

WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

Acceptable Worship

Study Guide

Worshiping the Father in Spirit and in Truth

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A lesson-by-lesson companion for reading, discussion, and written responses.

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

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Using this guide

Read the corresponding chapter, then work through the themes, arguments, and Scripture references.

Write your responses before discussing the questions with others. Use the application pages to identify a practical next step.

The study material is retained from the existing lecture study guides. Added writing prompts provide space for your own response.

Print at Actual Size / 100% on US Letter paper. Single-sided and double-sided printing are both suitable. Lessons begin on the next available page; no blank pages are inserted.

Reading assignments refer to the September 30, 2026 edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

Acceptable Worship

Part One

November 23, 2003

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-22.

Major Themes

The Duty of Worship

All people, both saints and sinners, have a duty to worship God because He is Creator, Provider, Redeemer, and King.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'It is our duty to worship God' and lists creation right, providential right, redemptive right, and kingship right as reasons.

God's Hatred of Unacceptable Worship

God is not indifferent to how He is worshiped; He hates and despises worship offered by the disobedient, even if it follows prescribed rituals.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Isaiah 1:11-15, Amos 5:21-23, Malachi 1:6-10, and Jeremiah 7:19-28 to show God's rejection of insincere worship.

Worship According to Divine Revelation

Acceptable worship must be based on God's revealed Word, not human ideas, feelings, traditions, or pragmatism.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Acceptable worship is a matter of divine revelation' and contrasts it with rationalism, subjectivism, traditionalism, pragmatism, and sentimentalism.

Christ as the Only Way to Acceptable Worship

Only through the person and work of Jesus Christ can anyone offer acceptable worship to God, because He saves us and brings us to God.

Lecture support: Weaver references Matthew 1:21, Philippians 3:3, 1 Peter 3:18, and John 14:6 to show that acceptable worship is a fruit of Christ's work.

Worship as Evangelism

The biblical doctrine of worship can be used to convict sinners of their duty and inability, leading to regeneration.

Lecture support: Weaver explains that Jesus used worship to evangelize the Samaritan woman, showing her duty and her unfitness to worship without conversion.

The Meaning of Worship

Worship involves bowing down, submission, and honoring God, illustrated by the Greek word *proskuneo* and the image of a dog licking its master's hand.

Lecture support: Weaver defines worship as 'reverence, honor, and homage paid to superior beings' and explains *proskuneo* as 'to bow down before, to submit to, to lick the back of the hand.'

Key Arguments

Worship is a universal duty

Every person must worship God because He is Creator, Provider, Redeemer, and King; failure to do so is a great sin.

Lecture support: Weaver argues, 'It is our duty to worship God' and gives four rights: creation, providence, redemption, and kingship.

Unacceptable worship provokes God's wrath

God explicitly states He hates and despises worship from those who are disobedient, even if the forms are biblically prescribed.

Lecture support: Weaver reads Isaiah 1:11-15, Amos 5:21-23, Malachi 1:6-10, and Jeremiah 7:19-28, where God rejects sacrifices and assemblies.

Worship must be according to Scripture

Human methods of worship - rationalism, subjectivism, traditionalism, pragmatism, sentimentalism - are invalid; only divine revelation determines acceptable worship.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Acceptable worship is a matter of divine revelation' and contrasts it with human approaches.

Christ enables acceptable worship

Without Christ's saving work, no one can please God or worship acceptably; He is the only way to the Father.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Matthew 1:21, Philippians 3:3, 1 Peter 3:18, and John 14:6 to show that worship is a fruit of Christ's work.

Worship is not about personal feelings

The purpose of worship is to honor God, not to make the worshiper feel good; the question is whether it is acceptable to God.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Has it ever dawned upon you that worship is not designed for you? It's designed for God.'

Religion can hinder true worship

Religious traditions and rituals can become a hindrance when they replace heartfelt obedience and righteousness.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'One of the greatest hindrances to real worship is religion' and references Mark 7 and Matthew 15.

Scripture References

John 4:19-26

The primary text for the series; Jesus teaches the Samaritan woman about worship in spirit and truth.

1 Corinthians 10:20-21

Paul teaches that pagan sacrifices are to devils, showing there is no neutrality in worship.

Psalms 89:7

God is to be feared in the assembly of the saints and held in reverence.

Psalms 95:6-7

A call to worship and bow down before the Lord our Maker.

Mark 7 (also Matthew 15)

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for elevating tradition over God's Word, hindering true worship.

Romans 8:8

Those in the flesh cannot please God, showing the inability of the unsaved to worship acceptably.

Exodus 20:1-3

The first commandment: no other gods before the Lord.

Matthew 4:10

Jesus quotes Deuteronomy, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'

1 John 5:21

Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Ephesians 5:5

Covetous men are idolaters.

2 Timothy 3:4

Men will be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Philippians 3:19

Whose god is their belly.

1 Timothy 2:9

Women should dress in modest apparel.

Psalms 100

A call to worship because the Lord is God and we are His people.

Acts 14:17

God's providence in giving rain, fruitful seasons, food, and gladness.

Psalms 107:2

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

1 Timothy 6:15-16

Christ is the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Isaiah 1:11-15

God rejects the sacrifices and assemblies of the wicked; He hates their worship.

Amos 5:21-24

God hates and despises their feast days and will not accept their offerings; He desires righteousness.

Malachi 1:6-11

God rebukes the priests for offering polluted bread and blind sacrifices, showing contempt for His table.

Study notes

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Weaver say that even the unconverted should be interested in worship?

Consider: Weaver argues that worship is a duty for all and that failure to worship the true God is satanic worship.

2. What does the Greek word proskuneo teach us about the nature of worship?

Consider: Weaver explains the word means to bow down, submit, like a dog licking its master's hand.

3. How does the story of Cain and Abel illustrate the importance of acceptable worship?

Consider: Weaver notes that the first open sin was over worship; Abel's sacrifice was accepted, Cain's was rejected.

4. Why does God say He hates the worship described in Isaiah 1 and Amos 5?

Consider: God rejects worship from those whose hands are full of blood and who lack righteousness.

5. What does Malachi 1 teach about offering God our best versus our leftovers?

Consider: God rebukes the priests for offering blind and lame sacrifices, asking if they would offer such to their governor.

6. How does Weaver contrast divine revelation with human approaches to worship?

Consider: He lists rationalism, subjectivism, traditionalism, pragmatism, and sentimentalism as invalid bases for worship.

7. Why is it impossible to worship God acceptably apart from Jesus Christ?

Consider: Weaver cites Romans 8:8 and John 14:6 to show that only through Christ can we please God and come to the Father.

Applications

Examine the object of your worship

Consider whether you are worshiping the true God or an idol such as money, pleasure, or self.

Lecture support: Weaver warns that your god is whatever you set your heart upon and lists modern idols.

Evaluate your worship by Scripture, not feelings

Assess whether your worship is based on God's revealed Word rather than personal feelings or traditions.

Lecture support: Weaver states that worship must be according to divine revelation, not subjectivism or sentimentalism.

Offer God your best, not leftovers

Give God the honor due His name by offering Him the best of your time, resources, and devotion, not what is convenient or leftover.

Lecture support: Weaver applies Malachi 1, where God rebukes offering blind and lame sacrifices.

Trust in Christ alone for acceptable worship

Recognize that only through faith in Jesus Christ and His saving work can you worship God acceptably.

Lecture support: Weaver emphasizes that acceptable worship is a direct fruit of the work of Jesus Christ.

Use the doctrine of worship in evangelism

When sharing the gospel, help sinners understand their duty to worship God and their inability to do so without Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver explains how Jesus used worship to convict the Samaritan woman.

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 2

Acceptable Worship

Part Two

November 30, 2003

Read Chapter 2 in the companion book, pages 23-42.

Major Themes

The Object of Worship

Acceptable worship must be directed exclusively to the one true and living God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'The proper object of acceptable worship... is the one true and the living God.'

Knowledge of God Essential for Worship

Worship is defective if it is not based on an accurate, growing knowledge of God's character and revelation.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'We cannot worship God acceptably if we're ignorant... we must bring to God an ever-increasing knowledge of Him as He is revealed in Scripture.'

Rejection of God's Revelation Defiles Worship

Rejecting any aspect of God's revealed character makes worship unacceptable to that degree.

Lecture support: Weaver asserts, 'Where there is rejection of any aspect of His revealed character, worship is defective in proportion to that rejection.'

God as Father of Christ

God must be worshiped as the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, a relationship that affirms Christ's deity.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'Every time our Lord used the term Father, He was identifying Himself as God.'

Worship Through the Son in the Spirit

The biblical pattern is to worship the Father through the mediation of the Son and in the power of the Spirit.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Ephesians 2:18: 'For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.'

God as Father of Believers

Believers worship God as their Father by adoption, a relationship of grace that should produce humility and love.

Lecture support: Weaver references Galatians 4:4-7 and Romans 8:15-16, emphasizing the cry 'Abba, Father.'

Key Arguments

Idolatry Begins in the Mind

Wrong thoughts about God constitute idolatry, so worship must be based on correct biblical knowledge.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Idolatry does not begin in the workshop, it begins in the mind... it is possible to be in a Christian assembly and be guilty of idolatry.'

Ignorance Makes Worship Unacceptable

The Samaritans' limited canon led to ignorant worship, which Jesus condemned.

Lecture support: Weaver notes, 'The Samaritans only accepted the Pentateuch... they rejected the Psalms... How in the world could they bring to God an acceptable worship?'

Selective Emphasis on God's Attributes Is Defective

Emphasizing only God's love while rejecting His justice or sovereignty results in defective worship.

Lecture support: Weaver illustrates with preachers who say 'God is love' but never mention His justice or holiness.

Jesus' Use of 'Father' Claims Deity

When Jesus called God His Father, the Jews understood it as a claim to equality with God.

Lecture support: Weaver points to John 5:18: 'Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him... because he... said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.'

Honoring the Son Is Necessary to Honor the Father

One cannot honor the Father while dishonoring the Son; rejecting Christ's deity is rejecting the God of the Bible.

Lecture support: Weaver cites John 5:23: 'He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.'

Worship Must Follow the Trinitarian Pattern

The consistent biblical pattern is to worship the Father through the Son in the Spirit, not to overemphasize one person to the exclusion of the others.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'Everything is always out of the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit... That is God's order of movement.'

Scripture References

John 4:19-26

The passage about the Samaritan woman and worship in spirit and truth, read at the beginning.

1 Corinthians 14:24-25

Shows that a converted sinner's first act is to worship God.

John 4:24

God is Spirit, and worshipers must worship in spirit and truth.

Romans 1:20-23

Idolatry begins in the mind when people fail to glorify God as God.

2 Peter 1:2

Grace and peace are multiplied through the knowledge of God and Jesus.

2 Peter 3:18

Believers are to grow in grace and knowledge of Christ; the 'and' can mean 'even'.

Acts 17:22-26

Paul declares the unknown God to the Athenians, emphasizing knowledge of God.

John 5:16-18

Jesus calls God His Father, and the Jews seek to kill Him for making Himself equal with God.

John 17:1,5

Jesus prays to the Father, claiming shared glory before the world existed.

John 10:27-33

Jesus says 'I and my Father are one,' and the Jews accuse Him of blasphemy.

Matthew 11:26-27

Only the Son knows the Father, and only the Father knows the Son.

Romans 15:5-6

Believers glorify God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:3

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:3,17

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Father of glory.

1 Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 John 1:3

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father.

John 5:21-23

The Son quickens whom He will, and all should honor the Son equally as the Father.

Ephesians 2:18

Through Christ we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Ephesians 3:14-16

Paul bows his knees to the Father, through Christ, strengthened by the Spirit.

Hebrews 7:25

Christ saves to the uttermost those who come to God through Him.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Weaver argue that idolatry begins in the mind, and how does this affect our worship?

Consider: Based on Romans 1:20-23, Weaver explains that wrong thoughts about God lead to idolatry.

2. How does the Samaritan woman's limited knowledge of Scripture illustrate the danger of ignorant worship?

Consider: Weaver notes the Samaritans only accepted the Pentateuch, leading to Jesus' rebuke.

3. In what ways might modern worship music reflect a defective view of God?

Consider: Weaver contrasts old hymns that teach theology with modern music that is man-centered and emotionally driven.

4. Why is it essential to worship God as the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Consider: Weaver argues that Jesus' use of 'Father' claims deity, and New Testament worship consistently addresses God this way.

5. What does Weaver mean by worshipping the Father 'through the Son in the Spirit,' and why is this pattern important?

Consider: He cites Ephesians 2:18 and other passages to show the biblical order of worship.

6. How does the doctrine of adoption influence our worship?

Consider: Weaver explains that being made sons of God by grace should humble us and motivate worship.

Applications

Pursue Knowledge of God

Believers must continually grow in their knowledge of God as revealed in Scripture to offer acceptable worship.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'We must bring to God an ever-increasing knowledge of His person, His character, His attributes.'

Examine Worship Content

Evaluate the songs and prayers used in worship to ensure they teach accurate theology about God.

Lecture support: Weaver criticizes modern music that teaches nothing about God and prefers Psalms and doctrinally rich hymns.

Worship the Triune God in Biblical Order

Pattern worship to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit, avoiding overemphasis on one person to the exclusion of others.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'The overriding principle of Scripture is that we come to the Father through the Son in the Spirit.'

Embrace All of God's Attributes

Do not reject or ignore difficult aspects of God's character (e.g., sovereignty, justice) but worship Him in the fullness of His revelation.

Lecture support: Weaver warns that rejecting any revealed truth makes worship defective.

Cultivate a Spirit of Adoption

Approach God with the intimacy and humility of a child, recognizing the marvel of being made a son or daughter through grace.

Lecture support: Weaver emphasizes the cry 'Abba, Father' and the love that makes us sons of God.

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 3

Acceptable Worship

Part Three

December 07, 2003

Read Chapter 3 in the companion book, pages 43-62.

Major Themes

The Essence of God as Spirit

God's essential nature is Spirit - immaterial, invisible, infinite, and without bodily form. This is foundational to understanding who God is and how to worship Him.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'God is Spirit. And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth' (John 4:24). He explains that God is 'pure, infinite, eternal, and an uncreated being' and 'does not have a body.'

The Distinction Between God's Relationships and Essence

God as Father describes His relationships (with Christ and believers), while God as Spirit describes His essence. This distinction helps clarify the nature of God.

Lecture support: Weaver uses the illustration of George W. Bush: 'When you talk about God as Father, that is a relationship. When you say that God is Spirit, that is what He is in His essence.'

The Omnipresence of God

Because God is Spirit, He is not limited by space; He is everywhere present in His totality. This truth counters pagan and erroneous views that confine God to locations.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Since God is Spirit, there is no such thing as physical limitations to God... God is everywhere at once in the totality of His being.' He cites 1 Kings 20 and Psalm 139.

The Invisibility of God and the Danger of Images

God is invisible and cannot be represented by physical or mental images. Idolatry, whether literal or mental, corrupts true worship.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Colossians 1:15, 1 Timothy 1:17, and Deuteronomy 4:12-19. He warns, 'Whenever you begin to try to conceive of God in any physical image, even a mental image, it is idolatry.'

Worship Must Be Spiritual, Not Merely Physical

Acceptable worship engages the inner spirit, not just external rituals or emotions. God desires a broken and contrite heart, not mere physical expressions.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'God is not interested in pomp, but rather in purity... It's not the physical aspect... that satisfies God. It's that which is spiritual, as He is.' He references Psalm 51.

The Reduction of Christianity to Churchism

Many Christians mistakenly confine God to church buildings, leading to a secular-sacred divide and hypocritical living. True worship extends to all of life.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Most Christians have never understood that God is Spirit, and therefore that God cannot be confined to buildings... There is no division between the secular and the sacred for the Christian.'

Key Arguments

God's essence as Spirit is essential for acceptable worship

Jesus taught the Samaritan woman that true worship requires understanding God as Spirit, not just as Father. This doctrine is foundational for worship that pleases God.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Our Lord is teaching this unsaved fallen woman on the essence of God... If you're going to worship God, you must not only worship God who has revealed Himself as Father, but you must worship God who is in and of Himself Spirit.'

God cannot be confined to special places or structures

Since God is Spirit, He cannot be limited to temples, churches, or geographic locations. This refutes the Samaritan woman's focus on Gerizim vs. Jerusalem.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Acts 17:24-25 and Isaiah 66:1-2, and says, 'You cannot confine God to a temple, or to a shrine, or to a building.'

Physical and mental images of God are idolatrous

Any attempt to represent God visually, whether in art or imagination, violates His spiritual nature and leads to false worship.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Whenever you begin to try to conceive of God in any physical image, even a mental image, it is idolatry.' He references Deuteronomy 4 and Numbers 33.

God is not pleased by mere physical aspects of worship

External actions like singing loudly or emotional displays do not guarantee acceptable worship. God looks at the heart and spirit.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Plopping yourself down in a chair, shouting or singing as loud as you can, does not necessarily please God. That's all physical.' He cites Psalm 51.

God cannot be perceived by the five senses

Because God is Spirit, He is not accessible through taste, touch, smell, hearing, or sight. We perceive Him by faith through His Word, not by sensory experience.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'You cannot taste God. You cannot touch God. You cannot smell God. You cannot hear God... You cannot sense God with your five senses.' He adds, 'It is faith and not feelings.'

True worship requires inner submission to the Father of spirits

Hebrews 12:9 calls God the 'Father of spirits,' indicating that worship must involve the inner man, not just external conformity. Rebellion in the heart invalidates worship.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'If we're going to be in subjection to the Father of spirits... We can't just have the external right. We must have the internal right.'

Scripture References

John 4:19-26

The primary text of the sermon, where Jesus teaches the Samaritan woman about worshiping in spirit and truth and declares that God is Spirit.

John 5:18

Referenced to show that when Jesus called God His Father, the Jews understood He was claiming equality with God.

John 10:30

Cited to demonstrate Jesus' oneness with the Father, supporting His deity.

John 14:28

Mentioned as a passage where Jesus says 'My Father is greater than I,' explained by His role as the sent Servant.

Philippians 2:5-7

Used to explain that Christ, though equal with God, took the form of a servant, accounting for His statements about the Father being greater.

John 14:9

Quoted to show that seeing Christ is seeing the Father, affirming His deity.

1 Kings 20:23, 28

The Syrians thought God was only God of the hills, but God proved He is God of the valleys too, illustrating His omnipresence.

Isaiah 40:15-28

Read to show God's transcendence over creation and the folly of making images to represent Him.

Jeremiah 23:23-24

God asks if He is only a God nearby and not far off, declaring He fills heaven and earth, affirming His omnipresence.

Exodus 20:2-4

The second commandment prohibiting graven images, cited to show God's rejection of physical representations.

Exodus 32:1-4

The golden calf incident, used as an example of the blasphemy of idolatry.

Colossians 1:14-15

Christ is the image of the invisible God, showing that God is invisible and Christ is His visible manifestation.

1 Timothy 1:17

God is described as immortal, invisible, the only wise God, emphasizing His spiritual nature.

1 Timothy 6:15-16

God dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, reinforcing His invisibility.

Romans 1:21-23

Idolaters changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images of corruptible things, showing the sin of materializing God.

Psalms 139:1-12

David's meditation on God's omniscience and omnipresence, illustrating that God is everywhere and cannot be escaped.

Acts 17:24-25

Paul preaches that God does not dwell in temples made with hands, as He is Lord of heaven and earth.

1 Kings 8:27

Solomon's dedication prayer acknowledges that the heaven of heavens cannot contain God, much less the temple.

Isaiah 66:1-2

God declares heaven is His throne and earth His footstool, asking what house could be built for Him.

Deuteronomy 4:12-19

God reminds Israel they saw no form at Horeb, warning them not to make any graven image or likeness.

Study notes

Discussion Questions

1. How does understanding God as Spirit change the way we approach worship compared to focusing on physical locations or rituals?

Consider: Weaver contrasts the woman's concern about where to worship with Jesus' teaching on God's spiritual nature.

2. In what ways might we be guilty of 'churchism' - confining God to a building or Sunday service - and how can we live with an awareness of His omnipresence throughout the week?

Consider: Weaver warns against the reduction of Christianity to the church building and emphasizes that all of life is sacred.

3. Why is it dangerous to form mental images of God or Christ, and how can we guard against this form of idolatry?

Consider: Weaver argues that even mental images are idolatrous because God is Spirit and has not revealed a physical form.

- 4.** What is the difference between an emotional response to worship and true spiritual worship? How can we discern whether our worship is pleasing to God?

Consider: Weaver explains that physical or emotional responses are not necessarily indicators of true worship, which must be in spirit.

- 5.** How does the truth that God is the 'Father of spirits' (Hebrews 12:9) challenge us to examine our inner attitudes and submission, not just outward behavior?

Consider: Weaver uses the illustration of a child obeying outwardly but rebelling inwardly to show that God requires internal submission.

Applications

Reject the compartmentalization of sacred and secular

Since God is Spirit and omnipresent, believers must recognize that all of life is sacred. Work, family, and daily activities are to be done as unto the Lord, not just church activities.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'There is no division between the secular and the sacred for the Christian... My work is sacred. My worship is sacred. My family is sacred.'

Avoid physical and mental idolatry

Believers must not use physical images (statues, pictures) or mental images of God or Christ in worship, as this violates His spiritual nature and the second commandment.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Whenever you begin to try to conceive of God in any physical image, even a mental image, it is idolatry.' He removed pictures of Jesus from a church.

Pursue internal, heartfelt worship over external display

Acceptable worship is not about loud singing, shouting, or emotionalism, but about a broken and contrite heart that submits to God in spirit.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'God is not interested in pomp, but rather in purity... It's not the physical aspect... that satisfies God.' He cites Psalm 51.

Live with constant awareness of God's omnipresence

Because God is everywhere, believers cannot hide from Him or live as if He is absent. This awareness should lead to holy living and genuine worship at all times.

Lecture support: Weaver tells the story of Mel Trotter's neon eye sign and says, 'You see, since God is Spirit, He cannot be confined to a local place.'

Submit inwardly to God as the Father of spirits

True subjection to God involves the inner man, not just outward compliance. Believers must examine their hearts for rebellion and seek to align their spirits with God's will.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'If we're going to be in subjection to the Father of spirits... We can't just have the external right. We must have the internal right.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 4

Acceptable Worship

Part Four

December 14, 2003

Read Chapter 4 in the companion book, pages 63-82.

Major Themes

The Nature of God as Spirit

God is spirit - invisible, immaterial, incorporeal. Worship must correspond to His essence by engaging the human spirit.

Lecture support: Weaver explains that God is spirit (John 4:24), meaning He has no body or parts. Anthropomorphic terms are accommodations. Worship must be in spirit because God is spirit.

The Incomprehensibility of God

Finite humans cannot fully comprehend an infinite God, but we must seek accurate knowledge of Him. It is sin to neglect this pursuit.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Charnock: 'If we could have thoughts of Him as high and as excellent as His nature, our conceptions must be as infinite as His nature.' Only God can comprehend God (Matthew 11:27).

Worship in Spirit and Truth

True worship combines heartfelt engagement (spirit) with accurate knowledge of God (truth). Neither ignorant sincerity nor dead orthodoxy is acceptable.

Lecture support: Weaver contrasts Gerizim worship (sincere but ignorant) and Jerusalem worship (truthful but dead). Jesus says true worshipers worship in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24).

The Father's Seeking Grace

True worshipers are produced by God's sovereign initiative. The Father seeks such worshipers; salvation is monergistic.

Lecture support: Weaver points to John 4:23 ('the Father seeketh such') and the woman at the well as an example of Christ seeking the lost. He contrasts monergism with synergism.

Wholehearted Engagement in Worship

Worship must involve the totality of our being - mind, heart, will. Half-hearted worship is a curse of the modern church.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Psalm 103:1 ('all that is within me'), Psalm 47:7 ('sing ye praises with understanding'), and Paul's example of serving God with his spirit (Romans 1:9).

Worship as Giving, Not Getting

The primary purpose of worship is to give God honor, not to receive a blessing. Seeking personal advantage mocks God.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Charnock: 'To pretend homage to God and intend only the advantage of myself... is rather to mock God than to worship Him.'

Key Arguments

God is not indifferent to how He is worshiped

Scripture shows God hates and despises worship that is not according to His will. Acceptable worship is a matter of divine revelation.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'God is not indifferent as to how we worship Him, because many times in Scripture God says, "I hate, I despise, I will not have your sacrifice and your worship."'

True worship is bounded by spirit and truth

Jesus' words in John 4:23-24 establish that acceptable worship must be both spiritual (heartfelt) and truthful (according to God's revelation).

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'the true worship of God is bounded by spirit, worship in spirit, and worship in truth.' He notes the repetition in verses 23 and 24.

Christ's coming inaugurated true worship

The 'hour' Jesus speaks of is the era of His completed work. Old Testament shadows are replaced by reality in Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver explains Hebrews 1:1-3 and 10:1,9, showing that God has spoken finally through His Son and taken away the first covenant to establish the second.

Salvation is monergistic, not synergistic

God alone initiates and accomplishes salvation. True worshipers are the product of the Father's seeking grace, not human effort.

Lecture support: Weaver defines monergism and synergism, citing John 4:3-4 (Jesus 'must needs go through Samaria'), Luke 19:10, and Jonah 2:9.

Both ignorant sincerity and dead orthodoxy are unacceptable

Gerizim worship represents zeal without knowledge; Jerusalem worship represents truth without heart. God rejects both extremes.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Gerizim and Jerusalem are symbolic of all that is abominable and unacceptable to God.' He gives examples of Mormons, Catholics, Muslims, and Pharisees.

Worship requires spiritual life, assistance, and activity

One must be born again, enabled by the Holy Spirit, and deliberately engage the mind and will in worship.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Ephesians 2:1, John 15:5, Romans 8:26, and Philippians 2:12-13 to show the necessity of divine enablement and human responsibility.

Scripture References

John 4:19-26

The primary text of the sermon, read at the beginning. Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman about true worship.

John 10:30

Cited to show that when Jesus called God Father, He was claiming equality with God: 'I and my Father are one.'

Galatians 4:4-6

Referenced to show believers are adopted as sons and cry 'Abba, Father' by the Spirit.

Matthew 11:27

Quoted to demonstrate that only the Son knows the Father fully, and only the Father knows the Son fully.

Hebrews 1:1-3

Read to show that God has spoken finally through His Son, who is the brightness of His glory and express image of His person.

Hebrews 10:1,9

Cited to show the law was a shadow; Christ came to do God's will and take away the first covenant to establish the second.

John 4:3-4

Referenced to show Jesus 'must needs go through Samaria' to seek the woman, illustrating the Father's seeking grace.

Romans 3:10-12

Alluded to ('There is none that seeketh after God') to argue that no one seeks God apart from His grace.

Luke 19:10

Quoted: 'For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.'

Jeremiah 23:29-32

Read to show God is against those who steal, add to, or substitute for His Word.

Ephesians 4:23-24

Read to show believers are renewed in the spirit of their mind and created in righteousness and true holiness.

Romans 1:8-9

Quoted to show Paul served God 'with my spirit' in the gospel, indicating spiritual engagement.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Quoted: 'Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.'

Psalms 103:1

Quoted: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.'

Psalms 47:1,5-7

Read to show expressive praise, culminating in 'sing ye praises with understanding.'

Hebrews 10:19-22

Read to show believers have boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus and should draw near with a true heart.

Psalms 86:5-11

Read to illustrate meditation on God's attributes and a prayer for an undivided heart to fear His name.

Ephesians 2:1

Cited: 'And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.'

John 15:5

Quoted: 'Without me ye can do nothing.'

Philippians 2:12-13

Cited to show the concurrence of divine working and human activity: 'Work out your own salvation... for it is God which worketh in you.'

Study notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean that God is spirit, and how should that affect the way we worship?

Consider: Weaver explains that God is invisible, immaterial, and incorporeal, so worship must engage our spirit - the part of us most like Him.

2. How can we balance the truth that God is incomprehensible with the command to know Him?

Consider: Charnock's quotes highlight that while we cannot fully comprehend God, it is sin not to seek accurate knowledge of Him.

3. In what ways might our worship resemble Gerizim worship (sincere but ignorant) or Jerusalem worship (truthful but dead)?

Consider: Weaver contrasts these two types of unacceptable worship and calls for worship in spirit and truth.

4. What does it mean to worship 'in spirit'? How can we cultivate wholehearted engagement in corporate worship?

Consider: Weaver describes worship in spirit as involving the mind, heart, and will actively focused on God, not mere physical presence.

5. How does understanding that the Father seeks true worshipers change our view of salvation and worship?

Consider: Weaver emphasizes monergism - that God alone initiates salvation and seeks worshipers, as seen in the woman at the well.

6. What are practical ways to prepare ourselves physically and spiritually for worship?

Consider: Weaver mentions the need for rest, turning our minds from distractions, and deliberately focusing on God's attributes and works.

7. How does the idea that we come to worship to give rather than to get challenge common attitudes about church attendance?

Consider: Weaver argues that the primary purpose of worship is to give God honor, not to be blessed or entertained.

Applications

Seek accurate knowledge of God

Though we cannot fully comprehend God, we must diligently study Scripture to know Him truly. Ignorance is not an excuse; it is sin not to pursue a true notion of God.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Charnock: 'It is our sin not to endeavor after a true notion of Him.' He urges learning about God's attributes and works.

Engage the whole self in worship

Worship must involve the mind, heart, and will. Believers should consciously turn from distractions and focus on God's person, works, and approach through Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Psalm 103:1 and explains that our spirit must move our bodies and minds in worship, not just sit passively.

Prepare physically and spiritually for corporate worship

Physical weariness leads to spiritual sluggishness. Believers should get adequate rest, especially on Saturday night, to be alert and engaged on the Lord's Day.

Lecture support: Weaver shares his personal practice of going to bed early and instructing his children to be home by 11 p.m. on Saturdays.

Come to worship to give, not to get

The primary purpose of worship is to give God the honor and glory due His name. Seeking personal blessing as the main goal mocks God.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Charnock: 'To pretend homage to God and intend only the advantage of myself... is rather to mock God than to worship Him.'

Reject both ignorant sincerity and dead orthodoxy

Believers must avoid the extremes of zeal without knowledge (like the Samaritans) and truth without heart (like the Pharisees). True worship combines spirit and truth.

Lecture support: Weaver contrasts Gerizim and Jerusalem worship and warns against formalism, ritualism, and sentimentalism.

Depend on the Holy Spirit's assistance

We cannot worship aright in our own strength. We must ask the Holy Spirit to enable and assist us in prayer, study, and worship.

Lecture support: Weaver cites John 15:5 and Romans 8:26, emphasizing that the Spirit helps our infirmities and intercedes for us.

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 5

Acceptable Worship

Part Five

December 21, 2003

Read Chapter 5 in the companion book, pages 83-102.

Major Themes

Worship in Truth as Scripturally Bounded

True worship is not merely subjective or emotional but is bounded and regulated by the objective truth of God's Word.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'to worship in truth means that we worship with every passion... that the totality of our worship is guided and regulated by the Word of God.'

The Sufficiency and Authority of Scripture in Worship

Nothing should be introduced into worship without biblical warrant; God's commands must not be added to or diminished.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Deuteronomy 12:32 and argues for the regulative principle: 'we throw out everything except for that which we have biblical warrant to maintain.'

Christ as the Fullness of Truth and Reality

Jesus Christ is the truth incarnate, the reality to which all Old Testament types and shadows pointed. Worship in truth requires peculiar regard to Him.

Lecture support: Weaver explains: 'grace and truth in its full and final manifestation only came in Jesus Christ' and 'He is reality.'

The Transition from Shadow to Substance in Worship

Old Testament worship was a shadow; New Covenant worship is in spirit and truth because Christ has come and completed His work.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'all of that in the Old Testament was nothing but a type and shadow... Jesus Christ said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."'

Spiritual Sacrifices in the New Covenant

Believers offer spiritual sacrifices of praise, not physical ones, because they have been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver references 1 Peter 2:5 and Hebrews 13:15: 'we now offer unto Him a spiritual sacrifice... the fruit of our lips.'

The Danger of Returning to Types and Shadows

To reintroduce Old Testament ceremonial elements is to reject the reality of Christ and to exchange the sun for a candle.

Lecture support: Weaver warns: 'To go back to any part of those Old Testament types and shadows is to dig up what God has buried and to change the light of the sun for the light of a candle.'

Christ as the True Altar and Mediator

There is no physical altar in the church; Christ Himself is our altar, high priest, and sacrifice, enabling us to worship anywhere.

Lecture support: Weaver argues: 'We do not have a physical altar, but we have a real spiritual altar, Jesus Christ.'

The Inadequacy of External Aids for True Worship

Elaborate buildings, stained glass, and instruments cannot produce true worship; only the reality of Christ can stir the heart.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'If the reality of Jesus Christ... doesn't stir your heart... no \$40,000 stained glass window will ever move you.'

Key Arguments

Worship must be regulated by the totality of Scripture

Because God is as He has revealed Himself in the whole Bible, worship that neglects or perverts any part of His revelation is defective and unacceptable.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'The only God that exists is the God of Scripture, and He is as He has revealed Himself... to the degree then that we neglect and reject or pervert the word of God, to that degree, worship is unacceptable.'

The regulative principle is biblical

Deuteronomy 12:32 commands not to add or diminish from God's commands, implying that worship elements must have explicit biblical warrant.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Deuteronomy 12:32: 'What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.'

Expository preaching is essential for true worship

Systematic teaching of the whole counsel of God equips believers to worship in truth by knowing God as He has revealed Himself.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'one of the best ways to prepare yourself and to promote true worship is through a regular, systematic, expository preaching and teaching of the truth.'

Christ is the full and final revelation of God

John 1:17 teaches that grace and truth came in their fullness through Jesus Christ, making Him the ultimate object of worship and the lens through which we approach God.

Lecture support: Weaver explains: 'grace and truth in its full and final manifestation only came in Jesus Christ.'

Old Testament worship was typological and temporary

The tabernacle, temple, and sacrifices were shadows pointing to Christ; now that He has come, worship is in spirit and truth, not tied to physical locations or rituals.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Hebrews 8:5 and 10:1: 'the law having a shadow of good things to come... all of that in the Old Testament was nothing but a type and shadow.'

Believers offer spiritual sacrifices through Christ

Because Christ is the true sacrifice, believers now offer spiritual sacrifices of praise, not physical ones, as their reasonable service.

Lecture support: Weaver references 1 Peter 2:5 and Romans 12:1-2: 'we now offer unto Him a spiritual sacrifice... the fruit of our lips.'

Returning to types denies the sufficiency of Christ

Those who cling to Old Testament shadows have no right to Christ, according to Hebrews 13:10, because they reject the reality.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Hebrews 13:10: 'We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.'

True worship is independent of physical structures

Since Christ is the true temple and altar, worship can occur anywhere and does not require elaborate buildings or instruments.

Lecture support: Weaver argues: 'We do not have a physical altar, but we have a real spiritual altar, Jesus Christ... Reality is not in buildings. Reality is in Christ.'

Scripture References

John 4:19-26

The primary text for the sermon, where Jesus teaches the Samaritan woman about worship in spirit and truth.

Philippians 3:3

Paul describes true believers as those who worship God in spirit, have no confidence in the flesh, and rejoice in Christ.

Ephesians 2:1

Used to show that spiritual life is necessary for worship; we were dead in trespasses and sins.

John 15:5

Without Christ we can do nothing, including worship; we must be spiritually assisted.

Psalms 103:1

David's call to bless the Lord with all that is within him illustrates worship in the totality of one's being.

Romans 1:9

Paul served God in his spirit, showing that the spirit motivates bodily worship and service.

Romans 3:1-2

The Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God, giving them the truth that others lacked.

Romans 9:3-5

Israelites received the adoption, glory, covenants, law, service, and promises; Christ came from them according to the flesh.

John 17:17

Jesus prayed, 'Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth,' linking truth directly to Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.

John 1:1-3, 14

Jesus is the living Word who became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

John 12:48

Jesus equates rejecting Him with rejecting His words; the written and living Word are inseparable.

Colossians 1:5; 2 Timothy 2:15

The Scriptures are called the word of truth; we are to rightly divide it.

2 Timothy 2:7

Paul tells Timothy to consider what he says, and the Lord will give understanding; the mind must be engaged.

John 3:16, 36

Both God's love and His wrath are true; we must worship God as He is revealed in the totality of Scripture.

Proverbs 28:9

If one turns away from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination, showing that neglect of the Word corrupts worship.

Deuteronomy 12:32

God commands not to add to or diminish from His commands, establishing the regulative principle for worship.

John 6:27, 35

Jesus is the true bread of life; the physical is a shadow, and Christ is the substance.

John 14:6

Jesus declares, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life,' identifying Himself as the embodiment of truth.

John 1:17

The law came through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ, indicating the fullness of revelation in Him.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean practically for our worship to be 'guided and regulated by the Word of God'?

Consider: Weaver defines worship in truth as being bounded by Scripture.

2. How does the regulative principle (only doing what Scripture commands in worship) protect the church from error?

Consider: Weaver contrasts the Lutheran and Zwinglian views and argues for the latter.

3. In what ways might we be tempted to neglect or pervert the Word of God in our worship today?

Consider: Weaver warns that worship becomes unacceptable in proportion to our neglect of Scripture.

4. Why is expository preaching essential for promoting true worship?

Consider: Weaver argues that systematic teaching of the whole counsel of God equips believers to worship in truth.

5. How does understanding Old Testament worship as shadow and type deepen our appreciation for New Covenant worship?

Consider: Weaver explains that Christ is the reality to which all shadows pointed.

6. What are some modern examples of 'going back to types and shadows' in worship?

Consider: Weaver warns against reintroducing ceremonial elements and relying on external aids.

7. How does the truth that Christ is our altar, priest, and sacrifice change the way we approach God in worship?

Consider: Weaver emphasizes that we have bold access to the throne of grace through Christ.

8. What does it look like to offer 'spiritual sacrifices' of praise in our daily lives?

Consider: Weaver references Hebrews 13:15 and Romans 12:1-2 about offering the fruit of our lips and our bodies as living sacrifices.

Applications

Study the whole counsel of God

To worship in truth, believers must diligently study all of Scripture to know God as He has revealed Himself, not just favorite attributes.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'we must study to know the Word of God... most of us never, ever meditate upon them [God's attributes].'

Evaluate worship practices by Scripture

Examine whether elements of corporate and personal worship have explicit biblical warrant, and remove those that do not.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'we throw out everything except for that which we have biblical warrant to maintain.'

Engage the mind in worship

Worship requires active mental engagement with biblical truth about God, not passive waiting for emotional experiences.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'you must consider what God has revealed... the mind is engaged in thinking about God.'

Reject reliance on external aids for worship

Do not depend on buildings, music, or aesthetics to produce worship; focus on the reality of Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver warns: 'If the reality of Jesus Christ... doesn't stir your heart... no \$40,000 stained glass window will ever move you.'

Offer spiritual sacrifices of praise

Continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God through Christ, acknowledging His finished work as the basis for access.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Hebrews 13:15: 'let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.'

Meditate on the person and work of Christ

Let worship be permeated with the consciousness of what Christ has done, as He is the full revelation of God.

Lecture support: Weaver concludes: 'all true and acceptable worship is permeated with the consciousness of what Jesus Christ has done for us.'

Prioritize expository preaching

Seek out and support preaching that systematically expounds Scripture, as it is the best means to promote true worship.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'one of the best ways to prepare yourself and to promote true worship is through a regular, systematic, expository preaching.'

Cultivate heartfelt gratitude for salvation

Understand the depth of sin to appreciate the greatness of redemption, leading to more fervent praise.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'if you don't know who you are and what you are and what you were, you don't know how to be thankful for what God has delivered you from.'

Study notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 6

Acceptable Worship

Part Six

December 28, 2003

Read Chapter 6 in the companion book, pages 103-121.

Major Themes

Necessity of Public Worship

Public worship is not optional; it is a biblical requirement because God peculiarly manifests Himself in the gathered assembly.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Just simply because we may worship God wherever we are, does that mean that there is no specific place for public worship? And the answer is absolutely no.'

God's Peculiar Manifestation in the Assembly

In both Testaments, God's special presence is linked to public worship; today, the church is the temple where He dwells.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Where in the world does God today peculiarly and particularly manifest himself? And the answer is in the assembly of the saints.'

Heart Preparation for Worship

Acceptable worship requires intentional preparation of the heart through confession, repentance, and giving God our best.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'Unless your heart is prepared, you'll never receive one benefit from the message... We must seek Him to prepare our hearts.'

Unity and Purity in the Worshiping Community

Sinful attitudes and disunity hinder corporate worship; believers must guard unity and deal with sin to worship acceptably.

Lecture support: Weaver warns, 'It takes just one individual to really ruin a worship service... our envies, our jealousies, our hard feelings, all of that must go.'

God's Seeking Grace

The Father actively seeks true worshipers, and our worship is a response to His initiating grace.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'The only reason we're here is because God sought us... We have a seeking Father who seeks His own and brings them to Himself.'

Key Arguments

Public worship is biblically mandated, not replaced by private worship.

Weaver argues that the ability to worship anywhere does not eliminate the need for corporate worship, as seen in Old and New Testament patterns.

Lecture support: He asks, 'Does that take the place of public worship? And the answer is no. No true Israelite in the Old Testament could ever be satisfied with just mere private worship.'

The gathered church is the present-day temple where God dwells.

Using 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and Matthew 18:20, Weaver contends that God's peculiar presence is now in the assembly of believers, not a building.

Lecture support: He states, 'He is saying that the assembly of the saints are the temple of God... you are, in this instance, the holy of holies.'

Heart preparation is a human responsibility enabled by God.

Weaver balances divine sovereignty and human responsibility, citing Hosea 10:12 to show we must 'break up fallow ground' through confession and intentional preparation.

Lecture support: He says, 'The ability to prepare our hearts belongs to God. The responsibility to prepare our hearts belongs to us.'

Unconfessed sin and disunity hinder acceptable worship.

Weaver argues that known sin, bad attitudes, and relational strife block God's hearing and corrupt corporate worship.

Lecture support: He cites 1 Peter 3:7 and Psalm 66:18, saying, 'If a husband and wife are not right with each other, they're not right with God... How dare we flaunt those sins in His face.'

Worship demands our best effort and preparation.

Weaver insists that half-hearted worship is rejected; we must be physically, mentally, and spiritually prepared to give God our all.

Lecture support: He asks, 'How in the world can you be your best on the Lord's Day morning and give God worship with all your might if you've been up to three o'clock in the morning?'

Scripture References

John 4:19-26

The passage on worship in spirit and truth, read at the beginning of the sermon.

Genesis 12:7-8

Abram built an altar where the Lord appeared to him, establishing public worship at a place of divine manifestation.

Genesis 13:3-4, 14-18

Abram returned to the altar and later built another altar after God's promise, continuing the pattern.

Genesis 21:28-34

Abraham planted a grove and called on the name of the Lord at Beersheba after a public blessing.

Genesis 22:6-18

Abraham built an altar on Mount Moriah and worshipped after God provided a ram, naming the place Jehovah-Jireh.

Genesis 28:16-19

Jacob set up a pillar and worshipped at Bethel where God appeared to him in a dream.

Genesis 35:1

God commanded Jacob to return to Bethel and build an altar, reinforcing the place of public worship.

Joshua 5:13-15

Joshua worshipped the captain of the Lord's host on holy ground, a Christophany.

Luke 5:4-8

Peter fell at Jesus' knees in worship after the miraculous catch of fish.

John 20:26-28

Thomas worshipped Jesus as 'My Lord and my God' when Jesus appeared to him.

Revelation 1

John fell at Jesus' feet as dead when he saw the glorified Christ.

Isaiah 66:1-2

God declares heaven is His throne and earth His footstool, yet He looks to the humble; used to show God cannot be contained in a building.

1 Corinthians 3:9, 16-17

The church is God's building and temple; the assembly is the naos where God dwells.

Matthew 18:15-20

Where two or three are gathered in Christ's name, He is in the midst, showing His presence in the assembly.

1 Peter 2:5

Believers are living stones built into a holy priesthood.

Psalms 84:1-4

David's longing for the courts of the Lord, illustrating the necessity of public worship.

Proverbs 16:1

The preparation of the heart is from the Lord, showing God's sovereignty in heart preparation.

Hosea 10:12

Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord; used to call for heart preparation.

Psalms 15

Describes the character of one who dwells in God's tabernacle, illustrating continual preparation.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive; used to emphasize specific preparation through confession.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the Old Testament pattern of public worship at places of divine manifestation apply to the New Testament church today?

Consider: Weaver traces the principle from Abraham to the temple, then to the gathered assembly.

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2. In what ways might we be tempted to replace public worship with private devotion, and why is that insufficient?

Consider: Weaver argues that private worship cannot replace corporate worship, using David's longing in Psalm 84.

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3. What are some practical steps we can take to 'break up our fallow ground' and prepare our hearts for worship?

Consider: Weaver discusses indirect and specific preparation, including confession and physical readiness.

4. How can unresolved conflict or bad attitudes among believers hinder corporate worship, and what is our responsibility?

Consider: Weaver shares an example of a brother and sister who hadn't spoken in 10 years, affecting the church.

5. What does it mean to worship God 'with all our might,' and how can we practically give Him our best?

Consider: Weaver references David dancing before the Lord with all his might and warns against staying up late before the Lord's Day.

6. How does understanding that the Father seeks worshipers change our perspective on worship?

Consider: Weaver emphasizes God's seeking grace as the foundation for our worship.

Applications

Prioritize public worship

Believers must not be indifferent to gathering with the church; private worship is not a substitute for corporate worship.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'You cannot be indifferent as a child of God to the public worship of God.'

Guard unity and deal with sin

We must confess known sins, resolve conflicts, and maintain unity to avoid hindering corporate worship.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Our envies, our jealousies, our hard feelings, all of that must go if we're going to worship God acceptably.'

Prepare your heart intentionally

Engage in both continual daily preparation and specific preparation before the Lord's Day, including confession and seeking God.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'We must seek Him to prepare our hearts... break up your fallow ground.'

Give God your best physically and mentally

Get adequate rest and be mentally alert to worship God with all your might, avoiding late-night activities that hinder worship.

Lecture support: Weaver asks, 'How in the world can you be your best on the Lord's Day morning... if you've been up to three o'clock in the morning?'

Worship with a clean heart

Confess and repent of specific sins before worship, recognizing that unconfessed sin hinders prayer and worship.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'If we come to publicly worship God... and we know that we have specific sins... How dare we flaunt those sins in His face.'

Respond to God's seeking grace

Recognize that our worship is a response to God's initiative in seeking and saving us, leading to humble gratitude.

Lecture support: Weaver testifies, 'I wasn't looking for Him. He found me.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

Online Lecture Resources

Scan a code or select the lecture link in the PDF. The original lecture identifiers and destinations are preserved.

Lesson 1: Acceptable Worship - Part One

Lecture JW01041

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01041&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



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Lesson 2: Acceptable Worship - Part Two

Lecture JW01040

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Lesson 3: Acceptable Worship - Part Three

Lecture JW01039

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Lesson 4: Acceptable Worship - Part Four

Lecture JW01038

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Lesson 5: Acceptable Worship - Part Five

Lecture JW01037

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Lesson 6: Acceptable Worship - Part Six

Lecture JW01036

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Source information

Study material: existing Major Themes, Key Arguments, Scripture References, Discussion Questions, and Applications from the corresponding Weaver Bible College lecture records. Original lecture titles and provenance are retained in those source records.

Layout upgraded September 30, 2026. Original manuscripts, study-guide data, and previous PDFs have not been changed.