

# ***Teaching Sound Doctrine***

## ***BUILDING BETTER WORSHIP Pt.1***

### **INTRODUCTION**

God has placed within man certain needs. While we generally think of air, fluids, and food, there are many other needs God has placed within man. One of the needs God placed within man is the need to worship. Thus, as one looks at the history of any society, he will find that the people worshiped something or someone. The Creator of the universe and man is the one who rightfully deserves our worship.

Jesus taught three great principles of worship when speaking to the woman at Jacob's well.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24).

He taught us that worship is to be directed to God the Father. Then that worship to the Father is to be done "in spirit and in truth" involves doing it with the right attitude and doing it according as God instructs us to do it.

### **WHAT IS WORSHIP**

*Worship* is from the Middle English word which means "worthiness, respect" and is defined, "reverence offered a divine being or supernatural power, also an act of expressing such reverence." The main word translated *worship* in the Old Testament carries the meaning "to bow down, prostrate oneself." It was a posture which would indicate reverence toward one considered superior. The primary word in the New Testament is *proskuneo* and literally means "to kiss toward." Arndt, Danker, and Bauer write that this word is: used to designate the custom of prostrating oneself before persons and kissing their feet or the hem of their garment, the ground...**to express in attitude or gesture one's complete dependence on or submission to a high authority figure, (fall down and) worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to** (882).

Zodhiates explains a little more in detail when he writes:

To worship, do obeisance, show respect, fall or prostrate before. Literally, to kiss toward someone, to throw a kiss in token of respect or homage. The ancient oriental (especially Persian) mode of salutation between persons of equal ranks was to kiss each other on the lips; when the difference of rank was slight, they kissed each other on the cheek; when one was much inferior, he fell upon his knees and touched his forehead to the ground or prostrated himself, throwing kisses at the same time toward the superior. It is this latter mode of salutation that Gr. writers express by *proskuneo*. In the NT, generally, to do reverence or homage to someone, usually by kneeling or prostrating oneself before him. In the Sept. it means to bow down, to prostrate oneself in reverence, homage (G4352).

In all the definitions of worship we have the idea expressed of showing respect to one whom we consider Superior. In connection with what Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, God desires for man to give Him respect, reverence, to give Him homage, or do obeisance to Him. This must be done in the proper way (“in truth”) and with the proper attitude (“in spirit”). In building better worship, all three aspects must be respected.

When one has a proper view of and attitude of God, he will worship Him in the proper way and attitude. The real problem with worship and why man does not worship God acceptably is man’s view of God.

## **JEHOVAH IS WORTHY OF WORSHIP**

### **Creator**

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). “For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it” (Exo. 20:11). God created the universe in which we now live. On each day of the creation week God was preparing a place for the crowning glory of His creation—man. God created a beautiful garden in which he placed man. Even though man fell and lost access to the Garden of Eden, we can still see the beauties of God’s creation. It speaks to the glory of God and that He is worthy of our worship. The twenty-four elders fell down before God to worship Him and said, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11). Later, John records that an angel flying in the midst of heaven was saying “with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (14:7). Jehovah is worthy to be worshiped because He created such a marvelous universe for our existence.

## **Sustainer**

God did not simply create the universe including man and then leave man to himself as the Deist holds. Instead not only did God create all things, He also sustains the existence of all things including man. Without God providing those things which are necessary, this world would cease to exist. The sweet singer of Israel wrote, “Thy righteousness *is* like the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast” (Psa. 36:6). David could have as easily said that our Lord preserves all things including man and beast. After the return from captivity, the people are gathered together:

Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said, Stand up *and* bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, *even* thou, *art* LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all *things* that *are* therein, the seas, and all that *is* therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee (Neh. 9:5-6).

They recognized that He was worthy to be worshiped because He preserves all things.

## **Omnipotent**

Another reason that Jehovah deserves worship is because of His omnipotence. Man is awed by power. Simply notice all the television shows that are clearly a demonstration of man’s power. The weightlifting events in the Olympics are designed purely to see how strong a person is. How many children and adults thrill as the historical accounts of Samson are told. Why? Because man is fascinated with power. Yet, if one was able to combine all the strength of all the people who have ever lived upon the earth, it would not come close to *touching* the great power of God. Isaiah would write, “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth” (40:26).

There are at least three ways we see the great power of God: (1) creative power, (2) sustaining power, and (3) recreative power, i.e., creating in man a new life. God was able out of nothing to create that which we see. Simply by speaking, things came into existence. “Through faith we understand that the

worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Heb. 11:3). Jeremiah was certainly correct when he writes, “Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, *and* there is nothing too hard for thee” (Jer. 32:17). What greater power could exist than to be able to simply say something and bring it into existence out of nothingness.

There is that aspect of God’s ability to sustain this universe which shows His great power also. This world which was created by the spoken Word of God must be sustained. That ability to sustain it takes as great a power as it would to create it.

We also observe God’s power in His ability to recreate or His ability to create in man a new life. Paul states: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:16-17). The Gospel is God’s power to save sinful man. It gives man the ability to live by faith, thus creating a new man in Christ. It was stated of Christ: “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). God is able to save all people and to create within them that new man. Paul would write to the Ephesians: “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:24) and repeated to the Colossians: “And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Col. 3:10). Through the power of the Gospel, God is able to recreate man into a new man. Paul is a perfect example of this as he was a leading persecutor of the church and was recreated into that new man to where he became persecuted. God’s spoken word brought about the creation of all things at the beginning, and God’s spoken Word, the Gospel, is able to bring about creation spiritually.

Next week we will look God's nature and continue these lessons.