

Title: WHAT WORSHIP DOES FOR US, PSALM 99  
(Chatham, NJ; 10/19/14, AM) [Pc – Cause to Effect]

Theme: Worship centers our lives by reminding us that we are God's creatures and by assuring us we are participating in the spiritual world's worship activity.

Purpose: To develop a higher understanding of why we participate in weekly worship.

Introduction:

1. Worship is essentially defined as "prostrating oneself," and although everyday life is considered spiritual worship before God, participating in community worship plays a major role in shaping us.
2. Paul praises the Thessalonians for turning from idols to serve the "living and true God."
3. Worship should be the next natural step in turning to him.
4. This year's "Forty Days of Prayer" prompts us to reflect on how worship centers us.
5. Let me give you some biblical thoughts on that.

#### I. The True and Living God, 1 Thessalonians 1:9

- A. The prophetic words against false gods
  1. The first of the Ten Commandments prohibits it
  2. Isaiah 44:9-20, the prophet demonstrates the absurdity of worshipping something that isn't even alive
  3. Jeremiah 10:6-16 (esp. 10) reflects Isaiah and Paul adapts his words about the "true and living God"
- B. The Thessalonians turn from these idols
  1. They believed in the one true God and his Son
  2. In Ephesus (Acts 19) Christianity caused a major disruption in the trades supported essentially by pagan idols
  3. Worship of the one God demands a worship of no other gods

#### II. Israel at Worship

- A. Psalm 95 and other "songs of praise"
  1. Several psalms in this section exhort the participant to sing songs of praise and thanksgiving (92, 96, 98, 100)
  2. Psalm 95 in particular:
    - Come into his presence, 2
    - He is a great God and king above all gods, 3
    - He owns all things (4-5)
    - Worship and bow down before our maker, 6
    - The spirit of repentance is inherent in the call to worship (8-11)
- B. The Lord Reigns, Psalm 99
  1. Along with 93 & 97, this psalm proclaims the Lord's rule over all things
  2. NT fulfills this: Mt 28:18; Revelation 4; Ephesians 1:21-22
  3. Psalm 99 calls Israel to worship him:
    - The people tremble
    - Exalt and worship, 5, 9
    - His holiness demands it, 3, 5, 9
    - God of justice, righteousness (4), forgiver yet avenger of wrongs (8)
    - As in 95 his nature defines him and gives us a reason to worship

#### III. Worship Effects Us

- A. What it doesn't do . . .
1. Jeremiah 7 – it doesn't allow us a false sense of security to do as we please, but still present ourselves before him
  2. Paganism has no connection between religion and moral behavior; the pagan gods only demanded that they be pacified
  3. Second, it doesn't merely satisfy a religious obligation
  4. Worship satisfies our deeper longing for communion with God
  5. Third, it does not (or should not) breed self-righteousness
  6. We come to church because we are not righteous
- B. What worship does . . .
1. Reminds us that we are the creatures and God is the creator: all that we are depends on Him
  2. We glimpse and participate in the choruses of praise in heaven, Rev. 4 (remember that Ephesians considers us blessed in the "heavenly places")
  3. We are reminded of our responsibilities to him when we hear from His Word
  4. Worshipping the true and living God breeds a person made in His image: you are what you worship
  5. Worshipping God changes:
    - Our understanding of service to Him
    - Our understanding of human nature in relationship to Him
    - The cosmic scheme of things

Conclusions:

1. John exhorts his church to avoid idols, 1 John 5:20-21.
2. Worshipping the only God will help with this.
3. Come each week with humility and reverence in the presence of God.
4. Let your weekly attendance center and focus your life.