

# The Nature Of Worship

## *Kevin Kay*

**Text:** Jn. 4:19-24; Rom. 12:1-2

### Introduction

- I. When Jesus conversed with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, He revealed to her **several truths** about worship that we all need to understand Jn. 4:19-24
  - A. Unlike old covenant worship, new covenant worship is not associated with a **particular place** (v. 20-21)
    1. God ordained that the Israelites worship Him wherever He established **His name** (Dt. 12:5-14), and He eventually established His name in **Jerusalem** (cf. 1 Ki. 9:3; 2 Chr. 6:6; 7:12; Psa. 78:68-69)
    2. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, the **Samaritans** built a **temple** on **Mt Gerizim** to rival the temple at Jerusalem
      - a. Even after the Gerizim temple was destroyed by **John Hyrcanus** (ca. 129/128 BC), the Samaritans **continued worshipping** on that mountain (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13:9:1:254-256)
    3. Thus, there was a **controversy** between the Jews and the Samaritans about the **place of worship**
      - a. Since the Samaritans **accepted only the Pentateuch** and rejected the rest of the OT, they argued that God should be worshipped on **Mt. Gerizim**, because in the **Samaritan Pentateuch** (Dt. 27:4), Joshua is instructed to erect a shrine on that mountain
        - 1) Note: The Masoretic text reads "**Mount Ebal**" instead of "Mount Gerizim"
    4. But Jesus says that new covenant worship will not be confined to **any particular place**
  - B. It's possible to "worship what you **do not know**" (v. 22a)
    1. Jesus clearly tells the Samaritan woman that Samaritan worship was **ignorant**, and Jewish worship was **informed**. Therefore, Jesus clearly implies that the Samaritans were **wrong**, and the Jews were **right**
      - a. The fact that the Samaritans had "**their arguments**" to support their view did not change this fact
    2. Man can **worship incorrectly** if he worships the **wrong object**
      - a. **The host of heaven** [i.e. sun, moon, stars] (Dt. 4:19)
      - b. **Idols** (2 Ki. 21:21; Isa. 2:8)

- c. **gods** (Ex. 34:14; Psa. 81:9; Dan. 3:28)
  - d. **Satan** (Mt. 4:8-10 // Lk. 4:5-8; Rev. 13:4)
  - e. **Demons** (Rev. 9:20)
  - f. **Angels** (Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:9-10; 22:8-9)
  - g. **Men** (Acts 10:25-26)
  - h. **Civil Government** [e.g. the beast = Roman Empire] (Rev. 13:4, 8, 12; 14:9, 11; 16:2)
3. Man can **worship incorrectly** if he worships in the **wrong way** (cf. Dt. 12:2-4, 29-31)
- a. *Given O. Blakely could not have been more wrong when he said: “**You cannot worship wrongly.** That is like saying there is an angelic devil. You cannot do that. You cannot – **worship is right! It is never wrong.** It can be *vain*, but not *wrong*.”* (Bold emphasis added, *The Highers-Blakely Debate*, 1988, 106)
  - b. If man **cannot worship God wrongly**, why does the Bible talk about **different kinds of worship**?
    - 1) **Vain** worship (Mt. 15:7-9; Mk. 7:6-7)
    - 2) **Ignorant** worship (Acts 17:23)
    - 3) **Will-worship** (Col. 2:20-23)
    - 4) **True** worship (Jn. 4:23-24)
  - c. If man **cannot worship God wrongly**, why does the Bible **condemn** men for doing that very thing?
    - 1) **Cain** (Gen. 4:3-7)
    - 2) **Nadab and Abihu** (Lev. 10:1-3)
    - 3) **The Israelites** (Ex. 32:1-9)
    - 4) **King Saul** (1 Sam. 13:8-14)
    - 5) **Uzziah** (2 Chr. 26:16-23)
    - 6) **The Athenians** (Acts 17:22-23)
  - d. If man **cannot worship God wrongly**, why does the Bible talk about various kinds of **unacceptable worship**?
    - 1) The **wrong God** (Ex. 20:1-3; 32:8; 1 Cor. 10:20)
    - 2) The **right God** in the **wrong way** (Mt. 15:8-9; Jn. 4:23-24; 1 Pet. 2:5)

- 3) The **right God** in the **wrong relationship** (Eph. 3:21)
  - 4) The **right God** with the **wrong heart** (Mt. 15:8-9; Jn. 4:23-24)
  - 5) The **right God** with the **wrong life** (Isa. 1:10-20; Amos 8:4-7)
- C. It's also possible to "**know** what [you] worship" (v. 22b)
1. Man can know that he is worshipping the **right object**
  2. Man can know that he is worshipping in the **right way**
- D. "**True worshipers**" implies **false worshipers** (v. 23a)
1. So not everything that is **called "worship"** is **truly worship**
- E. True worshipers will worship **the Father** in spirit and truth (v. 23a)
1. "Worship" is not about **ME**; it's all about **HIM**. "Worship" is not about **the worshiper**; it's all about **God** (2 Ki. 17:36; 1 Chr. 16:29; Psa. 5:7; 29:2; 96:9; Rev. 4:9-11; 11:16-17; 14:6-7; 15:3-4)
- F. The Father is seeking "**such**" (i.e. "true worshipers") to worship Him (v. 23b)
1. God is **looking** for those who will **truly worship** Him
- G. There is a "**must**" to worship (v. 24)
1. *William Hendriksen*: "Genuine worshipers not only *will* worship the Father in spirit and truth; they *must* do so." ("John," BNTC, 1:168)
  2. "True worship" is not an "**If it feels good do it. Do it if it's what you feel**" kind of thing
- H. Those who worship God must worship in **spirit** and **truth** (v. 24)
1. Worshipping in **spirit** has been interpreted in various ways:
    - a. Worshipping with **the right attitude**
      - 1) *Charles Simeon*: "The thing which God expects, is, that there be a correspondence between **the feelings of our heart**, and **the offerings of our lips**...." (Bold emphasis added, *Horae Homileticae Vol. 13: Luke XVII to John XII*, 298-299)
    - b. Worshipping with **the inner man** (Rom. 1:9)
      - 1) "True worship happens when **a believer's spirit** is connected with **God's Spirit**, not when a believer is in any particular physical place like Jerusalem or Samaria." (TCBC, 470)
      - 2) *H. R. Reynolds*: "But 'spirit' here does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but to **the spirit of man**—that part of man's constitution through which he most especially bears the image of God, and with which the Divine

Spirit deals, and in which he dwells (Rom. 8:26).” (“The Gospel of St. John,” *The Pulpit Commentary*, 169)

3) *H. R. Reynolds*: “Only **the spirit of man** can really touch or commune with the Spirit of spirits....” (Bold emphasis added, “The Gospel of St. John,” *The Pulpit Commentary*, 170)

c. Worshipping in the **new realm** He has revealed

d. Worshipping through the **Holy Spirit**

e. Worshipping in **substance** as opposed to **shadow**

1) In the sense of **the spirit** vs. **the letter** (cf. Rom. 2:29; 7:6; 2 Cor. 3:6)

2) *H. R. Reynolds*: “The worship in spirit is worship contrasted with all mere **carnal concomitants**, all mere **shadows** of the good things to come, all mere **ritual**, all specialties of **place**, or **time**, or **sacrament**, or **order**.” (Bold emphasis added, “The Gospel of St. John,” *The Pulpit Commentary*, 169)

3) See Appendix A “John 4:24: In Spirit And In Truth” by Phil Roberts

4) See Appendix B “Worship in Spirit and Truth” by Darrell Hymel

2. Worshipping in **truth** has also been interpreted in various ways:

a. Worshipping in keeping with **God’s revealed will** (Jn. 17:17)

b. Worshipping with **proper motives** (Php. 1:18)

c. Worshipping God through **Jesus** (Jn. 14:6)

d. Worshipping in **substance** as opposed to **shadow**

II. With those **preliminary observations** behind us, there are **two main questions** that we want to answer as we consider “**The Nature Of Worship**”

A. First, “**What Is Worship?**”

B. Second, “**Is All Of Life Worship?**”

**Body:**

I. **What Is Worship?**

A. Our English word “**worship**” etymologically means “**worthship**”

1. *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*: “...**the honor, reverence, and homage paid to superior beings** or powers, whether men, angels, or God. The English word means ‘**worthship**,’ and denotes the worthiness of the individual receiving the special honor due to his worth.” (Bold emphasis added, p. 899)

2. *R. P. Martin*: “The origins of the word ‘worship’ aid in defining its meaning and usage. ‘Worship’ is from the Saxon/Old English word ‘weorthscipe’ or

‘weordhscipe,’ which means ‘**worship**’ or **worthiness**. This connotes actions motivated by **an attitude that reveres, honors, or describes the worth of another person or object**. In the context of the OT and NT, worship refers specifically to worship of the divine. Worship is seen as reverent devotion and service to God motivated by God’s saving acts in history.” (Bold emphasis added, ISBE, 4:1117-1118)

B. The predominant Hebrew and Greek terms for “**worship**” mean to show **reverence**, to **honor**, to make **obeisance**

1. See Appendix C: “Definitions Of Major Terms”

2. Note: The idea of **literal prostration** fell by the wayside in common Greek usage

a. **Etymology** does not determine **current meaning** (See D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 28-33)

b. See Appendix D: “*Proskuneo* And Literal Prostration”

c. In the NT, **falling down** is often distinguished from **worshipping** (*proskuneo*). People **fell down** and then they **worshipped**

1) Wise men (Mt. 2:11)

2) Jesus (Mt. 4:9)

3) Cornelius (Acts 10:25)

4) Unbeliever (1 Cor. 14:25)

5) 24 elders (Rev. 4:10; 5:14; 11:16)

6) Angels, 4 living creatures, & 24 elders (Rev. 7:11)

7) 4 living creatures & 24 elders (Rev. 19:4)

8) John (Rev. 19:10; 22:8)

d. There are times when people **worshipped** without any indication that they **literally fell down to the ground**

1) The **Canaanite woman** (Mt. 15:25)

2) The **apostles** (Mt. 28:17)

3) A **blind beggar** (Jn. 9:38)

4) Certain **Greeks** (Jn. 12:20)

5) The **Ethiopian eunuch** (Acts 8:27)

6) **Paul** (Acts 24:11)

- e. Furthermore, there are examples of worship in the NT where it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, for the worshipers to have literally **fallen down to the ground** in worship
- 1) **Jacob** “worshiped” (*proskuneo*) leaning on the top of his staff (Heb. 11:21)
  - 2) **The apostles** “worshiped” (*proskuneo*) Jesus in a boat (Mt. 14:33)
  - 3) **The apostles** worshiped” (*proskuneo*) Jesus as He ascended into heaven (Lk. 24:51-52)
  - 4) When **certain Greeks** came to “worship (*proskuneo*) at the feast” (Jn. 12:20), did they prostrate themselves before a person and kiss his feet, the hem of his garment, the ground? What person would that have been?
  - 5) Did the **Ethiopian eunuch** do all of this when he went to Jerusalem to worship (*proskuneo*) (Acts 8:27)?
  - 6) Just exactly how did the **rest of mankind** worship (*proskuneo*) demons (Rev. 9:20)?
  - 7) If **falling down** is inherent in the definition of *proskuneo*, then in these passages, the people involved **fell down** and **fell down**. Now, does that make good sense? I think not.

C. The way the term “**worship**” (*proskuneo*) is used in the NT tells us at least three things:

1. First, *proskuneo* is a **personal act** (Jn. 4:23)
  - a. No one can *proskuneo* **for me**
2. Second, *proskuneo* is a **conscious act** (Jn. 4:22; cf. Mt. 28:9)
  - a. It is not something you do **accidentally** or **without thinking**
3. Third, *proskuneo* is a **selfless act**
  - a. The focus of *proskuneo* is not on **the worshipper** at all; it is on **the object** of worship
  - b. Worship is the **adoring reverence** of the **creature** for the **Creator** (Rev. 4:8-11; 2 Chr. 7:3)
    - 1) *R. P. Martin*: “At its most elemental level, worship may be defined...as **‘the response of the creature to the eternal’** or **‘an acknowledgment of Transcendence.’** That response or acknowledgment is best interpreted and expressed in terms of adoration as **the worshipper, conscious of his or her creatureliness and finiteness, bows before**

**the transcendent and wholly other being who is God.**” (Bold emphasis added, ISBE, 4:1131)

- c. Worship is an act **self-abasement** before One who is greater than oneself (Rev. 1:10-18; cf. Gen. 24:52; Ex. 34:8; 2 Chr. 20:18; Neh. 8:6; Psa. 95:6)
- d. The emphasis in true worship is on **giving**, not **receiving**
- 1) *R. P. Martin*: “It [worship] is an exercise of the human spirit that is **directed primarily to God**; it is an enterprise undertaken not simply to **satisfy our need** or to **make us feel better** or to **minister to our aesthetic taste or social well-being**, but to **express the worthiness of God Himself**. And this observation corresponds with the derivation of the very word we use, which has, incidentally, no semantic equivalent in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, or any modern European language. As noted, ‘**worship**’ means by its Anglo-Saxon etymology ‘**worth-ship**.’....**To worship God is to ascribe to Him supreme worth**, for He is uniquely worthy to be honored in this way....” (Bold emphasis added, ISBE, Vol. 4, p. 1131)
  - 2) *John MacArthur, Jr.*: “**That consuming, selfless desire to give to God is the essence and the heart of worship**. It begins with the giving first of **ourselves**, and then of **our attitudes**, and then of **our possessions** -- until worship is **a way of life**.” (Bold emphasis added, *The Ultimate Priority*, p. 14)
  - 3) Those who complain that the **singing** is uninspiring; the **sermons** are dry, dull, and dusty; and the **service** is boring, etc. often do so, I’m convinced, because they have **missed the fundamental essence** of what worship is all about in the first place
  - 4) I fear that the **microwave mentality** of our **convenience-crazed society** has crept into the souls of Christians to such an extent that we want a “**fast-food faith**” and a “**remote-control religion**”
  - 5) Now, I am certainly not defending **sloppy singing**, **sorry sermons**, or **shabby services**, but when it comes to this thing called worship, if we are thinking more about **me**, **myself**, and **I** than we are about **God**, we have gotten **the cart before the horse**, and things will never be what they ought to be until we change that
- e. The emphasis in true worship is on **giving the best we have**, not the leftovers
- 1) Under the old covenant, **God demanded the very best** from His people: the firstlings of the flock, the firstborn of man and animal, the firstfruit of the harvest (Ex. 13:2, 11-16; 22:29; 23:19; 34:19-20; Num. 3:12-13, 40-45; 8:16-19; 18:12-13)
  - 2) *R. P. Martin*: “The other side of worship is derivative and secondary, but nonetheless important in its place. Because God is eminently praiseworthy and worshipful, those who address worship to God in an

act of acclamation and devotion will **want to offer their very best** and to demonstrate, by that offering of praise, prayer, and giving, the seriousness with which this religious exercise is regarded. If the theocentric aspect of worship heads the list of priorities, a second element will be that Christians intend by what they do in worship to **make a thoughtful, costly, and worthy offering**, appropriate to the high occasion and in line with the serious intent of their coming into the presence of the all-holy, all-gracious God....A flippant attitude to worship is obviously out of place and shows only that we have not yet even begun to understand what the worship of God is intended to be and do. Conversely, a deep sense of privilege in our approach to God will mean that **our worship will be ordered with careful thought** and thus will be acceptable to Him.” (Bold emphasis added, ISBE, Vol. 4, p. 1131)

- 3) When **David presumptuously numbered Israel** without God’s approval, He sent a plague and 70,000 men died. The prophet Gad came to David and instructed him to offer a sacrifice to appease the wrath of Jehovah. When David arrived at the threshing floor of Araunah, the site and the sacrifice was offered to David free of charge, but David refused, because he understood that **worship that costs nothing is worth nothing** (2 Sam. 24:24)
  - 4) The heart that says in effect: **“Let’s worship God, but let’s do it as quickly, conveniently, cheaply, and effortlessly as possible”** does not understand **the very essence** of what true worship is all about
  - 5) If God would not accept **“the leftovers”** from His people in the days of the prophets (Mal. 1:7-8, 10; cf. Amos 5:21; Hosea 6:4-6; Isa. 1:11-15), He will not accept them today
- f. It is only when we come to realize that worship is a **selfless act of giving** and when we **give selflessly** to our God that worship will be the **meaningful experience** for us that we and God want it to be
- 1) This is one of the **great paradoxes** of the spiritual life
  - 2) Just as we must **lose our life to find it** (Mt. 10:39) and **hate our life to keep it** (Jn. 12:25), and **humble ourselves to be exalted** (Mt. 23:12), so we must **give of ourselves completely and totally** to the worship of God to **receive abundant spiritual blessings** in return
  - 3) It was Jesus our Lord who said: **“Give, and it will be given to you:** good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you” (Lk. 6:38)
  - 4) No wonder Jesus said, **“It is more blessed to give than to receive”** (Acts 20:35), for it is only in giving that we really can receive

- 5) At the end of a worship service, the questions that each of us should ask are not:
- a) “**How do I feel?**”
  - b) “**Did I enjoy it?**”
  - c) “**Did I get anything out of it?**”
- 6) But rather:
- a) “**Was God pleased?**”
  - b) “**How did I do?**”
- 7) The person, whose primary concern is “**What’s in it for me?**” (Mal. 3:13-15), does not understand what worship is all about

## II. Is All Of Life Worship?

### A. That’s what some are saying

1. *Mike Root*: “**Worship is a life given in obedience to God.** It’s not a **when** or **where** proposition, but a **what**. **It’s what we are.** You can’t **go** to it or **leave** it, **dress** for it or from it, and you can’t **start** it or **stop** it. It’s not **formal** or **informal**, **horizional** [sic] or **vertical**, and it’s also not **high** or **low**, or **contemporary** or **traditional**. It doesn’t open and close with a prayer, and it doesn’t have a human leader or a special day. Worship is not corporate or private, and it isn’t ‘five acts,’ and it’s not so much **what we do to God** as **what we do for** (in the name of) God.” (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 115)
2. *Mike Root*: “The kind of worship God wants is a living sacrifice that manifests itself through unselfishness and compassion. **Every act of ‘doing good’ and every act of ‘sharing’** is a real, biblical act of **worship**.” (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 21-22)
3. *Mike Root*: “There is no place for segmenting our lives. We are either Christians all the way and all the time, or we’re not Christians. Worship is a spiritual quality, and what spiritual qualities are there that God only wants us to have some of the time? These are all-inclusive concepts that we choose to live by. For example, **to glorify God is to worship God**.” (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 121-122) ???
4. *Mike Root*: “We will have **Sunday-only Christians** as long as we have **Sunday-only worship**. *We have been fighting a losing battle because we have been proclaiming that **Christianity is something ‘you are,’** but **worship is something ‘you do.’** Nothing could be farther from the truth. **If you are a Christian you are worship to God.** The matter is not one of *doing* but rather of *being*.” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 20)*
5. *Mike Root*: “**Worship is a life given in obedience to Christ.** At one time worship was the act of going to the temple and making a sacrifice, but in Christ,

we sacrifice ourselves. **Our lives become worship to God.**” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 20)

6. *Mike Root*: “*We have done a terrible disservice to worship when we confine it to a passive, localized and selective gathering and time. **Worship is a ‘living sacrifice’ and that life is constant.** With every beat of a heart that is living for God, He is glorified and worshiped.*” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 23)
7. *Mike Root*: “***When we think of worship, we should think of living for God and not have mental pictures of buildings, reverent atmospheres, long faces and structured acts. Worship is synonymous with sacrifice, praise, obedience and service.** Worship is the person we help who has been left for dead by the roadside, and not just the three hours at ‘church’ on Sunday. Worship is the cup of cold water given on Tuesday as well as the cup of grape juice taken on the first day of the week. Worship comes from a heart that houses God and not just from what tradition calls ‘the house of God.’*” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 25)

#### B. What does **God say**?

1. The NT clearly teaches that a Christian is to:
  - a. Present his body as “**a living sacrifice**” to God (Rom. 12:1-2)
  - b. Do everything in the **name of the Lord** (Col. 3:17)
  - c. Do all to the **glory of God** (1 Cor. 10:31)
2. It also teaches that a Christian can and should **worship God** apart from the “**worship assemblies**” of the local church (cf. Acts 16:25; Heb. 13:15; Jas. 5:13)
3. Does this mean, however, that **all of life is worship**? Does this mean that **every single thing** that I do with my body is **an act of worship**?
4. **How we answer** those questions will depend on several things?
  - a. What do we mean by “**worship**”?
  - b. Is all “**worship**” the same?
  - c. What **Hebrew** or **Greek word** are we considering?
  - d. Can something be “**worship**” in **one sense** and not in another?

#### C. The Bible clearly indicates that, at least in some sense, **all of life is not worship** because:

1. Worship can have a **beginning point**
  - a. **Abraham** told his servants that he and Isaac would “go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you” (Gen. 22:5)
  - b. When Rebekah offered food and provision for **Abraham’s servant**, then he

- bowed his head and worshiped (Gen. 24:26, 48)
- c. When **Abraham's servant** heard their [Laban & Bethuel] words, he worshiped the Lord (Gen. 24:52)
  - d. When **the Israelites** heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, "they bowed their heads and worshiped" (Ex. 4:31)
  - e. God told **Moses** to "come up to the Lord...and worship from afar" (Ex. 24:1)
  - f. When Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting outside the camp, **the people** rose and worshiped (Ex. 33:7-10)
  - g. After God revealed Himself to Moses on Mt. Sinai, **Moses** bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped (Ex. 34:4-8)
  - h. **The Israelites** were to present a basket of firstfruits to the priest, recite a formula and then worship (Dt. 26:1-11)
  - i. After **Gideon** heard the interpretation of the Midianite's dream, he worshiped (Jdg. 7:13-15)
  - j. **Elkanah** went up to Shiloh yearly to worship and offer sacrifice (1 Sam. 1:1-3)
  - k. After **Hannah** weaned Samuel, she brought him to Eli and worshiped the Lord there (1 Sam. 1:24-28)
  - l. After **Saul** sinned in sparing the Amalekites, he wanted Samuel to return with him so that he might worship the Lord (1 Sam. 15:24-25)
  - m. After **Saul** confessed his sin, Samuel turned back with him and Saul worshiped God (1 Sam. 15:30-31)
  - n. After fasting seven days for his stricken son, **David** arose, washed and anointed himself, changed his clothes, went into the house of the Lord and worshiped (2 Sam. 12:20)
  - o. When **David** fled Jerusalem and came to the top of the mountain, he worshiped God (2 Sam. 15:30-32)
  - p. **Naaman** asked for pardon when he accompanied his master to the temple of Rimmon to worship there (2 Ki. 5:15-19)
  - q. **Sennacherib** was murdered by his sons while he was worshipping in the temple of Nisroch his god (2 Ki. 19:35-37)
  - r. **All the assembly** worshiped until a particular burnt offering was finished (2 Chr. 29:28)
  - s. When a particular burnt offering was finished, **Hezekiah** and others

worshiped (2 Chr. 29:29)

- t. When **Job** received the news about the loss of his sons and daughter, he tore his robe, shaved his head, fell to the ground and worshiped (Job 1:18-20)
- u. **The people of the land** will worship on the Sabbaths and the New Moons (Ezek. 46:3)
- v. The **wise men** came to worship the baby Jesus (Mt. 2:2)
- w. **Herod** asked to know where the baby was so that he could go and worship Him (Mt. 2:8)
- x. When the **wise men** found Jesus, they worshiped Him (Mt. 2:11)
- y. **A leper** came and worshiped Jesus (Mt. 8:2)
- z. **The ruler** [Jairus] came and **worshiped** Jesus (Mt. 9:18)
  - 1) Did the ruler continue to worship Jesus as he led Jesus to his house? (Mt. 9:18-19)
- a. **Those in the boat** worshiped Jesus (Mt. 14:33)
- b. The **Canaanite woman** came and worshiped Jesus (Mt. 15:25)
- c. **The apostles** held Jesus by the feet and worshiped Him (Mt. 28:9)
- d. When **the eleven disciples** saw Jesus, they worshiped Him (Mt. 28:17)
- e. When **the demon-possessed man** saw Jesus, he ran to Him and worshiped him (Mk. 5:6)
- f. **The soldiers** struck Jesus, spat on Him, bowed the knee and worshiped Him (Mk. 15:19)
- g. When Jesus revealed Himself to **the blind man**, he worshiped Him (Jn. 9:38)
- h. **Certain Greeks** came up to worship at the feast (Jn. 12:20)
- i. When Jesus appeared to **the women** after His resurrection, they worshiped Him (Mt. 28:9-10)
  - 1) Did the women **continue to worship Jesus** when they went to tell the brethren that He had been raised from the dead?
- j. After Jesus ascended, **the apostles** worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem (Lk. 24:52)
- k. **Cornelius** fell at Peter's feet and worshiped him (Acts 10:25)
- l. **Paul** went up to Jerusalem to worship (Acts 24:11)

- 1) If all of life is worship, how could Paul have **gone “up to Jerusalem to worship”**?
  - 2) Isn't it obvious that if he **“went up to Jerusalem to worship,”** this worship was going to **begin** when he got there?
  - 3) Here is a passage that doesn't mention **five acts** or **an assembly**, but it certainly indicates that *proskuneo* is something that **begins** and **ends**
  - 4) Now, since Paul was a Christian, he was **already walking in the newness of life** that some call “worship,” but that wasn't *proskuneo*, he was **going to proskuneo** when he **got to Jerusalem**
  - 5) Note: This worship evidently involved keeping a **Jewish feast** (Acts 18:21)
- m. When **an unbeliever** was convicted of sin in the assembly, he would fall down on his face and worship God (1 Cor. 14:25)
  - n. As he was dying, **Jacob** worshiped (Heb. 11:21)
  - o. **John** “fell at his feet to worship” the angel (Rev. 19:10; 22:8)
    - 1) John was **not worshipping** the angel, then he **started to worship** the angel, but the angel's rebuke caused him to **stop** what he was about to do
2. Worship can have an **ending point**
    - a. **Elkanah** and Hannah worshiped before the Lord and then returned home (1 Sam. 1:19)
    - b. After **David** worshiped God in the house of the Lord, he went to his own house (2 Sam. 12:20)
    - c. **The apostles** worshiped Jesus and then returned to Jerusalem (Lk. 24:52)
    - d. The **Ethiopian eunuch** had come to Jerusalem to worship (Acts 8:27)
  3. Worship can involve a **“when”** and a **“where”**
    - a. Abraham went over **yonder** to worship (Gen. 22:5)
    - b. Eli worshiped God in **Shiloh** (1 Sam. 1:3)
    - c. David went into the **house of the Lord** to worship (2 Sam. 12:20)
    - d. The Ethiopian eunuch “had come to **Jerusalem** to worship” (Acts 8:27)
    - e. Paul “went up to **Jerusalem** to worship” (Acts 24:11)
  4. Is it **really reasonable** to believe that **every single thing** that I do with my body is **worship** to God (in every sense of that term)?
    - a. **Household chores?**

- b. **Mowing the lawn?**
  - c. **Sexual intercourse?**
  - d. **Spanking** a disobedient child?
  - e. **Sleeping?**
  - f. **Dreaming?**
  - g. **Sin?**
    - 1) Those who advocate that all of life is worship will admit that **sin is not worship**
      - a) *Ray Hawk*: “When I sin or if I reject God, then I would no longer be bowing before him in service when I am engaged in that sin or rejection. **My imperfections are not presenting my ‘body as a living sacrifice.’**” (Bold emphasis added, personal correspondence: “Ray Hawk’s 5<sup>th</sup> Response, p. 2)
    - 2) So they don’t really believe that **ALL** of life is worship, since every Christian sins from time to time (1 Jn. 1:8-10)
    - 3) Therefore their understanding of Rom. 12:1 is **modified** by other passages about **sin**
    - 4) If that’s the case, why shouldn’t their understanding of Rom. 12:1 also be **modified** by other passages about “**worship**”?
5. Are there **other ways** to glorify and honor God than “worship”?
- a. Evidently some do not think so
    - 1) *Mike Root*: “For all practical purposes, **worship and praise are synonymous words** in the New Testament when applied to what the child of God is and does. **Another synonym of both these terms is glory or glorify.** To glorify is to magnify, extol, praise, or ascribe honor to someone. When we worship, praise, and glorify God, we are exalting Him. This means that we are reflecting positively on Him and showing His preeminence in our lives.” (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 141)
  - b. However, a distinction seems to be made between giving God **glory** and **worshipping** Him (Rev. 14:6-7)
  - c. God can be **glorified** in many **different ways**
    - 1) **Achan** gave glory to God when he confessed his sins (Josh. 7:19-20)
    - 2) God was glorified when he brought judgment on **Sidon** (Ezek. 28:22)
    - 3) **Christ’s** obedience glorified God (Jn. 14:13)

- 4) Christians glorify God when they **bear fruit** (Jn. 15:8)
  - 5) The Holy Spirit glorified God when He **revealed His will** to the apostles (Jn. 16:14)
  - 6) Jesus prayed that the Father would **glorify Him** (Jn. 17:1, 5)
    - a) Did the Father **“worship” the Son** when He glorified Him in His resurrection and ascension?
  - 7) Jesus glorified the Father by **finishing His work** (Jn. 17:4)
  - 8) Peter would glorify God in **his death** (Jn. 21:18-19)
  - 9) Christians glorify God in their bodies when they **avoid sin** (1 Cor. 6:18-20)
- d. God can be **praised** in different ways
- 1) By **words of praise** (Lk. 1:64; 2:13-14; 19:37-38; 1 Pet. 2:9)
  - 2) By **songs of praise** (Heb. 2:12)
  - 3) By giving **thanks** (Heb. 13:15-16)
  - 4) By a **genuine faith** “tested by fire” (1 Pet. 1:7)
    - a) Note: I’m not sure **who receives the praise** in this passage. Is it **God** or the **faithful Christian**?
  - 5) By the **fruits of righteousness** (Phil. 1:11)
    - a) Is this **necessarily worship**?
6. Whatever **“worship”** is, it must be defined according to **word meanings** and **biblical usage**, not **wishful thinking** and **human emotions**
  7. In other words, **our concept** of “worship” must harmonize with **God’s concept**. We must understand “worship” as God has **revealed** it to be in **all of Scripture**
- B. In light of this kind of evidence, where does this **“all-of-life-is-worship”** concept come from?
1. The proponents of this concept primarily hang their hat on **a single verse** (Rom. 12:1), although a few other passages are appealed to (cf. Eph. 1:12-14; Heb. 12:28; 13:15-16)
    - a. See Appendix C for definitions of *latreia* (noun) and *latreuo* (verb)
    - b. The key term *latreia* is translated in **two different ways** in Rom. 12:1 by our major English versions
      - 1) **“Service”**

- a) “Spiritual **service**” (ASV)
  - b) “Reasonable **service**” (KJV; LEB; NET; NKJV)
  - c) “Intelligent **service**” (YLT)
- 2) “**Worship**”
- a) “Spiritual **worship**” (ESV; HCSB; NAB; NRSV; RSV)
  - b) “Spiritual **service of worship**” (NASB)
  - c) “True and proper **worship**” (NIV)
  - d) “Spiritual act of **worship**” (NIV84)
  - e) “Reasonable way for you to **worship**” (ISV)
- c. The key terms, *latreia* (noun) and *latreuo* (verb), are **translated differently** throughout the NT in our major English versions

1) *Latreia* (noun): 5x in the NT

	S	DS	W	SW	D	TW	M
<b>NKJV</b>	<b>5</b>						
<b>KJV</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>					
<b>NASB</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>			
<b>ESV</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>		
<b>NIV</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>NIV84</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>NRSV</b>			<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>		
<b>LEB</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>				

S = Service(s); DS = Divine Service; W = Worship; SW = Service of worship; D = Duties; TW = Temple worship; M = Ministry

2) *Latreuo* (verb): 21x in the NT

	S	W	Se	O	Off	OW	M
<b>NKJV</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>				
<b>KJV</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>				
<b>NASB</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>				
<b>ESV</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>					
<b>NIV</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>					<b>1</b>
<b>NIV84</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>					<b>1</b>
<b>NRSV</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>LEB</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>					

S = Serve, Served, or Serving; W = Worship, Worshipped, or Worshiper(s); Se = Service, Did Service, or Offer Service; O = Offer; Off = Officiate; OW = Offer Worship; M = Minister

2. Does Romans 12:1 teach that **all of life is worship**, that **every single thing** I do

with my body is **an act of worship** to God?

3. As we consider that question, there are **several observations** that I'd like to make
  - a. First, it is a **precarious procedure** to build a **whole concept** on a **single verse** of scripture
    - 1) Example: The Mormon doctrine of "**baptism for the dead**" (cf. 1 Cor. 15:29)
  - b. Second, Rom. 12:1 does not **explicitly say** that all of life is worship. This is **an inference** from what Paul says
    - 1) Perhaps that is what Paul **implies**; but that is not what he **explicitly says**
    - 2) While some certainly infer from Paul's statement that all of life is worship, is this a **necessary inference**? Is this the **only possible conclusion**?
    - 3) There is a BIG difference between a **possible**, a **reasonable**, a **probable**, and a **necessary** inference
    - 4) Furthermore, it is certainly possible for us to **infer** something that is **not implied** in Scripture (cf. Jn. 21:21-23)
    - 5) Does "**pray without ceasing**" (1 Th. 5:17) mean that I am to pray every moment, night and day without ever stopping?
    - 6) Must Paul's statement "**present your bodies a living sacrifice**" (Rom. 12:1) necessarily mean that **everything** I do with my body is "**worship**" (*latreia*)?
  - c. Third, if all of life is "**worship**" (*latreia*), is all of life "**worship**" (*proskuneo*)?
    - 1) **Proskuneo** is the **predominant term** translated "worship" in the NT
      - a) *Proskuneo*: (60x)
      - b) *Latreia*: (5x)
      - c) *Latreuo*: (21x)
      - d) *Sebo*: (7x)
      - e) *Eusebeo*: (1x)
      - f) *Therapeuo*: (1x)
      - g) *Sebazomai*: (1x)

- h) *Threskeia*: (1x)
- 2) Even if one can prove that **all of life** is *latreia* or *latreuo*, that certainly does not prove that **all of life** is *proskuneo*
- a) Just because both of these terms are translated “**worship**,” doesn’t mean that they are **exact synonyms**
- b) Although the Greek words *baros* and *phortion* are translated “**burdens**” (KJV; ASV; LEB; YLT), they do not refer to the same thing (Gal. 6:2, 5)
- 3) Note: In some contexts, *latreuo* is contrasted with *proskuneo* (2 Ki. 21:21; Dan. 3:12, 14, 18, 28; [LXX]; Mt. 4:10; Lk. 4:8), suggesting a **difference** between the two. In other contexts, these terms seem to be parallel
- a) “Where προσκυνεῖν is used for the **customary worship** of God rather than a **single act** it often seems to be parallel to λατρεύειν. . . .” (Bold emphasis added, *TDNT*, 6:761)
- b) See Ex. 20:5; 23:24; Dt. 4:19; 5:9; 8:19 etc. (*TDNT*, 6:761, n. 36)
- d. Fourth, the all-of-life-is-worship concept **ignores clear evidence to the contrary** that at least some forms of worship begin and end, start and stop, and sometimes involve a time and place
- 1) Sometimes *latreia* is used in Scripture to describe activities that had a **beginning** and an **end**
- a) When some **killed Christians** thinking they offered God **service** (*latreia*), did that act have a **beginning** and an **ending**? (Jn. 16:2)
- b) Was the tabernacle **service** (*latreia*) a **24/7** kind of thing? (cf. Rom. 9:4; Heb. 9:1, 6)
- 1] Did the tabernacle service **continue** when the Israelites **packed up** and **moved** to another location? (Num. 10:33-34)
- c) Sometimes “**serve**” and “**service**” [translating various Greek words] describe a **general course of life** that is ongoing (Mt. 20:28; Lk. 15:29; 16:13; Jn. 12:26; Acts 10:19; 26:7; 27:23; Rom. 1:9; 12:11; Phil. 2:17, 22; 1 Th. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:3; Heb. 9:14; 12:28)
- d) Sometimes “**serve**” and “**service**” describe **specific acts** that **begin** and **end** (Lk. 1:8, 23; 4:39; 10:40; 12:37; 17:8; Jn. 12:2; 16:2; Rom. 14:18; 15:31; 1 Cor. 9:13; 2 Cor. 9:12; Gal. 5:13; Eph. 6:7; Phil. 2:30; 1 Pet. 5:2)
- 1] When Anna “**served** God with fastings and prayers night and day” (Lk. 2:37), does that mean that she never stopped fasting

and praying? Of course not

- 2) *Proskuneo* is used in Scripture to describe activities that had a **beginning** and an **end**
- a) Can anyone show me a passage in the NT where *proskuneo* does not clearly have a **beginning** and/or an **ending**? I haven't found one
  - b) If someone can do that, is this the way the word is **predominantly used** in the NT?"
  - c) The **24 elders**, who were in the immediate presence of God, **began** to worship Him, evidently **stopped** worshipping Him, and then **began** to worship Him again (Rev. 4:10; 5:14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4)
    - 1] Their worship had a **beginning**, and it wasn't just **being in God's presence**, and it wasn't just falling down before Him. They were in **God's presence** before they **fell down**, and they **fell down** before they **began to worship**
    - 2] Note: Evidently one of these 24 elders **stopped worshipping** to talk to John (Rev. 7:13)
  - d) **If all of life is worship**, how could the angel "preach to those who dwell on the earth to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and **worship Him** who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water'" (Rev. 14:6-7)?
    - 1] This instruction would be **absurd if all of life is worship** and they were **already worshipping God**, but it makes perfect sense if worship is something that **begins** and **ends**
  - e) Why did the angel tell John not to worship him but rather **"Worship God"** (Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9) if all of life is worship? Wouldn't John have **already been worshipping God**?
- e. Fifth, what is the significance of the **aorist tense verb "present"** (*paristemi*)?
- 1) *Robert Mounce*: "παρίστημι ('to present') is a **technical term** in the language of sacrifice (BAGD, 628)." (Bold emphasis added, "Romans," NAC, 27, 230, n. 6)
  - 2) Is our "reasonable service" **the act of presenting** our bodies?
    - a) *Garreth Reese*: "The '**presentation of the body as a sacrifice**' is the thing that is designated as '**a spiritual service of worship.**'" (Bold emphasis added, *New Testament Epistles: Romans*, 574)
    - b) *Garreth Reese*: "It is **the act of offering**, and not the thing offered

– the sacrifice – that constitutes **the ‘service.’**” (Bold emphasis added, *New Testament Epistles: Romans*, 574, n. 16)

c) Some commentators argue that the aorist tense indicates a **once for all decisive act**

1] *Leon Morris*: “παρίστημι. The aorist infinitive points to **decisive action.**” (Bold emphasis added, *PNTC:Romans*, 432, n. 8)

2] *Warren Wiersbe*: “The verb ‘present’ in this verse means **‘present once and for all.’** It commands a definite commitment of the body to the Lord, just as a bride and groom in their wedding service commit themselves to each other.” (Bold emphasis added, *BEC, Logos Elec. Ed.*, n.p.)

3] *Robert Mounce*: “Believers are exhorted to **‘make a decisive dedication’** (Berkeley) of themselves as worshipers stepping forward to place their offerings on the altar.” (Bold emphasis added, “Romans,” *NAC*, 27, 231)

d) Others maintain that the aorist tense **does not inherently denote once-for-all action**

1] *Thomas R. Schreiner*: “The aorist form of the imperative is occasionally adduced to support the idea that such total commitment to God is a **definitive once-for-all act** that should never be repeated, or is the process by which one attains entire sanctification (see the helpful article by Maddox 1981; cf. D. Peterson 1993: 281). **This is a gross misreading of the aorist tense, which does not inherently denote once-for-all action.** Whether the aorist signifies an action that occurs only once is indicated by other contextual factors (see Stagg 1972). No such contextual factors are present here. The two imperatives, συσχηματίζεσθε (*syschēmatizesthe*, be conformed) and μεταμορφώσθε (*metamorphousthe*, be transformed), in verse 2 are both present tense, which cautions against undue emphasis on the aorist tense in verse 1.” (Bold emphasis added, “Romans,” *BECNT*, 642)

2] *Jeff Smelser*: “Regarding the aorist tense παραστῆσαι (present), **although it is often said the aorist indicates ‘point action,’ this is a misconception.** The aorist is the default tense used when the speaker does not intend to emphasize a durative or ongoing action. That doesn’t mean the action being described by the aorist is point action. It **may be ongoing**, or it **may not be.**” (Bold emphasis added, *Emai*, 08/03/13)

a] “I **hit** the ball”

b] “I **attended** college”

c] “I **studied** physics”

d] “I **raised** four children”

3) Is our “reasonable service” our *bodies* as “**living sacrifices**”?

4) Is our “reasonable service” **both**?

a) *Thomas R. Schreiner*: “Barrett (1991: 213) understands the phrase τῶν λογικῶν λατρείων ἡμῶν (*tēn logikēn latreian hymōn*, **your reasonable service**) to relate only to the words θυσίαν ζῶσαν ἁγίαν ἐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ [**sacrifice, living, holy, well pleasing to God**, ksk]. Most scholars, however, agree that **the phrase is appositional to the whole sentence**, and this seems more sensible (cf. BDF §480.6; Sanday and Headlam 1902: 353; Cranfield 1979: 601; Wilckens 1982: 4; Dunn 1988b: 711; Fitzmyer 1993c: 640). Paul is not merely saying that sacrifices are spiritual in nature. His point is that it is eminently reasonable, given the mercies of God, for believers to dedicate themselves wholly to God (cf. Mounce 1995: 232).” (Bold emphasis added, “Romans,” BECNT, 644-645)

5) Since Paul uses the word “**present**” (*paristemi*) in the **aorist** and the **present** tenses in the **same context** (Rom. 6:13, 19), it’s probably a mistake to **make too much** of his use of the aorist tense in Rom. 12:1; but the question ought to at least be **considered**

f. Sixth, does Rom. 12:2 **explain** Rom. 12:1?

1) Some commentators believe it does?

a) *Robert Mounce*: “If v. 1 speaks of a specific act in which we offer ourselves to God, v. 2 tells us of two ongoing activities that **carry out the intention of the living sacrifice**. The first is negative; the second, positive.” (Bold emphasis added, Mounce, “Romans,” NAC, 27, 232)

b) “V 2, while grammatically parallel to v 1, really **explains in more detail** how this giving of ourselves as sacrifices is to be carried out.” (Bold emphasis added, NBC, Elec. Ed., n.p.)

2) If Rom. 12:2 explains Rom. 12:1, then we present our bodies as **living sacrifices** by:

a) Not **conforming** to the world

b) Being **transformed** by the **renewing** of our minds

3) Can anyone know for sure that Paul meant **more than this**? Can anyone know for certain that Paul meant that presenting my body as a living sacrifice means that **every act of my body is “worship”** (*latreia*)?

- 4) If the context of Acts 2 indicates that the pouring out of the Spirit on “**all flesh**” means **all classes of Christians** (Acts 2:17-18), does the context of Rom. 12 indicate that **presenting our bodies as living sacrifices** means **not conforming** to the world and **being transformed** by the renewing of our minds?
- g. Seventh, is this **figurative language** rather than literal?
- 1) The **implied contrast(s)** between the animal sacrifices of the old covenant with the “**living sacrifices**” of the new may very well indicate **figurative language**
  - 2) *B. M. Newman & E. A. Nida*: “The phrase *living sacrifice* involves a **contradiction in terms** since a *sacrifice* is something which is put to death.” (Bold emphasis added, *UBS Handbook: Romans*, 234)
    - a) Cf. 1 Pet. 2:5: <sup>5</sup> you also, as **living stones**, are being built up a **spiritual house**, a holy priesthood, to offer [*aorist tense*] up **spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
  - 3) Some commentators believe that Paul is using **figurative language**
    - a) *Craig S. Keener*: “Ancient Judaism and some philosophical schools **often used ‘sacrifice’ figuratively** for praise or for a lifestyle of worship; hence it would be hard for Paul’s readers to miss his point here.” (Bold emphasis added, *IVPBBCNT, Elec. Ed.*, n.p.)
    - b) “**Spiritual** (Gk. *logikēn*) is derived from ‘word’ (Gk. *logos*) and so here means **‘figurative, metaphorical’** as distinct from the material **worship** of OT ritual.” (Bold emphasis added, *NIBC*, 1338)
    - c) *Robert Haldane*: “**Sacrifice**.—This term is used **figuratively**. It intimates that there are now no proper sacrifices. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross has put an end to sacrifices.” (Bold emphasis added, *Commentary on Romans*, 562)
    - d) *Everett Harrison & Donald Hagner*: “‘Worship’ translates *latreia*... which Paul has already used for the entire Jewish cultus (9:4). Here he gives it a **metaphorical turn**—i.e., he **spiritualizes it, or transforms it** to a new level of meaning. The NASB’s ‘service of worship’ comes close to the intended meaning. It captures not merely the idea of the adoration of God but covers the entire range of the Christian’s life and activity (cf. Dt 10:12). Service is always the proper accompaniment to worship.” (“Romans,” *EBC, Rev. Ed.*, 11:183)
      - 1] There is an **interesting change** in the comment on this passage between the old edition and the revised edition
      - 2] *Everett Harrison*: “‘Worship’ translates *latreia*, which Paul has already used for the entire Jewish cultus (9:4). Here he

gives it a **metaphorical turn**. The problem to be faced is **whether ‘worship’ may not be too restricted a rendering, for worship in the strict sense is adoration of God**, which does not fit well with the concept of ‘bodies’ (‘your bodies’ is rendered ‘yourselves’ in NIV). It is just at this point that **the term ‘service’ (KJV) has an advantage**, since it covers the entire range of the Christian’s life and activity (cf. Deut 10:12). Service is the proper sequel to worship.” (“Romans,” EBC, 10:128)

- e) “The concrete idea of sacrifice seems always to cling to the noun no less than to the verb. This is also true in the last verse (R. 12:1), though **the use here is metaphorical**. The service which Christians are to offer consists in the fashioning of their inner lives and their outward physical conduct in a way which plainly distinguishes them from the world and which corresponds to the will of God. This is the living sacrifice which they have to offer.” (Bold emphasis added, TDNT, 4:65)
- 4) If this is **figurative language**, then interpreting it **literally** or **pressing it too far** would be a very serious **hermeneutical mistake**
- a) Illust.: It would be a gross error to conclude that since the Christian life is described as **a race** (Heb. 12:1) and the ancient Greeks exercised and ran in **the nude**; therefore Christians could be **nudists**
- h. Finally, if everything I do with my body is **“worship”** (*latreia*), is it “worship” in **every sense** of that term?
- 1) In other words, is *latreia* always used in the **same sense** in every context?
- 2) Terms can certainly have **different meanings and nuances** in different contexts (i.e. **general** and **specialized** meanings)
- a) **“Church”** (*ekklesia*)
- 1] The **universal** church (Mt. 16:18; Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22; 5:23)
- 2] The **local** church (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 1:1; 1 Th. 1:1; Rev. 1:11)
- 3] The **assembled** church (1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19, 28, 34-35; 3 Jn. 10)
- a] Note: If someone **ignored the various nuances** of the word **“church,”** he might erroneously conclude that a woman could **never say a word** (cf. 1 Cor. 14:34-35)
- b) **“Elder”** (*presbuteros*)
- 1] Older man (Acts 2:17; 1 Tim. 5:1)

- 2] Member of Sanhedrin (Mt. 16:21; 26:41)
- 3] Bishop/Pastor (Acts 20:17, 28; Tit. 1:5, 7)
- c) **“Deacon”** (*diakonos*)
  - 1] Domestic servant (Jn. 2:5, 9)
  - 2] Christians (Jn. 12:26)
  - 3] Preachers (1 Cor. 3:5; 1 Th. 3:2)
  - 4] Deacons (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8, 12)
- d) **“Apostle”** (*apostolos*)
  - 1] One sent out (Jn. 13:16)
  - 2] The twelve (Mt. 10:2; Lk. 6:13)
  - 3] Messengers of churches (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25)
- 3) If all of life is “worship” in **one sense**, is it not “worship” in **another sense**? In other words, is it **a certain kind of “worship”** but not **another kind of “worship”**?
  - a) Some who advocate that all of life is worship seem to make **this kind of a distinction**
    - 1] *Jack Cottrell*: “The point is that all Christian living is worship offered up to God. **Public, corporate worship is special** and must not be neglected, but **that is not the only part of the Christian life that may be called ‘worship.’** Christians must do *everything* ‘for the glory of God’ (1 Cor 10:31), and whatever is done for his glory is an act of worship. Thus Cranfield is correct: ‘The true worship which God desires embraces the whole of the Christian’s life from day to day’ (2:601; see Moo, 754; McGuiggan, 348-357).” (Bold emphasis added, “Romans,” CPNIVC, 2.n.p.)
    - 2] *Jim McGuiggan*: “Now any person who doesn’t know there is **a difference between public and corporate ‘worship’ and daily ‘worship’** just isn’t thinking. But it doesn’t follow that one is ‘worship’ and the other is not ‘worship’. We know the difference between teaching ‘publicly’ and ‘house to house’ but it never enters our mind to say one is ‘teaching’ and the other isn’t ‘teaching’. We understand that a woman is not to *teach* the assembly in mixed assemblies of saints but we accept the fact that she *teaches* under other circumstances. We know the difference but we would never dream of saying one was ‘teaching’ and the other wasn’t ‘teaching’. What takes place isn’t *essentially* or *constitutionally* different. The

same is true of ‘worship’.” (Bold emphasis added, “Romans.” *Looking Into The Bible Series*, 349)

- 4) If terms are used in **different senses**, and we do not make that clear, that is **misleading** at best and downright **deceptive** at worst

4. Objections:

- a. OT examples of worship **do not apply** to NT worship (Ray Hawk)
- 1) Although the OT is not our law today, it was **written for our learning** (Rom. 15:4)
  - 2) While OT worship was different from NT worship, it was **not different in every way**
    - a) Worship in the OT and the NT is directed to the **same God**
    - b) OT and NT worship have some of the **same elements** (e.g. prayer, singing, teaching)
    - c) Etc.
  - 3) The OT contains **principles** that are just as **true and applicable** today as they were when they were originally given to Israel (cf. Pr. 22:6)
    - a) Just as we can learn valuable lessons about **faith** from Abraham (Gen. 22:1-19) and **strict obedience** from Uzzah (1 Chr. 13:1-14; 15:1-15) and respect for the **silence of God** from David (2 Sam. 7:1-7) and “**convenient religion**” from Jeroboam (1 Ki. 12:25-33), etc., we can also learn from the OT that **worship begins and ends**
    - b) The writer of Hebrews believed that **OT texts** still speak to **NT Christians**
      - 1] He writes: “And you have forgotten the exhortation which **speaks to you** as to sons.... (Heb. 12:5), then he quotes Proverbs 3:11-12
      - 2] He expected his readers to **draw a conclusion** from this OT text before and without **his application** of that text
      - 3] That tells me that God expects me to **do the same** thing today, and therefore, I have the ability to **draw legitimate conclusions** from OT texts without specific NT **quotations or applications**
  - 4) The OT provides **a background** for the NT
    - a) Doesn’t the **OT sacrificial system** provide a background against which Paul gives us the instructions of Romans 12:1-2?
      - 1] Isn’t there in Paul’s instructions an implied contrast between

the offering of a **dead animal** and a **living (human) body**?

- 2] If the **OT sacrificial system** informs our understanding of **presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice**, is it ridiculous to believe that the way the term **“worship”** is used in the OT provides a **background** and **informs our understanding** of the term **“worship”** in the NT?
- 5) There are examples of **new covenant worship** that have a **beginning** and an **ending**, so even if this argument were valid, it's **irrelevant**
    - a) **The apostles** (Lk. 24:52)
    - b) **Ethiopian eunuch** (Acts 8:27)
    - c) **Cornelius** (Acts 10:25-26)
    - d) **Paul** (Acts 24:10-11)
    - e) **John** (Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9)
  - b. No one can prove that there are **only “five acts”** of worship (Ray Hawk)
    - 1) If one cannot prove that worship is **limited to five acts**, that would not prove that worship includes **ALL ACTS**
    - 2) No one has to prove that *proskuneo* is **limited to five acts** of worship to prove that *proskuneo* **begins and ends**; the **definition** of *proskuneo* and its **usage** in the NT prove that
  - c. Are we to present our bodies as **living sacrifices only 3 or 4 hours a week** in the worship services of the local church? (Ray Hawk)
    - 1) My body is to be a **living sacrifice all the time**, but that doesn't mean that **everything** that I do with my body is *proskuneo*
  - d. *Ken Green*: “Since when is the offering of a sacrifice not an act of worship?” (cf. Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15-16) (“The Preeminent Act Of Worship,” n.p.)
    - 1) Is this language **literal** or **figurative**?
    - 2) Is this a **certain kind of “worship”** but not another kind?
      - a) *Ken Green*: “I am not implying that such [the “five acts” of worship, ksk] is not worship, or even that it is **not worship in a particular sense**. But if we are not worshipping God with all of our lives, we will not worship Him when we engage in these activities.” (“Is Life To Be Worship?,” 1)
  - e. The so-called **five acts of worship** (prayer, singing, preaching, Lord's Supper, & giving) are never explicitly identified as **“worship”**
    - 1) I will readily admit that **none of the “five acts of worship”** are

explicitly called “**worship**” (*proskuneo*) in the NT

- 2) Despite that fact, if these five acts **meet the definition of *proskuneo***, I contend that **they are *proskuneo***, whether they are **specifically called** that or not
  - a) “If it **looks** like a duck and **quacks** like a duck, and **waddles** like a duck....”
  - b) When I **pray**, as Jesus taught me to pray, “Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name....” (Mt. 6:9), when I **sing** the hymn “How Great Thou Art,” when I **remember** the sacrifice of my Lord in the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-30), when I **preach** His word (Acts 11:20; Eph. 3:8-12), when I **give** as I have been prospered (2 Cor. 8:3-5), with a heart that is **attuned to God**, what is that if it’s not showing **reverence**, doing **homage**, and making **obeisance**?
    - 1] Note: I will readily admit that someone might “**go through the motions**” and not really be worshipping God
  - c) Will anyone say that these things are not showing **reverence**, doing **homage**, and making **obeisance**? If not, then these things are ***proskuneo*!!!** If not, why not?
- 3) If ***proskuneo*** is showing **reverence**, doing **homage**, making **obeisance**, etc., and I show **reverence**, do **homage**, and make **obeisance**, when I **sing, pray, commune, teach, preach, give**, isn’t that ***proskuneo***? If not, why not?
- 4) The “five acts of worship” do not have to be specifically called ***proskuneo*** to be “**worship**”
  - a) Can we not learn what was involved in the ***proskuneo*** offered by **the Greeks** at the Passover (Jn. 12:1, 20) and **the Ethiopian eunuch** (Acts 8:27) from the OT passages that indicate God’s requirements for the various **Jewish feasts**?
  - b) If so, then **contextual evidence** can indicate that singing, preaching, teaching, giving, communion, and prayer are “**worship**”
  - c) Furthermore, the **participial phrases** in Rev. 4:10-11; 7:11-12; 11:16-18 indicate that ***proskuneo*** involved **praise** offered to God
    - 1] I would call that **prayer**
    - 2] Heavenly beings also **ascribed “worth”** to the Lamb in **song** (Rev. 5:8-10)
    - 3] So even though **prayer** and **singing** are not specifically called

*proskuneo*, this contextual evidence indicates that **they are**

C. What is **behind** the all-of-life-is-worship concept (at least with some)?

### 1. Informality

- a. *Mike Root*: “This ‘first day of the week’ assembly [in Acts 20:7, ksk] was as **unstructured** and **informal** as an **unplanned reunion** of college friends.” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 50-51)
  - 1) **Who says so?** Luke certainly doesn’t say anything like that
  - 2) Since Paul taught **the same things** in all the churches (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17), there is every reason to believe that the assembly in Troas followed **the principles of decorum** that Paul taught the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 14:26-40)
- b. *Mike Root*: “The only thing we read in the Bible about Christian assemblies is that they had them and that they were told to equip one another for spiritual growth. We have **no biblical authority for formalism** in our assemblies. We do have a need and a command to be together. Togetherness should meet the need we have for encouraging and equipping in order for us to grow into Christ’s likeness.” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 116)
- c. *Mike Root*: “Just as surely as God sees hearts and not houses, He sees **righteousness and not rituals.**” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 30-31)
  - 1) It’s not an **either/or**; it’s a **both/and**
  - 2) God’s word does not in any way disparage **God prescribed ritual**. Rather it insists that it be accompanied by **reverence** in our hearts and **righteousness** in our hands (cf. Isa. 1:11-17; Hos. 6:6; Amos 5:21-24)

### 2. Togetherness

- a. *Mike Root*: “So, why did they meet? **They met to be together.**” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 40)
- b. *Mike Root*: “Together is the one thing you can’t do alone. They, the New Testament church, did not meet to fulfill requirements. They did not meet to pay back God. They did not meet just because it was expected. They did not meet out of a need to get some list of sacramental acts checked off. **They met because they wanted to be together and because God wants His children to be together.** This is the one common denominator shared by every New Testament passage on the assembly. With all their faults and growing pains, the early Christians were people who were together.” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 40)
- c. *Mike Root*: “Christians assemble to be together. **We don’t assemble to worship** because that’s what our lives are. **We don’t assemble to perform rituals** because no rituals are found in the New Testament, just togetherness

builders. One of the main reasons Christians assemble is to be equipped.”  
(Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 116)

- d. *Mike Root*: “Whether it’s the temple porch, a living room, a hillside, a prison, or a building specially constructed for Christians, **God’s people meet only to reap the benefits of togetherness**. These benefits can’t be obtained alone, even though God is as much in attendance with the lone sentry as He is with the encampment of His army. (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 21-22)
- e. *Mike Root*: “The New Testament **Christians assembled to break bread**, not because they needed to sing, pray, study, give, and meditate on Jesus. These activities, and many others, were all **tools to enhance their togetherness, and not rites or rituals to be performed.**” (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 23)

### 3. Pep-rally religion

- a. *Mike Root*: “Encouragement is the glue that keeps us close, the **rah-rah** that keeps us going, and **the hook** that keeps us coming back for more. It’s **a drug** we can’t get enough of and **a gift** that we never tire of giving” (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 73)
- b. *Mike Root*: “People are crying for equipping, and we tell them, sorry, but **you come to church to give, not to get.**” Again, **where are the scriptures to justify such assertions?** (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 119-120)
- c. For the promoters of the all-of-life-is-worship concept, **it’s all about ME** (or to be as charitable as possible, it’s primarily about ME); **it’s not about GOD**
- d. But worship is not about **ME**; it’s all about **HIM** (cf. 2 Ki. 17:36; 1 Chr. 16:29; Psa. 5:7; 29:2; Rev. 4:9-11; 11:16-17; 14:6-7; 15:3-4)

### 4. Applause in the assembly

- a. *Mike Root*: “What is the primary way in our culture that we show appreciation publicly? Applause. It says to the recipients, ‘**We truly appreciate what you have done, and we want to publicly recognize you and honor you.**’ Because Christians are into rejoicing and showing appreciation, **how could it possibly be out of place to applaud in the assembly?** I am not talking about raucous cheers and shouting, but sincere appreciation that is displayed naturally by uninhibited applause. (Bold emphasis added, *Spilt Grape Juice*, 135)
- b. Once again the emphasis is on **ME** or **US**
- c. This quote indicates that the applause that is being advocated is not **an expression of agreement**, like saying “Amen” (cf. 1 Cor. 14:16), but an **expression of praise and appreciation**, not for God but for man
- d. While **clapping** is mentioned in the OT (and it meant different things in

different contexts), it is **nowhere mentioned** in the NT

- 1) The coronation of **Joash** (2 Ki. 11:12)
- 2) A response to the **wicked man** (Job 27:23)
- 3) A charge against **Job** (Job 34:37)
- 4) An **expression of praise** to God (Psa. 47:1;
- 5) A figurative **expression of joy** over God's judgment (Psa. 98:8-9)
- 6) A figurative **expression of joy** (Isa. 55:12)
- 7) An **expression of disdain and disgust** after Jerusalem's destruction (Lam. 2:15; Ezek. 25:6)
- 8) An **expression of disdain and disgust** after Nineveh's downfall (Nah. 3:19)

## 5. Eating together

- a. In his book *Unbroken Bread*, Mike Root argues that there are **three kinds of bread breaking** in the NT
  - 1) Breaking the **Bread of Life** = sharing Jesus
  - 2) Breaking the **bread of the Lord's Supper** = sharing Jesus' death, resurrection, return, indwelling, and our personal struggles
  - 3) Breaking the **bread of a shared meal** = sharing our material possessions and building unity and love (*Unbroken Bread*, 44-45)
- b. Yet Paul told the Corinthians, after they had turned the Lord's Supper into a common meal, to "**eat at home**" (1 Cor. 11:22, 34)

## 6. An expanded role for women

- a. *Mike Root*: "[W]omen can talk all they want before and after those **magical opening and closing prayers**, because being silent in the church is referring to the formal assembly. Five minutes before that opening prayer, the same women in the same building, sitting in the same seats, could comment, share, and edify others, simply because it was called 'a Bible class,' and everyone knows that's not the same as the formal worship. There is some sense of consistency in this; neither Bible classes nor formal worship are found in the New Testament, so we can **make up the rules as we go.**" (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 128)
- b. Root suggests that Paul's restrictions on women (1 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 14:34-35) were "just dealing with **specific first century problems** in Corinth and Ephesus" (Bold emphasis added, *Unbroken Bread*, 180)
  - 1) However, in the context Paul instructs men "**everywhere**" (1 Tim. 2:8)

and his instructions for the Corinthians were the same “**as in all the churches of the saints**” (1 Cor. 14:33-34, ASV, ESV, NIV, NRSV)

c. Others argue that these restrictions were based on **first-century culture**, and, therefore, have **no application** in twenty-first-century America

1) However, Paul bases his restrictions on women on:

a) **Creation** (1 Cor. 11:7-9; 1 Tim. 2:13)

b) **The Fall** (1 Tim. 2:14)

c) **Headship** (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-23)

d) **The Law** (1 Cor. 14:34)

2) Those things have absolutely nothing to do with **culture**

D. Is there **anything good** that is promoted by the all-of-life-is-worship advocates?

Yes, I think there is

1. Their insistence that there is much more to Christianity than “**going to church**” -- a **meet, eat, and retreat** religion

2. Their emphasis on a **life consecrated to God**

3. Their charge that many have emphasized the “**what**” of assemblies and missed the “**why**” (though their “why” is not necessarily God’s “why”)

4. Their complaint that merely **rote ritual** is not what God wants from His people

5. Their insistence that **Christians’ needs be met**

6. Their contention that the **primary purpose** of our assemblies is **edification**, not **evangelism**

E. But we mustn’t throw the **baby** out with the **bath water**

1. Stressing a **life consecrated to God** does not require an **all-of-life-is worship concept**

2. Emphasizing the “**why**” does not require that we ignore the “**what**”

3. We can stress “**want to**” without downplaying “**have to.**” **Devotion and duty** can go together. **Love and law** are not antithetical concepts (cf. Jn. 14:15)

4. We should meet “**felt needs**” (i.e. comfort, encouragement, exhortation) and **unfelt needs** (i.e. reprove, rebuke, admonition)

a. Sometimes people need to feel **guilty**, not **good**

5. By focusing on **God** and **others**, we can receive **wonderful blessings** as a byproduct

**Conclusion:**

- I. Brethren, some preachers are trying to affect **radical change** in the church as we know it today. The **all-of-life-is-worship concept** is a step in that direction.
- II. If all of life is worship in **some sense** (and that's a BIG "IF"), it is not worship in **every sense** of that term
- III. If all of life is a **certain kind** of worship, it is not **every kind** of worship

Kevin Kay  
 1816 Weaver Branch Rd.  
 Piney Flats, TN 37686  
 kevinaskay@gmail.com

### Sources Consulted

- Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*.
- Arndt, W., Gingrich, F. W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (1979). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*.
- Barnes, Gary. "Is All We Do Worship?" *Defender*. Bellview Church, Pensacola, FL. Sept. 1998. 27:9.
- Brown, F., Driver, S. R., & Briggs, C. A. (2000). *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*.
- Bruce, F. F. "Romans: An Introduction And Commentary." *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Vol. 6.
- Cottrell, Jack. *The College Press NIV Commentary: Romans*. Vol. 2.
- Deason, Jim. "Is Mowing My Grass Worship?"
- Gesenius, W., & Tregelles, S. P. (2003). *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*.
- Green, Ken. "Is Life To Be Worship?" November 6, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Preeminent Act Of Worship."
- Haldane, Robert. *Commentary on Romans*.
- Hamilton, Clinton. "Romans." *Truth Commentaries*.
- Harris, R. L., Archer, G. L., Jr., & Waltke, B. K. (Eds.). (1999). *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*.
- Harrison, Everett. "Romans." *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Vol. 10.
- Harrison, Everett & Donald Hagner. "Romans." *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Revised Edition*. Vol. 11.
- Hendriksen, William. *Baker New Testament Commentary: John*.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Baker New Testament Commentary: Romans*.
- Hughes, Robert B. & J. Carl Laney. *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*.
- Hymel, Darrell. "Worship in Spirit and Truth." *Christianity Magazine*: January 1986, Number 1, 3.
- Kay, Kevin. "Is All Of Life Worship?" *Biblical Insights*. July, 2006. 6:7:18-19.
- Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*.
- King, Daniel Sr. "John." *Truth Commentaries*.
- Kittel, G., Bromiley, G. W., & Friedrich, G. (Eds.). (1964-). *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*.
- Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*.
- McGuiggan, Jim. "Romans." *Looking Into The Bible Series*.
- Morris, Leon. *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: Romans*.
- Mounce, Robert. "Romans." *The New American Commentary*. Vol. 27.
- New International Bible Commentary*.
- Newman, B. M. & E. A. Nida. *UBS Handbook: Romans*.
- Reynolds, H. R. "The Gospel of St. John," *The Pulpit Commentary*.

- Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol. 4.
- Roberts, Phil. "John 4:24: In Spirit And In Truth." *The Plano Provoker*, October 14, 1976, pp. 2-3.
- Root, Mike. *Spilt Grape Juice: Rethinking The Worship Tradition*. College Press Publishing Co.: Joplin, Missouri. 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Unbroken Bread*. College Press Publishing Co.: Joplin, Missouri. 1997.
- Schreiner, Thomas R. "Romans." *Baker Exegetical Commentary on The New Testament*.
- Simeon, Charles Simeon. *Horae Homileticae* Vol. 13: Luke XVII to John XII.
- Stott, John. *The Message Of Romans*.
- Strong, James. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*.
- Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)*.
- Taylor, Gene. *Worshipping The Lord*.
- Thayer, Joseph. (1889). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*.
- The New Bible Commentary*.
- Toews, John, E. *Believers Church Bible Commentary: Romans*.
- Utley, Bob. *The Gospel According to Paul: Romans*.
- Vincent, Marvin R. *Word Studies in the New Testament*. Vol. 3.
- Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*.
- Vinson, Bryan, Sr. *Paul's Letter To The Saints At Rome*.
- Whiteside, Robertson L. *A New Commentary On Paul's Letter To The Saints At Rome*.
- Whitten, Eddie. "Is Everything The Christian Does Worship?" *Defender*. Bellview Church, Pensacola, FL. Nov. 1998. 27:11.
- Wuest, Kenneth. *Wuest's Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*.
- Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament*.

Appendix A:

### **John 4:24: In Spirit And In Truth**

Jesus told the woman at the well that the time had now come when true worshippers would “worship the Father in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:24).

This has long been a favorite passage among us preachers because it lends itself so well to sermon outlines. We can say this passage teaches us the proper object of worship (the Father), the proper attitude of worship (in spirit), and the proper standard of worship (in truth), thus making a good three point sermon outline for next Sunday.

Now I have no doubt concerning the essential truthfulness of such lessons, but I wonder if that was really the point Jesus was trying to get across to the woman of Samaria. Frankly, I have come to doubt it. As I look at the context of John 4, it seems to me that Jesus was saying that this worship that was described as “in spirit and in truth” was to be some new type of worship. Yet there is nothing new at all about worshipping God with the right attitude and according to the standard of truth revealed in his word. The Israelites were constantly being chastised by the prophets of the O.T. for their failures to worship God “in spirit and in truth” (see Isa. 1:10-15; Amos 5:21-24; and Mal. 1:6-14).

In fact, the very point ‘that Jesus is alleged to be making here was made all the way back in Josh. 24:14 when Joshua admonished the Israelites to “fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth. God has always expected men to worship him with the right attitude, and according to the standard of truth. It doesn’t seem sensible to have Jesus saying in John 4 that the time for such worship had just now arrived.

Moreover, a continued examination of the context of John 4 seems to indicate rather clearly that the coming of this new “worship in spirit and truth” has something to do with the transition from the old to the new covenant. It was the Samaritan woman’s question about worshipping in Jerusalem or Samaria that prompted Jesus’ remark. And the coming of this new type of worship is directly linked by Jesus to the cessation of worship in Jerusalem (4:21).

What then is there about the worship that we offer under the new covenant which, when compared with the worship offered under the old covenant, can be characterized as “in spirit and in truth”? I believe that the key to the answering of this question is provided in the very next verse. There Jesus says that “God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.” Now Jesus is not just making an assertion here. He is making an argument. He is implying that it is because of God’s nature as a spiritual being that our worship must be in spirit and truth. Now if “in spirit and in truth” only means in sincerity and according to God’s laws, it is a bit hard to see how the necessity of such worship is related to God’s nature as a spiritual being.

But, if we take the phrase “in spirit and in truth” as a combination of two words to express the single concept of the inner spiritual realities of the new covenant as opposed to the external shadows of the old covenant, all becomes clear. Jesus is telling the Samaritan woman that God is not a material being but a spiritual being, and the time has now come for the material and external forms of the O.T. system to be replaced by the true spiritual realities which they foreshadowed.

This point can be most clearly illustrated from the very question which the woman put to Jesus. She wanted to know whether men should worship God at the sanctuary in the temple at Jerusalem or at the sanctuary of the temple on Mt. Ebal in Samaria. Jesus responded by saying, in effect, that though Jerusalem was God's appointed place, the time had now come for the old temple worship of Jerusalem to be replaced by the new "worship in spirit and truth." But he is not thereby implying that the worship that had formerly been offered at Jerusalem was insincere and false. Rather, he is saying that the time has now come for that temple to be replaced by the true spiritual reality which it foreshadowed, the true sanctuary which the Lord pitched and not man (Heb. 8:2). As a matter of fact, the writer of Hebrews develops this very point throughout chapters 8 and 9 of his letter. The Aaronic priesthood has been replaced by the true spiritual reality which it foreshadowed, the priesthood of Christ. The animal sacrifices of Moses' system have been replaced by the spiritual reality which they foreshadowed, the sacrifice of Christ. And the old sanctuary has been replaced by the true sanctuary which it foreshadowed.

Perhaps we can also bring in II Cor. 3:1-18 at this point. There we are told that the old covenant was one of the letter, but the new is one of the spirit. I do not believe Paul is saying here that the religion of the O.T. was unspiritual. That was just not true. In fact, Paul himself said that the law of Moses was indeed spiritual (Rom. 7:14). But though it was a religion for spiritually minded people, the O.T. system was still an external foreshadowing of inward spiritual realities that were not to be fully revealed until the coming of the Christ. And in that sense, the O.T. was an external ministration of the letter as compared to the ministration of the spiritual realities of the new covenant.

This then is the interpretation of Jesus' words that seems to me to suit the context best. I have difficulty seeing Jesus telling the Samaritan woman that the time had just now arrived for men to start worshipping God sincerely, and in accordance with his laws. But I can sure see him telling her that her question about the proper mountain of worship would soon be insignificant because the time had now come for the old external forms such as the temple at Jerusalem to be replaced by the true spiritual realities which they, foreshadowed.

Indeed, I believe that such a message would have been of special interest to this woman, for it would, if actually understood by her, enable her to see why Jesus, a Jew, had been willing to talk to her, a Samaritan. The matters that separated the Jews and Samaritans were related primarily to external features of the old covenant. But the time had now come when the true Jew was to be reckoned, not according to the flesh, but inwardly, according to the circumcision of the heart, in the spirit (Rom. 2:28-29). And thus it was that Jesus, the Jew, could offer her, a Samaritan, the water of life.

**\*\*P[hil] R[oberts]\*\***

(This interpretation was first suggested to me in a lesson presented here at Plano by Larry Hafley, former editor of this paper.)

*The Plano Provoker*, October 14, 1976, pp. 2-3

Appendix B:

## **Worship in Spirit and Truth**

*Darrell Hymel*

### **A Contrast Between Judaism and Christianity**

AFTER PERCEIVING THAT JESUS WAS A prophet, the woman at the well in Samaria asked Jesus a religious question concerning the right place to worship. Before answering that the Jews were right in worshipping at Jerusalem, He directed her attention to the future when the place would not be important (John 4:19-24). Then Jesus contrasted the present Jewish system with the true worshippers who will worship the Father in spirit and truth. This contrast is also seen in many other New Testament passages (John 1:17; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 9:9-10).

The importance of understanding this contrast is evident when we see the number of denominational bodies who pick and choose what they want from the Old Testament to fit their religious system. Tithing, special garments for preachers, a separate priesthood, religious candles, the burning of incense, instruments of music, and infant membership are just a few things borrowed from worship in Jerusalem.

### **What the Contrast Cannot Be**

A common interpretation of “worship in spirit and truth” is that worship must be *sincere* and according to God’s *revealed truth*. However, if this is what it means, there is no contrast. Under the Old, sincerity was also required and hypocrisy was not tolerated. Love from the heart was commanded (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). Trusting in the temple while living in disobedience rendered sacrifice unacceptable (Jeremiah 7:1-10; Isaiah 1:10-18). Neither in the Old nor the New was worship acceptable when offered only with the lips and not with the heart (Matthew 15:7-8). Worship according to revealed truth was necessary under both Testaments (Deuteronomy 5:32-33), and New Testament writers even used their required obedience as examples for us (Hebrews 2:1-4; 12:25).

### **What Is the Contrast?**

Since the contrast is not between the sincere and the insincere, nor the doctrines of men and the commandments of God—what is the contrast? Worshippers in this last age are the true worshippers. The contrast is not that those under the law of Moses were false worshippers, but they were simply serving a shadow of the good things to come (Hebrews 10:1), a copy and pattern of the heavenly things (Hebrews 8:4). The Lord pitched the true tabernacle, not Moses, but that does not mean that Moses built a false one (Hebrews 8:2). “The law came through Moses but grace and truth through Jesus Christ” does not mean that Moses told lies, but rather it contrasts the fact that Jesus brought the “true heavenly things” while Moses brought only a shadow and pattern (John 1:17). Yes, Christians are to worship according to revealed truth, but that is not what Jesus is stressing in this passage. We have the reality versus the shadow, the true versus a copy, and the heavenly versus the earthly.

True worshippers worship in spirit; those who worshipped under the shadow and pattern of heavenly things observed carnal, fleshly ordinances (Hebrews 9:9-12, 23-24). Today, instead of a

physical temple filled with dazzling natural beauty, our bodies are the temple of Deity (1 Corinthians 3:16). We, as living stones, make up a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5-9). Instead of wearing the expensive robes of Old Testament priests, our robes are our righteous deeds (Revelation 19:8). Our prayers are a sweet incense to God (Revelation 5:8). Our sacrifice is not the blood of bulls and goats, but the precious lamb of God. We give our bodies as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1) and our sacrifice of praise is the fruit of our lips (Hebrews 13:15), not the noise of brass instruments and drums. God's law is written on our hearts, not on tables of stone (2 Corinthians 3:2-3). Today, our washing is a washing of regeneration, not of cups and pots and flesh. Its purpose is not to take away the filth of the flesh, but to give a clear conscience (1 Peter 3:21). So, when Jesus said that the true worshippers would worship in spirit, He was not talking about sincerity, even though that is required of these worshippers. But He was contrasting the carnal, fleshly ordinances of the Old system with the spiritual service offered in the New.

Since we now have the perfect tabernacle made without hands (Hebrews 9:11) it is a tremendous mistake to go back to the Old regulations which pertain only to food, drink, and various washings of the body that were imposed until a time of reformation (Hebrews 9:10). Hebrews ends by stressing that in order to benefit from the sacrifice of Christ, we must forsake the tabernacle worship and go outside the gate of Jerusalem (Hebrews 13:10-14). If we try to keep any part of the old fleshly, shadowy system, we cease to worship in spirit and in truth (Galatians 5:1-4).

*(Christianity Magazine, January 1986, Number 1, 3)*

Appendix C:

### Definitions Of Major Terms

#### Hawa (Hebrew):

*BDB*: "...vb. **bow down**.... **1. bow down, prostrate oneself**, before a monarch or superior, in homage, etc.... **2. before God, in worship, etc....**" (1005)

*Gesenius*: "(1) **TO BOW ONESELF DOWN**, Isa. 51:23 (Chald. id. and more frequent). (2) to sink down, to be depressed....HIPHIL...to depress, metaph. the heart, Pro. 12:25. HITHPALEL...(1) **to prostrate oneself before any one out of honour**, PROSKUNEIN....Those who used this mode of salutation fell on their knees and touched the ground with the forehead (whence there is often added...Gen. 19:1; 42:6; 48:12), and this honour was not only shown to superiors, such as kings and princes, 2 Sam. 9:8; but also to equals; Gen. 23:7; 37:7, 9, 10 [?]; but especially -- (2) in worshipping a deity; hence **to honour God** with prayers, Gen. 22:5; 1 Sa. 1:3; even without prostration of body, Gen 47:31; 1 Ki. 1:47. (3) to do homage, to submit oneself. Ps. 45.12...." (Bold emphasis added, #7812, pp. 813-814)

*TWOT*: "**III, exclusively in the Eshtaphal stem, hišta□āwâ "to prostrate oneself"; "to worship."** ....

"The verb in its original sense meant to prostrate oneself on the ground as in Neh 8:6 'worshipped' (KJV, RSV) but more correctly 'prostrated themselves' (NEB, JB, NAB) as the phrase □ār□â 'to the ground' requires. ....

"The Greek word *proskuneō*, which is used to translate *hišta□āwâ* 148 times in the LXX, had a semantic development similar to the Hebrew word. Like it *proskuneō* can mean either 'prostration' or 'worship.'" ....

"Prostration was a common act of self-abasement performed before relatives, strangers, superiors, and especially before royalty." (#619, 267-269)

*DBL:Hebrew*: "**1. ... bow down**, prostrate oneself, i.e., take a stance of bowing low in an act. of respect or honor, but not necessarily worship of deity (Ge 43:28); **2. ... bow in worship**, prostrate oneself, i.e., make a low stance as a sign of honor, worship, and homage of deity, with an associative meaning of allegiance to that deity (Ex 4:31)...." (#2556)

*ESL*: "A primitive root...172 occurrences; AV translates as 'worship' 99 times, 'bow' 31 times, 'bow down' 18 times, 'obeisance' nine times, 'reverence' five times, 'fall down' three times, 'themselves' twice, 'stoop' once, 'crouch' once, and translated miscellaneous three times. **1** to bow down. 1a (Qal) to bow down. 1b (Hiphil) to depress (fig). 1c (Hithpael). *1c1* to bow down, prostrate oneself. 1c1a before superior in homage. 1c1b before God in worship. 1c1c before false gods. 1c1d before angel." (#7812)

#### Proskuneo (Greek):

*BDAG*: "...(Trag., Hdt.+ Freq. used to designate the custom of prostrating oneself before persons and kissing their feet or the hem of their garment, the ground, etc.; the Persians did this in the presence of their deified king, and the Greeks before a divinity or someth. holy.) **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, welcome respectfully**.... This reverence or worship is paid a. to human beings, but

by this act they are to be recognized as belonging to a superhuman realm....—Jesus, who is rendered homage as Messianic king and helper: **Mt 2:2, 8, 11.—8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; J 9:38.—Mt 20:20**....Mock worship on the part of soldiers **15:19**.... b. to transcendent beings....” (Bold emphasis added, Third Edition, 882-883)

*BAGD*: “...used to designate the custom of **prostrating oneself before a person and kissing his feet, the hem of his garment, the ground**, etc.; the Persians did this in the presence of their deified king, and the Greeks before a divinity or someth. holy; (*fall down and*) *worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to, welcome respectfully*, in Attic Gk., and later....” (Bold emphasis added, Second Edition, 716-717)

*Thayer*: “fr. Aeschyl and Hdt. down; Sept. very often for...(to prostrate one’s self); prop. **to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence**....hence among the Orientals, esp. the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence....hence in the N.T. **by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance**, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication. It is used a. of homage shown to men of superior rank.... b. of homage rendered to God and the ascended Christ, to heavenly beings, and to demons: absol. (our to worship)....” (#4352, p. 548)

*Vine*: “to **make obeisance, do reverence to** (from *pros*, towards, and *kuneo*, to kiss) is the most frequent word rendered to worship.” (p. 1247)

### **Latreia (Greek noun):**

*BDAG*: “in cultic usage **service/worship (of God)**....**Ro 9:4**; λογικ□ λ. **12:1** (s. λογικός). δικαιώματα λατρείας *regulations for worship* **Hb 9:1**. τ□ς λ. □πιτελε□ν *perform the rites* vs. **6**. λ. προσφέρειν τ□ θε□ *offer a service to God* **J 16:2**. Of image-worship λ. θε□ν νεκρ□ν D 6:3; cp. Dg 3:2.” (Third Edition, 586)

*Thayer*: “**1.** in Grk. auth. *service rendered for hire*; then *any service or ministration* (Tragg., Plut., Leian.); *the service of God*.... **2.** in the Grk. Bible, *the service or worship of God acc. to the requirements of the levitical law*... Ro. 9:4; Heb. 9:1, (1 Macc. 2:19, 22); λατρείαν προσφέρειν τ□ θε□ [to offer service to God] i. q. θυσίαν προσφέρειν ε□ς λατρείαν [to offer a sacrifice in service], Jn. 16:2; □πιτελε□ν τ□ς λατρείας, *to perform the sacred services* (see □πιτελέω, 1), spoken of the priests, Heb. 9:6; univ. of any worship of God, □ λογικ□ λ. Ro. 12:1 [cf. W. § 59, 9 a.]; (of the worship of idols, 1 Macc. 1:43).” (372)

*Vine*: “akin to *latreuo*, ‘to serve,’ primarily, any service for hire denotes in Scripture the service of God according to the requirements of the Levitical Law, Rom. 9:4; Heb. 9:1, 6, ‘divine service.’ It is used in the more general sense of service to God, in John 16:2; Rom. 12:1.” (2:178)

*TDNT*: “The noun λατρεία is rather more common. It first means **service for reward**.... It then means **service, work, labour** generally.... Special note should be taken of the fact that λατρεία can be used for **the worship of the gods**....” (Bold emphasis added, 4:59)

*TDNT*: “λατρεία occurs only 9 times in the LXX (including the Apocrypha), and so far as the Heb. is available always corresponds to עָבַד הָיָה. With one exception **the meaning is always cultic**. It denotes very generally **cultic worship** (Jos. 22:27) or else specifically a single practice, namely, the Passover (Ex. 12:25, 26; 13:5). In 1 Macc. it is always used for **religion**, cf. 2:19.... Once λατρεία means **the priestly ministry**, cf. 1 Παρ. 28:13....” (Bold emphasis added, 4:61)

*TDNT*: “Of the five occurrences of this word in the NT, three refer to the sacrificial ministry... In Jn. 16:2...the word λατρεία virtually means sacrifice, as shown by the verb προσθέρειν. The concrete idea of sacrifice seems always to cling to the noun no less than to the verb. This is also true in the last verse (R. 12:1), though **the use here is metaphorical. The service which Christians are to offer consists in the fashioning of their inner lives and their outward physical conduct in a way which plainly distinguishes them from the world and which corresponds to the will of God. This is the living sacrifice which they have to offer....**” (Bold emphasis added, 4:65)

**Latreuo (Greek verb):**

*BDAG*: “...(Trag. et al. in var. senses, ‘work for pay, be in servitude, render cultic service’; ins, LXX; ApcMos 13; En, Philo, SibOr 4, 104; Just.) **serve**, in our lit. only of the carrying out of religious duties, esp. of a cultic nature, by human beings....” (Third Edition, 586)

*Thayer*: “...in Grk. writ. **a. to serve for hire; b. univ. to serve, minister to**, either gods or men, and used alike of slaves and of freemen; in the N. T. *to render religious service or homage, to worship*, (Hebr. עָבַד, Deut. 6:13; 10:12; Josh. 24:15); in a broad sense, λατρ. θεοῦ: Mt. 4:10 and Lk. 4:8, (after Deut. 6:13); Acts 7:7; 24:14; 27:23; Heb. 9:14; Rev. 7:15; 22:3; of the worship of idols, Acts 7:42; Ro. 1:25, (Ex. 20:5; 23:24; Ezek. 20:32)... absol., *to worship God...* Acts 26:7. in the strict sense; *to perform sacred services, to offer gifts, to worship God in the observance of the rites instituted for his worship*: absol., Heb. 9:9; 10:2; spec. of the priests, *to officiate, to discharge the sacred office...* Heb. 8:5; 13:10.” (372-373)

*Vine*: “primarily ‘to work for hire’ (akin to *latris*, ‘a hired servant’), signifies (1) to worship, (2) to ‘serve’; in the latter sense it is used of service (a) to God, Matt. 4:10; Luke 1:74 (‘without fear’); 4:8; Acts 7:7; 24:14, rv, ‘serve’ (kjb, ‘worship’); 26:7; 27:23; Rom. 1:9 (‘with my spirit’); 2 Tim. 1:3; Heb. 9:14; 12:28, kjv, ‘we may serve,’ rv, ‘we may offer service’; Rev. 7:15; (b) to God and Christ (‘the Lamb’), Rev. 22:3; (c) in the tabernacle, Heb. 8:5, rv; 13:10; (d) to ‘the host of heaven,’ Acts 7:42, rv, ‘to serve’ (kjb, ‘to worship’); (e) to ‘the creature,’ instead of the Creator, Rom. 1:25, of idolatry....” (2:563)

*TDNT*: “Etymology, Basic Meaning and Occurrence. λατρεύειν comes from λάτρον, ‘reward,’ ‘wages’; cf. λάτρις, ‘hireling,’ more generally ‘servant’; cf. also the Lat. *latro*, ‘robber.’ Hence the first meaning of λατρεύειν is **‘to work or serve for reward,’** then **‘to render services,’ ‘to serve,’** with no thought of reward and irrespective of whether the one who serves is a slave or free.... **The word was not very common....**

“b. Use. It is used of **bodily services** (Soph. Trach., 35 of Heracles: τῶν ἰσχυρῶν ἰατρῶν λατρεύοντα), of **workers on the land** (Solon, 13, 48, ed. T. Bergk, Poetae Lyrici Graeci, II<sup>5</sup> [1915]), of **slavery** (Xenoph. Cyrop., III, 1, 36). It is also **used figuratively in many different connections....** Though the word is rare, its potentialities are thus very large. There are no impulses towards the development of a usage which is even remotely technical.” (4:58-59)

*TDNT*: “Occurrence, Hebrew Equivalents and Basic Character. The word occurs a round 90 times in the LXX.... With a few unimportant exceptions λατρεύω is always used for the Heb. עָבַד. But this word is also very frequently rendered δουλεύειν. It is to be noted that the books which frequently have λατρεύειν use it mostly when עָבַד has **a religious reference**, cf. Ex. 3:12; 4:23; 7:16, 26; 8:16; 9:1, 13; 10:3, 7, 8, 24, 26; 20:5; 23:24, 25; Dt. 4:19, 28; 5:9; 6:13; 7:4, 16; Jos. 22:27; 24:14–24, 31. When the ref. is to human relations, the rendering is always δουλεύειν,

cf. Ex. 14:5, 12; 21:2, 6; Dt. 15:12, 18; Ju. 3:8, 14; 9:28, 38; and consistently in Gn.... Conversely, **λατρεύειν is always used in these writings in the religious sense.** The translators of these books thus attempted to show even by their choice of words that the relation of service in religion is something apart from other relations of service.... Nevertheless, **λατρεύειν is distinctively religious** not only in the books where it is chiefly found but wherever it appears in the LXX....

“Use. The religious connotation of λατρεύειν is not to be taken, however, merely in a general, abstract, spiritual or ethical sense. It is not enough to say that λατρεύειν has religious significance. One must say that it has sacral significance. λατρεύειν means more precisely **to serve or worship cultically, especially by sacrifice....**

“...λατρεύειν always denotes **the religious conduct of the people generally....**” (4:60-61)

*TDNT*: “The Purely Religious Character of the Word as Determined by the LXX. The influence of the LXX may be seen in the fact that the word never refers to human relations, let alone to secular services. The ministry denoted by λατρεύειν is **always offered to God** (or to heathen gods....)....

“λατρεύω of the Ministry of Prayer. In the other NT verses the reference of λατρεύειν is to **the cultic worship of praise and prayer** which all may offer, or else **the word is used in an extended, loose and almost figurative or spiritualised sense** to include every form of divine worship. ....

“**λατρεύω in a Generalised Figurative Sense.** The comprehensive use of λατρεύειν for **the whole conduct of the righteous towards God** is found first in Lk. 1:74.... λατρεύειν then has the same comprehensive sense in Ac. 24:14, where Paul gives the assurance that he serves the God of the fathers.....

“R. 1:9 has in view the same active religious service except that here the reference is specifically to Paul’s missionary work.... Hence Paul refers to his missionary work. He calls this a λατρεύειν, an act of religious service, of the worship which he offers to God.... Paul serves and worships God, he renders divine service, actively in the proclamation of the message and inwardly in intercession for the churches and for the progress of the Gospel....

“Finally, in Phil. 3:3 we again find λατρεύειν in **a broad metaphorical sense** in which it comprises **the whole of Christian existence.... The Christian life fashioned by the Spirit is true λατρεία.**

“**λατρεύειν means to worship cultically.** In the OT its primary reference is to the sacrificial cultus. In the NT, however, this is almost completely secondary, except in Hb. It gives place to the ministry of prayer, and then more broadly to the total view according to which **the whole life of the Christian is fundamentally brought under the concept λατρεύειν**, so that he alone seems to be capable of a λατρεύειν, a worship of God, which is worthy of the name. **The cultic concept is now spiritualised.**” (Bold emphasis added, 4:62-65)

## Appendix D:

***Proskuneo And Literal Prostration***

*The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*: “At an early time **the usage was transferred from the outward gesture to the inward attitude**. The beginnings are to be sought in the tragedians. .... The word becomes more general later, though the original use persists. .... On the other hand **the sense in pap. of the 1st cent. A.D. is the very general one.**” (Bold emphasis added, 6:760)

*The Complete Word Study Dictionary*: “Spoken of those who pay reverence and homage to deity, render divine honors, worship, adore, **with the basic idea of prostration, which, however, is often dropped** (cf. Sept.: Gen. 47:31; 1 Kgs. 1:47).” (Bold emphasis added, Elec. Ed., n.p.)

*The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume*: “...*proskynéō* is an ancient term for reverent adoration of the gods, which in the case of chthonic deities would mean stooping to kiss the earth. **The Greeks abandon the outward gesture but keep the term for the inner attitude**. Later the word takes on a much more general sense expressing love and respect.” (Bold emphasis added, 948)

*James Bales*: “[L]yric first meant ‘**of or for a lyre,**’ a song sung to the accompaniment of a lyre, and then **poetry delineating the poet’s own thoughts and feelings**, as opposed to *epic* or *dramatic poetry*, which details external circumstances and events.’ (*The Century Dictionary*, 3555) Today it refers to **the words of a song** without any idea of an instrument.” (Bold emphasis added, *Instrumental Music And New Testament Worship*, p. 62)