

♪ Worship Notes ♪

Volume 1, Number 10 ♪ October 2006

THEME: A Living Sacrifice

A LIFE AND LIFESTYLE OF WORSHIP

Jesus on Lifestyle Worship

In John 4 Jesus makes a significant statement about the nature of worship under His Lordship. Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that “an hour is coming when neither *in* this mountain nor *in* Jerusalem will you worship the Father” (v.21), but rather “an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father *in* spirit and *in* truth” (v.23). Jesus’ redirection of the preposition *in* from speaking of external location to internal focus is a grammatical shift of enormous spiritual significance: He is saying that He is changing the rules: no longer is it a matter of *where* or *when* you worship, but *how* you worship. No longer is there a geographical center for the people of God. Worship is now to be everywhere and at every time. As has been said, this is not a devaluing of times and places for corporate worship, but rather a hallowing of *every* time and *every* place as suitable for worshipping God.

Paul on Lifestyle Worship

Paul develops this thought further in Romans 12:1. As an appropriate response (“Therefore”) to all the wonderful “mercies of God” he has been explicating in chapters 1–11 of his epistle, he enjoins believers to present as their “bodies,” that is their entire lives, to God

living sacrificial gifts of thanksgiving. There is to be no sacred/secular compartmentalization in the lives of Christians. Paul reminds us elsewhere that we have been “bought with a price,” and again the fitting response is to “glorify God in your bodies” (1 Cor 6:20). As “temples of the Holy Spirit,” both individually (1 Cor 6:19) and corporately as the church (1 Cor 3:16), the place of worship is always present with us, and the time for worship is always now: “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31).

Biblical Principles of Worship*

#8 Worship is the response of our entire lives to God.

Implications for Us

Since God’s “divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3), that means that we are in possession of all that is necessary for a life and lifestyle of worship. Through the mediating ministry of the living

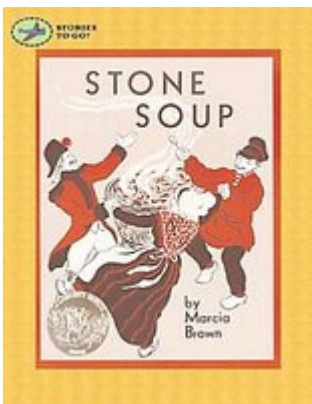
Christ (see *Worship Notes* July 2006) and the enabling, empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit within us (see *Worship Notes* August 2006), we can enter into the presence of the Father—anywhere, any time. Each believer has a responsibility to cultivate his or her own life of worship (cf. Gal 5:25; Heb 12:14).

This crucial perspective has huge implications for what we do when gather for corporate worship. It is *not* the responsibility of the pastor or the worship leader to supply or actuate worship for the people of God (only Christ in the power of the Spirit can do that anyway, as we have seen), but merely to facilitate its corporate expression. We should

not be in the habit of coming to the service with an empty spiritual “tank,” hoping to get it filled in order to be able to face the week *ahead*; the ideal for Christian living is to come to church *out of a week* of daily worship throughout all of life, and then to join hearts and voices together in a corporate expression borne out of the fullness of our spirits. Sunday should be less a preparation for our week, than our week a preparation for Sunday! It is true that sometimes we may indeed come spiritually empty and dry; and God in His grace will meet us in our need, and refresh and restore our spirits, and send us into our week with a renewed passion for God (see Bob Kauflin’s article below for more on this perspective). We often need to be reminded, by gathering with like-minded believers, of what is the true center of our lives (since that is constantly being challenged out in the workaday world). But our goal should be to come to church with a heart full of love and devotion to God from walking with Him throughout the week.

A Parable

In the children’s story *Stone Soup* (by Marcia Brown [reprint edition: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2005]) three soldiers are returning home from the war. They approach a village, but the villagers, seeing them coming, scurry to hide all of their food, because there is a shortage and they do not want to have to share with outsiders. They tell the soldiers that they have no food to give them. The soldiers, being rather shrewd fellows, tell the villagers that they will make some stone soup, and ask simply for a large kettle filled with water.



They choose several large, round stones and add them to the kettle, with the curious villagers looking on. Then the soldiers remark, “This soup should be excellent; but if we only had a couple of potatoes, it would be even better.” One of the villagers says, “I think I might have a few to spare,” and goes off to retrieve some potatoes from her stash. The soldiers add these to the pot, taste the soup, and say: “Wonderful! Now if we just had a few carrots . . .” and someone runs off and gets some. The same happens with onions, and cabbage, and so forth, until a hearty soup has been prepared. The soldiers invite the villagers to join with them in their feast, and the villagers are amazed that such a marvelous soup could be made with just *stones!*

Sunday should be less a preparation for our week, than our week a preparation for Sunday.

The Point

In our corporate worship, our rituals, hymns, anthems, even our sermons are like those stones—they are nothing that particularly impresses God: they’re just a framework, a skeleton. What makes it special and makes it *worship* is when our members come and add to the pot from

what’s been stored up in their hearts during a week of worshiping and walking with God, a week of loving God and cherishing and savoring His glory—*then* we are ready to worship God *together*. When our corporate adoration is the overflow of *many* hearts rejoicing in the goodness and greatness of God, which the Spirit can then energize and transform into something far more than the sum of the parts—*then* our congregational worship will truly be a nourishing and invigorating feast for the people of God, and—more importantly—a fragrant aroma to the God of glory, who delights in the worship of His people.

**Biblical Principles of Worship*
(treating twelve principles, of which the eighth is dealt with here) may be downloaded at www.worr.org/articles.

TEXTS

on Whole-Life Worship

(among many others, of course)

Psalm 1:1-3 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Matthew 22:37-40 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

1 Corinthians 6:19b-20 You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:21 . . . submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Philippians 4:12-13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Hebrews 13:16 Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

*(most of these are taken from *Lifestyle Worship: How to Bring Worship into Your Daily Life*
By John Garmo [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993])*

QUOTABLES

Worship as a Lifestyle

“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering.”

(Romans 12:1 in Eugene Peterson, *The Message*)

“Have your heart right with Christ, and He will visit you often, and so turn weekdays into Sundays, meals into sacraments, homes into temples and earth into heaven.”

(C. H. Spurgeon, cited in Ben Patterson, *Serving God: The Grand Essentials of Work and Worship*, 147)

“The entire worship life of the Old Testament has been radically refocused onto Jesus himself and has become a radically *spiritual* thing, as opposed to an *external* thing. The external is still important, but now the spiritual is so radically pervasive that virtually all of external life, not just church life, is the expression of worship. ‘Present your bodies as living sacrifices which is your reasonable service of worship’ (Rom 12:1). That’s all the time and everywhere. ‘Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God’ (1 Cor 10:31) all the time, everywhere.”

(John Piper, [“Our High Priest is the Son of God Perfect Forever”](#) [Hebrews 7:26–8:5], sermon 12/8/96)

“How do we become intentional in worship? How do we become participants rather than spectators? [A] friend’s mother taught her to go to church with ‘a full basket, not an empty one.’” (Karen Burton Mains, “Introduction” to the hymnal *Sing Joyfully!* [Tabernacle Publishing Co., 1969], 5)

“Worship, embracing both adoration and action, is nothing but the outworking of God-centeredness in the individual and corporate life of God’s people.”

(D. A. Carson, *Worship: Adoration and Action*, 18)

“I believe that we have enough how-to-do-it books and not enough reflection on worship as a total biblical idea. Worship is a subject that should dominate our lives seven days a week. Vitality and meaning will not be restored to Christian gatherings until those who lead and those who participate can recover a biblical perspective on their meetings, seeing them in relation to God’s total plan and purpose for his people.”

(David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship*, 21)

“Worship is not just a matter of regularly paying our dues by attending weekly rituals; it is ‘a soundtrack for the rest of life, the words and music and actions of worship inside the sanctuary playing the background as we live our lives outside, in the world,’ as Thomas Long writes in *Testimony*. Long says, ‘The words of worship are like stones thrown into the pond; they ripple outward in countless concentric circles, finding ever fresh expression in new places in our lives.’” (Nathan Bierma, “Worshipful Service” in *Perspectives*

<http://www.perspectivesjournal.org/2006/06/essay-service.html>)

“In the New Testament, all the focus is on the reality of the glory of Christ, not the shadow and copy of religious objects and forms. . . . Almost every worship tradition we have is culturally shaped rather than Biblically commanded. The command is a radical connection of love and trust and obedience to Jesus Christ in all of life.” (John Piper, [“Our High Priest is the Son of God Perfect Forever”](#) [Hebrews 7:26–8:5], sermon 12/8/96)

“True worship which God desires embraces the whole of the Christian’s life from day to day. . . . Any cultic worship which is not accompanied by obedience in the ordinary affairs of life must be regarded as false worship, unacceptable to God.” (C. E. B. Cranfield, *Commentary on Romans*, on 12:1)

“Worship is both an event and a lifestyle in which believers, by grace, center their mind’s attention and their heart’s affection on the Lord, humbly glorifying God in response to His greatness, His mighty acts, and His Word.”

(Dave Hall, *Worship from the Nations*, www.wfn.hu)

“If you do not know the presence of God in your office, your factory, your home, then God is not in the church when you attend. I have come to believe that when we are worshipping if the love of God is in us and the Spirit of God is breathing praise within us, all the musical instruments in heaven are suddenly playing in full support. . . . It is my experience that our total lives, our entire attitude as persons, must be toward the worship of God.”

(A. W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?* 123)

“ ‘Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God’ (2 Cor 7:1). Paul uses transformed cultic language to indicate that a sanctified lifestyle is the ‘worship’ appropriate to the new temple. Reverence for God is to be expressed by living differently from those around us.”

David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship*, 203.

“‘Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God’ (Cor 10:31). And ‘whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father’ (Col. 3:17). This is the form of worship commanded in the New Testament. . . . But the New Testament uses those greatest of all worship sentences without any reference to worship services. They describe life.”

(John Piper, [“Worship God!”](#) [Revelation 22:8-9], sermon 11/9/97)

“The way wholly loving God works out under the old covenant is in heartfelt obedience to the terms of that covenant and that includes the primary place given to the cultus with all its import and purpose in the stream of redemptive history; and the implications of this outworking include

distinctions between the holy and the common, between holy space and common space, between holy time and common time, between holy food and common food. The way wholly loving God works out under the new covenant is in heartfelt obedience to the terms of that covenant and here the language of the cultus has been transmuted to all of life, with the implication, not so much of a desacralization of space and time and food, as with a sacralization of all space and all time and all food.”

(D. A. Carson, *Worship by the Book*, 40)

“So our spiritual worship is to come to God each day and say: ‘O God, there is nothing that I want more than to approve what is most worthy, and value what is most valuable, and treasure what is most precious and admire what is most beautiful and hate what is most evil and abhor what is most ugly. I reckon myself dead to all that is unspiritual and worldly and deadening to my soul. Renew me, O my God. Awaken spiritual capacities of right assessment.’

And then we say, ‘And take me, body and soul, and make me the instrument of your glory in the world. Let the renewal you are working from within show on the outside. This is my spiritual worship. To show the world that you are my all-satisfying treasure.’

There it is. . . . The renewed mind perceives and approves and treasures and cherishes the will of God (and thus transforms all of life), because it first and foremost perceives and approves and treasures and cherishes God.

And doing the will of God is the outshining of God in his glory. ‘Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good deeds and give glory to your father in heaven’ (Matthew 5:16). All of life is the outshining of what you truly value and cherish and treasure. Therefore all of life is worship. Either of God, or something else.

Therefore be transformed in the renewal of your mind. Cherish God in all his works and all his ways. Reckon the old mind dead and offer yourself to God as a living sacrifice that he may put you on display by the outshining of his worth and his value in your life. Worship him with your life.”

(John Piper, [“All of Life as Worship”](#) [Romans 12:1-2], sermon 11/30/97)

GUEST ARTICLE

Worship as Preparation for Life

Bob Kauflin

It's easy to think of the time we spend in congregational worship as unrelated to everyday life. Have you ever experienced a moving time of worship, only to find yourself immediately after the service griping about the lunch menu or coveting someone's new car? How quickly we forget being in the presence of God.

The truth is, we're always in the presence of God. We just don't realize it. The time we spend praising God together is not meant to be an escape from reality, or a time to forget about our troubles and our cares. Quite the opposite. When we worship God, we are gaining a truer picture of reality than we'll ever have. That is the time to look directly at our problems and say, "God is bigger than you!" We aren't meant to forget our troubles; we're meant to overcome them by the Word and the Spirit of God.

Our experience within corporate worship is intended to prepare us for what we do outside that time. Singing a song about the gospel reaching the ends of the earth might spur us on to share Christ with a co-worker the next morning. A fresh awareness of our sins being forgiven might lead to us spend the week meditating on a passage such as Romans 3:21-31.

We might even seek to confront the sin of complaining in our lives! Proclaiming with our church on Sunday that "nothing compares to the promise I have in You" can help us at other times to battle idolatrous desires for food, approval and illicit pleasure. All of these post-meeting responses are vital goals of corporate worship. One reason we worship together is to become more like Jesus!

In reality, many of us would acknowledge it doesn't always work that way. Times of corporate worship seem heavenly, yet we too quickly descend to the earthly realms. I believe that's due in part to how we recall times of corporate worship. We tend to think about how we felt, how the music sounded, what the worship leader was wearing or how nice the new flower arrangement looked. Such elements can certainly encourage us, but they have no lasting authority or effect in our lives.

The ability of corporate worship to affect the way we live will be greatly enhanced as we reflect on the TRUTHS God revealed to us about Himself during that time, rather than the mere trappings of worship. This is how times of congregational praise prepare us for life. As we exalt, encounter and respond to God, we are reminded that He is the God over our circumstances, our emotions, our finances and our lives. He is personally involved with us and has promised that "goodness and love would follow us all the days of our lives." Not just when we're singing, but "all the days."

For each of us, may the result of corporate worship be a God-centered life.

Bob is the Director of Worship Development for [Sovereign Grace Ministries](#) (see their music resources), and also serves as a pastor and worship leader at [Covenant Life Church](#) in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

He writes a daily worship blog, [Worship Matters](#).

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

chronicling unfortunate takes on worship

Marketing worship, part 1

CD title:



IN HIS PRESENCE
LIVE!

. . . is there any other way ???

ONLINE RESOURCES

Worship Blogs

(click on links)

[Doxologue](#) (*Eric Schumacher, Kevin Larson, David Ward*)

[Isaiah Six](#) (*Gregory Pittman*)

[Worship Matters](#) (*Bob Kauflin*)

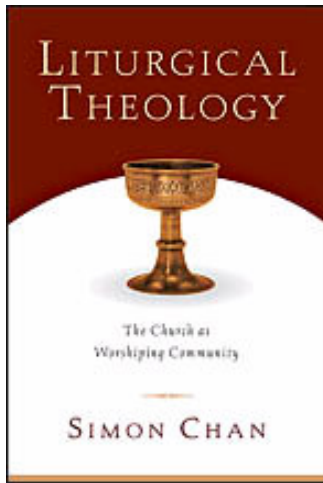
[Worship Weblog](#) (*Calvin Institute of Christian Worship*)

Newsletters

[Monday Morning Email](#) (*Bob Burroughs*)

[Ethnic Worship and Arts Focus](#)

BOOK NOOK



Liturgical Theology *The Church as Worshiping Community* by Simon Chan (InterVarsity Press, 2006)

Chan is an Assemblies of God minister with a Ph.D. from Cambridge who teaches at Trinity Theological College in Singapore. His varied background brings real depth and breadth to his perspective.

Chan maintains that we cannot fully comprehend the richness of worship without basing it firmly in the doctrine of the church, and that conversely we cannot understand the church apart from its life of worship. He rightly points out that many evangelicals today have a very weak understanding of what it means to be the body of Christ; rather, they succumb to “a reduction of the church’s role to a largely sociological one of a service provider catering to individual believers’ needs” (p. 24). This is of course one of the besetting sins of

American evangelicals in our age: treating church attendance as a sort of “window shopping” rather than as an expression of an organic spiritual relationship to one another in the body (1 Cor 12:12-14); when one grows weary of the selection or stock at one venue, the “worshopper” is off to find another merchandiser more to his or her liking.

Chan’s answer to this problem is that evangelicals need a more thorough grounding in and acceptance of “the meaning of the church and its liturgy as found *in the larger Christian tradition* [italics mine]” (15). And so he explores the twin themes of church and liturgy, drawing as he does upon an impressive breadth of scholarly reflection, including from Catholic and Orthodox writers. That is at the same time the book’s greatest strength and its greatness weakness: there are fully 570 endnotes, which themselves take up thirty pages; yet the Scripture Index covers only *one page*—he averages less than one biblical reference per page through the 160-page text. Chan, as so many of a liturgical bent, gives to early church history and practice great weight, in spite of (or because of) the paucity of New Testament data on worship forms and procedures. While the writings of the early Church fathers are indeed important witnesses to the practices of the church in their day, they are not necessarily normative or infallible guides, and there are many aspects of their teachings which we would hardly want to accept uncritically. Yet Chan goes so far as to say, “If Christ is the Truth, then tradition is the extension of the Truth. . . . The church as the living Tradition embodies a living and developing dogma. . . . The development of dogma does not lead the church astray (as evangelicals fear).” If that is consistently true, one wonders what need there was for the Reformation! (And indeed he quotes the Reformers very rarely.)

Chan’s chapters on the church and those on the traditional liturgy are where he leans most heavily on authorities other than the Scriptures. And his high view of tradition is coupled with a highly sacramental view of the Lord’s Supper: “the church becomes the one body of Christ by eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ” (p. 29). The Eucharist is in his view the climax of the liturgy, and therefore of course an indispensable weekly practice.

Chan is convinced that the traditional liturgy is the highest and only valid form of worship for Christians, and that evangelicals ignore it to their spiritual peril. However, he *assumes*, rather than *proves*, that his historical model is “the true way of worship,” and that “a normative liturgy is the true way of becoming church” (p. 62). This is certainly a valid point of view, yet Chan has not made his case strongly enough to resonate with many besides those already convinced!

On the other hand, his chapter on “The Worship of the Church” is wonderfully insightful (as it deals more with biblical and theological foundations than with his preferred outworking of them in the liturgy); this chapter is well worth careful study and reflection, as is the chapter on “Active Participation.” Chan has provided a valuable service by his thorough and thoughtful treatment of *the church as essentially a worshiping community*, and of *worship as the church’s essential activity*. The book may be profitably read as an astute exposition of one important stream of Christian thought on these issues.

WORSHIP EVENTS



January 2-4, 2007
Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
www.musicexplosion.org

(see Bob Burroughs' "[Monday Morning Email](#)" for a \$25 discount)

CALVIN SYMPOSIUM ON



January 25-27, 2007
Calvin College
Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.calvin.edu/worship/sympos

EUROPE WORSHIP LINK 2007 Conference

April 18-21, 2007 Malenovice, Czech Republic
for more information please see ewl.shorturl.com
or contact Ron Man at RMan@gemission.com

COMING NEXT MONTH:

Heart Worship



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