



“The Correct Attitude of Heart!!!” That is the definition of true worship. Oh, if you look up the definition of worship in the Hebrew and the Greek you will find different definitions. I am not simply talking about definitions but rather I am referring to what the concept of what **true worship** truly is. It is an attitude of the heart!!!

If we do look in a Bible dictionary and we look up the term “worship,” as mentioned, you will get a Hebraic definition, in the Old Testament, and a Greek definition, in the New Testament, for the word “worship” as used in the scriptures. It is interesting to note that the word “worship” is first used not until Genesis 22:5. It is first used, as we see Abraham and Isaac going forth to “worship” the Lord, alone, up to the mountain known as Mount Moriah.

It is interesting to note that we do not see the word “worship” used prior to that in our Bibles. However, that does not mean that worship was not discussed or actually performed prior to the time when we read of Abraham and Isaac going up to the mountain to worship unto the Lord. Actually, the concept of “true worship” is in the very beginning of the Bible, as we will see. But first, let us review what the definitions of the term “worship” are in both, the Hebrew text and the Greek text.

In Genesis 22:5, the Hebrew word for “worship” used in this passage is “šāḥâ” which is pronounced, “shaw-khaw.” It literally means to bow down (literally fall down flat) before someone in total reverence, honor and respect. It is acknowledging that the one you are bowing down to is your superior (greater than you). It is referring us to the fact that the “One” who is greater than us is Yahweh, the Lord God almighty.

The Greek definition is used in the New Testament. It is the word "*proskyneō*," which literally means to turn towards and to acknowledge with a deep reverence and respect to the one you are giving your total attention to. It also means “to adore,” to "kiss towards" and to "draw near to" the one that you desire to be with and to give all your praise and honor to. Obviously, for the true believer, it is referring that we are to give all the praise and honor to the Living God.

In the Greek definition, it also, figuratively, refers to being, "like a dog licking its master's hand." This gives a better understanding of what true worship is. It is not simply a word but rather it is, or at least it should be, an **attitude of the heart** that is then expressed through **actions** done by an individual towards the one they are choosing to acknowledge and give all their attention and all the glory to.

One of the great things about dogs is that no matter what happens, they are still waiting for you at the door. They always want to be with you and they always want to acknowledge you as their caretaker and the one that they truly love. That is what the worship of our God should truly entail. It is acknowledging the source of every good thing in your life – God.

Having said all of that, we must grasp and understand, as we stated previously, that the concept of true worship began much earlier than that of which we read of concerning Abraham and Isaac. True worship was established way before then. It was established “in the beginning” with Adam and Eve and then re-taught to us with Cain and Abel. Unfortunately, true worship, even though established by God early on, was never truly achieved and it was ultimately perverted by Adam and Eve and then their son Cain. Let’s see...

We all know the account of what took place with Adam and Eve. I don’t think I really need to go over that again. We can read the account of their “fall” in Genesis 3. We know that they disobeyed God’s one and only commandment – do not eat from the “tree of good and evil.” We all know the account. They disobeyed God and yielded to the enemy and chose to eat of the fruit of that tree of good and evil.

Yes, this was a direct action of disobedience against the command of God. However, it was even more. It was an action of disrespect towards the One who they were to honor, revere, and truly bow down to. Yes, it was an action of disobedience but it also was an action that was totally opposite to what the aspect of true worship is all about. Yes, Adam and Eve disrespected and disobeyed God by eating the fruit from that tree, but they also did something else.

Adam and Eve chose to change the focus of their worship, their honor and respect, from their Creator, God, not just to the devil, but it was that they chose to do what they wanted and ultimately chose to worship themselves. That was the thought that the serpent had deposited in their mind. Yes, it was deceitfully done by the wiles of the devil. Yet they believed those lies of the devil. They believed that they could be their own god; that they could know good and evil and therefore be the master over themselves.

That sounded so good to them. After all, they believed the deception that God was holding back on them. They believed the lie of the devil that God was not totally honest with them and that He was holding something great back from them. They believed and acted on the lie that they could now become their own god. Therefore, they rejected the true God and they believed and desired to be their own god. That is what it was really all about when they ate the fruit.

Yes, it was disobedience. However, it was actually an act of dishonoring God and choosing to change their focus of their worship from the true God to themselves. That is the danger of misunderstanding what true worship is. The worst part of it all was that, when God came immediately to help them to recognize their actions, they refused to “own up to it.” They chose to not truly repent of not only their disobedience but actually they also chose not to “own up” for their actions of taking their true worship for their God and choosing to worship themselves.

Their actions are “textbook.” They blamed God. They blamed each other. They blamed the serpent. What they failed to do was to take responsibility for their own lack of true obedience and true worship to and for the Lord. It became all about them. Hmmm.... Could that be what we may be doing, today, when we say we are worshiping God...? Are we truly worshiping God or are we making it all about ourselves? Hmmm.....

Let’s take another look from the beginning of the Bible where God is showing us what true worship is without even mentioning the word “worship.” I am referring to the very next section of scripture which is found in Genesis 4. This section tells us about Cain and Abel.

We see in Genesis 4:2 that Cain was a “*tiller of the ground*” and that Abel was a “*keeper of sheep*.” We are told in verses 3 and 4 that both, Cain and Abel had brought “*an offering to the Lord*.” In other words, they both came to “worship” their God. Cain brought an offering from the fruit of the ground. It was the only offering he could bring. After all, Cain was not a “*keeper of sheep*.” Abel brought his offering which was a lamb, the “*firstling of the flock*.”

We see in Genesis 4, that God accepted Abel’s offering but that He did not accept Cain’s offering. Now, we are told by some and taught that it was because the “*firstling*,” a lamb, represented the sacrifice that Jesus would make on the cross a few thousand years later. This is very much true. However, I believe there is more to this account.

No where up to this time, are we told, nor were Cain and Abel told, of anything concerning what an acceptable offering to God would be. We know that God had clothed Adam and Eve with “*coats of skins*.” We are not told what kind of skins these were. We assume that they were from a sheep or lamb, but we are not specifically told. However, we must see that it was God who made and brought these “coats” for Adam and Eve to wear to cover the shame of their sin.

When God accepted Abel’s offering it was not because it was a better offering than what Cain brought. Cain had brought the best of what he had unto God. The Bible tells us the God had “respect,” or in other words, God accepted Abel’s offering but God did not have “respect,” God did not accept, Cain’s offering. (Genesis 4:4,5) So why was it not accepted by God?

I believe that it was not necessarily the offering that God was receiving. They both gave what they had. I believe God was looking and saw what the real attitude of their heart was in the giving of their offerings. Who were they really worshiping? If we keep reading we will see that it was that very concept that God would try to teach Cain and ultimately us, today.

We see that Cain got angry. However, it is at this point that we see the love of God towards His creation. He asked Cain “point blank,” “*Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?*” Cain’s anger was undoubtedly rooted in pride. He couldn’t bear that his brother’s offering was acceptable to God and his was not.

And there it was!!! That was Cains' problem. His worship of God was not rooted in his love for God but rather it was rooted in how good his own offering would be. It was rooted in himself. It was all about how good he was and not about acknowledging how good God is.

To Cain, it was his own goodness and the pride of his own goodness that he wanted to express to God. It was all about him. That is what Cain brought to God but it was not a correct attitude of heart that leads to that true worship of our God.

Why was Cain angry? Why did his countenance fall? God just doesn't abandon Cain but rather He goes and tries to get Cain to understand his problem – not God's problem – it was his own problem. He tells Cain what the problem really was and ultimately, God tells everyone who reads this passage of scripture what the problem could be with our worship of Him.

God makes a most powerful statement. He tells Cain in Genesis 4:7, *"If thou do well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou do not well, **sin lies at the door**. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."* He tells Cain right up front that if your worship is not accepted by God that it is not God's problem. It is ours. The problem is that there is sin at the doorway of our heart instead of actual true worship!!!

We must recognize this immediately. If we do not recognize it and deal with it immediately, it could affect our relationship with our God. God then says to Cain, *"And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."* In other words God was telling Cain and us today, that sin is always at the "door" of our heart. It is up to each of us to keep it out of our heart. We can prevent sin from ruling over us by and if, we allow God to be our God. Without God as our master, we will be caught up in, and ultimately become, slaves to sin.

Unfortunately, as we all know, Cain did not heed the warning of God. He allowed sin to enter in because he did not repent of what was truly in his heart – pride. He just could not let it go.

We know that in the following verses of Genesis 4, that Cain killed Abel and then lied to God about it. Cain fell into the grips of sin, which is the total opposite of true worship. Everything he did from that time on was "cursed."

The curse upon Cain was great. Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden because of their sin (Genesis 3:24). Now, we see that Cain would find no resting-place on all the earth. Cain became “*a fugitive and a vagabond.*” A “fugitive” because he was running from his guilt of murdering his brother. He also became a “vagabond” or we can say he was a “restless wanderer.” Cain was banished from the society of mankind. He would lead a nomadic life. The “curse” that Cain reaped was a life of homelessness, insecurity, uncertainty, and restlessness.

That is the ultimate affect on an individual if the true worship of their heart is not for God. Remember, true worship is much, much more than the songs we sing or the things we do in church or other times. It is the **attitude of the heart**. If worship becomes anything other than for “an audience of One,” as Michael Card once said, then it is not **true** worship. It must be all about and for our God!!!

It is vital for us to see that in both of these first accounts in the Bible, Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel, we do not see the word “worship” used in the text. However, it is the crux of both of these accounts. We must grasp the fact that obedience and true worship are linked together—they go hand in hand. True worship was perverted from the beginning. But... Thank God for Jesus. Jesus came to restore “true worship” and the ability to enter into the true worship of our God.

John 4:23, 24 Jesus tells us, “*But the hour comes, and **now is**, when the **true worshipers** shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*” Notice, Jesus does not mention anything here about music, song, dance or anything. Why? It is because true worship is all about having a **correct attitude of heart**. A heart that simply loves God, the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus teaches us that the true worshiper worships God “...*in spirit and in truth.*” Now, through a “born again” spirit that has been made new through Jesus Christ, that new spirit can now freely worship God because He is “Spirit.” Our worship is now “spirit to Spirit.” This is referring to the “whole heart” of an individual. Unless there is a born again spirit involved which has a real passion and love, true love for God, there is no true worship.

The true worshiper must worship God “...*in truth*.” This means knowing who our God truly is. We must realize that God loves us not because of what we do but simply because of who we now are through the blood of Jesus – a child of God!!! We must get that.

It is simply because of Jesus and what He did and not because of anything we do. The term "true" also means to be "real." Is our worship real or do we do things out of ritualism and format? Only each of us, individually, knows the true answer to that. Hmmm.....

That is why we can and should desire to simply just worship our God – with our heart. Yes, we will do things but those things, if it is true worship, come from our heart and my worship is all about honoring, respecting and revering God for who He is – God!!!

That is the key to true worship. Where is the heart? What is the true attitude of the heart? Do we truly worship God “as a dog licking its master’s hand?” That may seem a little weird to some of us. However, that is what true worship really means. God is my Master. God is my everything!!!

True worship comes from a heart that loves and worships God for who He is, not for what you want or for what you get out of it. It is to know that you never did and still do not earn God's approval or acceptance by worshipping Him. That has already been done totally through the blood of Jesus. It must be pure and totally for and unto Him just because He is your God.

Matthew 5:8 tells us that those that worship with a pure heart shall see (experience) God in all His fullness. We must realize that the more we know about God - the more we turn to Him and appreciate and love Him. The more we appreciate and love our God - the deeper and more intimate our worship will become. The deeper and more intimate our worship of the Living God is - the more God is truly glorified in and through each of us.

It is all about the having the correct attitude of heart!!