collectively read, pray, and sing...
7. Thus by the five activities we considered this morning, reading, praying, preaching, singing, and the sacraments, grace is communicated to the collected people of God...
8. This is obviously true with reference to reading, preaching, and praying, but it should also true of singing....
9. For example, Col.3:15—“let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...”
10. In other words the songs that we sing in our corporate worship, should be of such a nature that they instruct, edify, and admonish...
11. Thus the public worship of God’s people is not only designed to offer worship to God, but in the process to receive a blessing from God...
12. Let me suggest that these two concepts [of giving to God and getting from God] are not in opposition to one another...
13. In fact they are intimately and necessarily related—because we were created to give glory and worship to God the soul is never more blessed and satisfied when it does what it was made to do...
14. Thus while the primary purpose behind worship is the glorification of God, this will in turn always result in the satisfaction and thus edification of man...
15. I am never able to understand how professing Christians can endure, without meeting together weekly for worship...
16. This life is like a pilgrimage through a wilderness, with the Lord’s Day as a weekly oasis—a means to revive and refresh the soul...
17. Can you imagine how week and tired you would be if you had to go week after week with no or little food and drink...
18. Ps.65:4—“Blessed is the man you choose, and cause to approach you, that he may dwell in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, of your holy temple [cp.Ps.36:7-9; 132:13-16]...”
19. Notice [a] the privilege of worship, v4a—“blessed is the man you choose, and cause to approach you, that he may dwell in your courts...”
20. How is a man brought into the church that he might approach God, and dwell in His courts—election and effectual calling...
21. “Blessed is the man you choose [election], and cause to approach you [effectual calling]—that he may dwell in your courts [the OT place of worship]...
22. Notice [b] the benefit of worship, v4b—“We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, of your holy temple...”
23. Having been made a guest in God’s house, our Host prepares a feast for His tried travelers—for it is within His house they satisfy their souls with Christ...
24. John Gill—“by ‘the house’ of God we are to understand the church of God; and by ‘the goodness’ of it the provisions of grace in it, the word and ordinances, and the blessings of grace held forth in them, and especially Christ the bread of life, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed; of which true believers may eat, and do to full satisfaction...”
25. Matthew Henry—“God’s holy temple is his house; there he dwells, where his ordinances are administered...He keeps a good house. There is abundance of goodness in his house, righteousness, grace, and all the comforts of the everlasting covenant; there is enough for all, enough for each; it is ready, always ready; and all on free cost, without money and without price...”

### C. Unification

1. Here I refer to a benefit or purpose of worship that is often times overlooked or forgotten—within public worship the church is uniting in a collective sense...

2. They are joining their voices and uniting their hearts in praise—they are joining hands before Him in celebration of their common salvation...
3. John Murray—“The assembly for worship is one of the principal ways of giving expression to the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and to the communion of the saints with one another in the oneness of Christ’s body...”
4. Ps.95:1—“Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms...”
5. V6—“Oh 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...”
6. Notice [a] a unified worship, v1—“let us sing...let us shout...let us come...[v6] let us worship...let us kneel...”
7. Notice [b] a universal salvation, v1—“our salvation...[v6] our Maker...our God...we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand...”
8. There is a sense in which public worship provides us a foretaste of that eternal worship we shall offer before the throne for all eternity...
9. Thus throughout the NT we are exhorted, Heb.10:25—“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...”
10. Ernie Reisinger—“Public worship, then, is the collective exultation of the gathered church. In fact, worship is the primary purpose of the church. A worship service is not merely a gathering of individuals who sing some hymns and hear a sermon together. Rather, it is the corporate expression of the body of Christ. It is a unique and unified offering of adoration and honor to God our Savior...”

## II. Our attitude in worship

### A. Wholehearted sincerity

1. This I trust is most apparent, Jn.4:24—“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth...”
2. Not every person who comes to church, listens to the reading, preaching, and praying, and even joins in the singing, actually worships...
3. CHS—“Soul worship is the soul of worship, and if you take away the soul from the worship, you have killed the worship...”
4. Ps.111:1—“Praise the LORD! I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation...”
5. This is what separates the worship of the hypocrite with the worship of God’s people—whole-hearted sincerity...
6. Matt.15:7-9—“hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 8 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...”

### B. Awe-filled reverence

1. This as I mentioned this morning is at the heart of what the word “worship” means—“to bow down or prostrate oneself before God...”
2. While we may not physically and literally prostrate our bodies, we must come with our souls silenced before God...
3. Ps.89:5-7—“and the heavens will praise your wonders, O LORD; your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints. For who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around him...”
4. Notice [a] what we are to do, v7—“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him...”
5. God is to be feared or revered—to fear God is to know who God is—it is the knowledge of God brought to bear upon ourselves as redeemed sinners...

6. God is “greatly to be feared”—that is He is worthy of our deepest and most continual reverence, for He is in heaven and we are on earth...
7. Notice [b] where we are to do it—the latter part of v5—“in the assembly of the saints” v7—“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints...”
8. It is in the assembly of the saints that God is especially to be feared, for it is here that He is especially present, Ps.99:2—“the LORD *is* great in Zion, and He *is* high above all the peoples...”
9. Thus we must enter as Jacob—“how awesome *is* this place! This *is* none other than the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven...”
10. Notice [c] why we are to do it—in short we are to fear God because of who He is, faithful (v5), transcendent (v6), and mighty (v8)...

### C. Joyous adoration

1. Joy and Godly fear are two sides of the same coin—we come before God with a sense of His majesty and with the deepest sense of joy within our hearts...
2. Ps.118:22-24—“the stone *which* the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. 23 This was the LORD's doing; It *is* marvelous in our eyes. 24 This *is* the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it...” (cp. Acts 4:10-11)
3. I suggest to you there are fewer words within the entire Psalter that are more often quoted with less understanding than this passage...
4. Notice [a] a marvelous work of God, vv22-23—“the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD'S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes...”
5. What specifically is he referring to when he says in v23—“this was the LORD'S doing” but the establishment of Christ as the chief cornerstone at His resurrection...
6. Acts 4:10-11—“...Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified...God raised from the dead...This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone...”
7. The point being—the work referred to in v23 is the work of Christ's resurrection wherein He was given a name above every name...
8. Notice [b] a specific day of God, v24—“this is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it...”
9. This is the day the LORD has made [that is, this is the new covenant Sabbath or Lord's Day], we will rejoice and be glad in it...
10. Barns—“The Sabbath should be a day of joy, and not of gloom; it would be the happiest of all days to weary and jaded people everywhere, if they observed it aright. In a world of toil and sorrow, it is among the richest of God's blessings to people; it strengthens, refreshes, and cheers the heart of burdened and sorrowful man here; it lifts the soul to joyous contemplation of that eternal Sabbath where wearisome toll and sorrow shall be no more...”

Let me suggest a single help—prepare for public worship by daily private worship

1. Fewer things frighten me more than the thought that for some us, the only time we worship God is on the Lord's Day...
2. Monday through Saturday our minds and hearts are never taken up with the things of God until Sunday morning...
3. Oh my friends, if this is true of us, then we must confess that corporate worship with the people of God possesses little appeal to it...
4. And if this is true of us then we have no reason to assume that we have been chosen of God and caused to approach Him, to dwell within His courts...
5. If we can habitually come to God's house, and fail to satisfy ourselves with His goodness, then it may be we are finding our satisfaction elsewhere...
6. Thus I suggest this principle—to the degree that you satisfy yourself with God in private worship, will be your ability to glorify God in public worship...
7. Donald Whitney—“How is it possible to worship God publicly once each week when we do not worship Him privately throughout the week? Can we expect the flames of our worship of God to burn brightly in

public on the Lord's Day when they barely flicker for Him in secret on other days? Isn't it because we do not worship well in private that our corporate worship experience often dissatisfies us..."