

THE WORSHIP OF GOD IN DAILY LIFE
Selected Scriptures

This morning I will be concluding this series on worship. It has been my prayer throughout this series that our worship of God both as individuals and as a congregation will continue to improve according to our Lord's standards instead of our own. If it has been half as helpful to you in hearing these sermons as it has to me in preparing them, then I believe that will happen, though it will take diligence to make such worship something permanent. Though I find that it is still easy to fall back into evaluating what is occurring by how I feel about it instead of thinking through what God thinks of it and then responding in heartfelt praise of Him, I have also found that diligence to concentrate on true worship makes it easier to give praise to the Lord in all circumstances. Worship becomes much more of a normal response as it is practiced over the years. I am sure many of you have also already found this to be true, and it is my hope that it will be a truth that all of us will continue to experience.

True worship is not just for Sundays and special services. It is even to be far beyond daily devotions. True worship is to be part of daily life in all the various situations that occur whether good or bad. Certainly it is much easier to praise God when some great blessing is bestowed upon you, but it is also to occur when the greatest tragedies hit. Job said that what he feared had come upon him, yet his response was to tear his robe and shave his beard in grief, then fall to the ground and worship - "*The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the Name of the LORD*" (Job. 1:20-21). That cannot happen unless your heart is set on true worship and it becomes a characteristic of your daily life.

This morning I want to conclude this series with some practical suggestions on how to implement the many principles we have talked about over the last few months so that your daily life will be increasingly characterized by true worship. You will need to Set your goal; Set your priorities; Set your spiritual diet; Set your mind, and then Live in the Body.

Set the Goal

If the worship of God is to be the focus of daily life, and it should be, then you have to make sure that you have set that as your goal. This may be quite basic, but it is also the major reason why people do not worship God as they ought. The tendency is for people to make a dichotomy between the secular and the sacred in their daily activities. That is tragic and actually only reveals a person's hypocrisy. They are in two minds, but that has become common in this post-modern world in which people profess and act upon opposing beliefs according to how they feel at the moment. Throughout this series I have tried to stress the point that there is not be such a separation for true Christians. The worship of God is to take place in everything you do in life. It is to govern how you work, what kind of a neighbor you are, your community involvement, how you raise your kids, how wisely you spend the money God has entrusted to you, and even how you eat. As 1 Corinthians 10:31 succinctly states it, "*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*"

If you are going to live with the worship of God as your goal, then you must also be careful of what influences you. Romans 12:2 commands, "*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*" Every society seeks to pressure those within it into its own mold so that everyone is alike sharing the same values and seeking the same goals for life. The idea of American rugged individualism is more myth than reality because few people want to stand out in a crowd as being different.

I have always found it humorous that the teenagers that rebel the most from their parents' standards of conduct and dress claiming that they have to be themselves are the same ones that are most conscious of dressing like all their friends and doing what their friends do. They are not being themselves. They are simply patterning themselves after their peers instead of their parents.

Societal pressure is also easily seen in the herd mentality that quickly develops in politics. You win by getting the most people to join your herd, and so the name of the game is marketing, not truth or statesmanship. Those who do try to stand against it will be severely punished seen in the government and business coercion of Christians who are against the multitude of sexual perversions we are told we must accept and celebrate. The latest is the demand that males who self identify as females be allowed to use women's bathrooms, changing rooms and showers lest their feelings get hurt. The actual danger of sexual predators is ignored. This is a true war on women.

Christians must understand that the world's standards are not our standards. The world's values are not to be our values. Our goals in life may differ greatly from those of family members, friends, co-workers and neighbors. The apostle John put it clearly in 1 John 2:15-17, "*Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* ¹⁶ *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.* ¹⁷ *And the world is passing away, and [also] its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.*"

This pressure to be like society is not only external but also internal as well. What the world offers is what was attractive to our sin nature and therefore still attractive by virtue of our flesh and old habits. Sin does have its pleasure, but only for a season after which it brings judgment (Hebrews. 11:25). These old habits must be broken, or as Paul states more graphically in Colossians 3:5-8, "*consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.* ⁶ *For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come,* ⁷ *and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.* ⁸ *But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, [and] abusive speech from your mouth.*"

Both the external and internal pressure to be like sinful society will be great unless you consciously set your goal of life to match the purpose of your salvation. Romans 8:29 makes it clear that God saves people from their sins so that they will be conformed to the image of Christ, and Ephesians 1:12 adds that this is so they will be a people for His praise and glory. You are to worship God in spirit & truth in every aspect of your life. What is it that you live for? If your citizenship is indeed in heaven as Philippians 3:20 says it is, then you are an alien and stranger in this world just as 1 Peter 2:11 states. What true interest can the things this world has to offer be to you whether it be money, fame, power, or pleasure? But if any of these things are what you seek, then do not be surprised that heaven and He who dwells there holds little attraction to you. Jesus put it plainly in Matthew 6:24 that you cannot love both God and mammon - the world's riches. If you love the world and the things in it, then you will not be a true worshiper of God.

Set the Priorities

To reach any goal, you must set your priorities and daily activities to reach that goal. The same is true here except that the goal of being a worshiper of God is to be primary so that all other goals, priorities and activities are either supportive or secondary. Since a true worshiper of God places the Lord as the focal point of his life, then he will set his priorities according to God's priorities. What are God's priorities?

We can find this out exactly by looking at what Jesus taught in Matthew 22:35-40. In that passage one of the Pharisees that was an expert in the law came to Jesus to test Him and asked, "*Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?*" Jesus' answered in verse 37-40, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.*" ³⁸ "*This is the great and*

foremost commandment.³⁹ *“The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*⁴⁰ *“On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”*

The top priority is to love God with all that you are. The idea of love here is not some sort of warm fuzzy emotional feeling you are supposed to get when you think about God. The word here is *ajgavph* / *agape*, the love of committed choice that sacrifices itself for the good of the chosen one. Your first priority is to seek out after the best interest of God, which is His glory and honor, with all that you are. God is to be first in your mind and your heart. Your soul is to long for Him while striving to bring Him glory and honor by your life. How do you do that? By obedience to His commands. Jesus said in John 14:15, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* He stressed it by restating it again in verse 21. *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me . . .”* The top priority of a Christian then is to be obedient to God because by this you demonstrate you love and trust Him supremely.

The second priority is loving your neighbor with the same degree of thoughtfulness that you show in caring for yourself. It has become popular to pervert this commandment into making your self esteem the priority with the twisted logic that until you love yourself you cannot love others. The truth is stated in Ephesians 5:29 that *“no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it.”* This modern usage of self esteem is just another phrase to describe pride which is the basis for all sorts of sin. Paul’s command in Philippians 2:3-4 explains what it means to love others as yourself. *“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not look out merely for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”* You are to apply yourself in loving those around you.

This being said, there is still the practical matter of working out these two great commandments in the details of daily life. Does loving God mean that you are supposed to be at church every time the door is open? Does it mean that you should neglect your employer in order to witness to your fellow employees? Does loving your neighbor include giving food to everybody that shows up on your door step wanting a handout? How do you balance out all these different responsibilities and keep them in proper priority?

All of these questions are answered as we become more knowledgeable of the Scriptures and develop a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. Let me give you some practical suggestions for now

1) Keep the Lord as your first priority. God saved you from your sins so that you might worship Him. I say again that true worship is to take place in spirit and in truth in every area of your life. Do not make going to church sacred and going to work secular when we are told plainly in Colossians 3:23-24, *“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men;”*²⁴ *knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”* Both work and meeting in church are to be sacred activities for each is to be done unto the Lord and His glory.

Keeping the Lord as the priority means He is always in mind in everything you do. That cannot be true if you neglect your fellowship with Him. I will talk more about this in a moment, but for now understand that if you neglect His Word and personal prayer then it is impossible to keep any other part of your life in order. You cannot know God or what He wants you to do apart from the Bible. You cannot serve Him in the power of the Spirit without prayer. As pointed out in previous sermons, God is not pleased with ignorant worship or with service done in the flesh. Israel came under His judgment for both these things.

2) The second priority of relationship God has placed upon man is the family. The husband-wife relationship, then the parent-child relationships, and then extended family. The Pharisees tried to make their religious system more important and Jesus rebuked them for it in Mark 7:10-13. God gave Eve to Adam in the Garden and made him responsible for her (Genesis 2:18-25). He has commanded husbands to love their wives even as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25). One of the marks of his spiritual maturity will be how he leads his wife in godliness (Ephesians 5:25-33). If he is not doing this, then he is

not qualified for leadership in the church (1 Timothy 3:2,12; Titus 1:6). She is commanded to respect and submit to him, and her level of godliness is marked by how well she does that (Ephesians 5:22-24,33; 1 Peter 3:1-6).

We are to love the Lord more than our spouses, but there is to be no other human relationship of deeper love and commitment. Now I am not talking about a marriage in which the two are best friends who share in their evil vices. A godly marriage is where each spouse is used by God in the life of the other to conform both more into the image of Christ. Sadly, too often this is not the case because people do not follow the Lord's priorities for their lives. So many other things, including at times "church work," replaces the priorities God has set.

The parent-child relationship is next on the priority list. This, like the marriage relationship, is not a priority for just having a good time together and having pleasant feelings toward each other. The priority here is for the children to honor their parents and obey them according to the Lord's command and for the parents to raise the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-4). Again we find that how a man deals with his children is a mark of his godliness, and if he is not managing them properly, then he is not qualified for church leadership (1 Timothy 3:2,12; Titus 1:6). Sadly, many dads and moms are so busy trying to provide their children with the goodies of this world that they fail to provide them with an example of personal godliness. Neither you nor your children will be taking any of the stuff of this world to heaven, so why the priority on either materialism or hedonism? Your example and teaching should be leading your children to walking with Christ.

It is tragic that so many pastors I have known have failed at this same point. They neglected their children in order to take care of the church. They foolishly thought that if they took care of the church, then God would take care of their children. The result was they lost their children. Jesus said He would build His church (Matthew 16:18). Fathers are to raise their children according to the commandments of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6; Ephesians 6). Your children are your first and foremost disciples regardless of your position in the church.

3) The next priority is the use of your spiritual gifts. When you were saved, God equipped you to serve Him in some capacity. The particular gift, the type of ministry it is used in, and the scope of that ministry are all up to God and will be according to His design and your spiritual qualifications (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16). Your level of talent is nearly irrelevant for the Scriptures are clear that God uses the humble to accomplish His work and He resists the proud as pointed out in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. Your spiritual condition is more important than your talent for it is not your ability but His grace working through you that makes the difference.

How do you know what gift or gifts God has given you and how you should use them? It really is not that difficult. If you are walking close to the Lord and are striving to live in holiness, then simply try doing what you would like to do and see if the Lord uses it in the lives of others to glorify Himself.

Two quick cautions need to be added to this advice. First, do not let fear or thinking the Lord cannot use you keep you from trying something new. Welcome the suggestions and challenges of others to see if you may have a gift you did not know about. Second, be careful of the other extreme and do not allow others to push you into a ministry you do not want to do. It is great to try new things, for you may find a ministry you did know you could do, but try new things as a test while keeping your other priorities straight. You may not be gifted to do that particular ministry or doing it will cause you to compromise your other priorities. Serve the Lord, but be sure He is the one you are serving.

4) The next priority is doing good to all men. Galatians 6:7-10 states, *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."*

Notice that there is a hierarchy in doing good. We are to do good to all, but especially to those who are of the household of faith. We are to be extra sensitive and giving to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Now if you have any time and energy left after all this, then I guess you can amuse yourself. Tragically most Christians have their order of priorities reversed. They place their own pleasure first and God is at the end of the list with everything in between jumbled around. How can God be truly worshiped if He is the last priority on your list? How can you be in daily worship of Him if your priorities do not match His? There is hope, however, because a good spiritual diet can correct this.

Set Your Spiritual Diet

The common saying is that you are what you eat. This adage is true in the spiritual realm too. You will live according to what influences you. If you mentally and emotionally feed on the ungodly things of this world, then your priorities will be wrong and you will live in an ungodly manner. Like a pig at a feed trough, those who feed on garbage usually wallow in it too.

To live daily in the worship of God you must have the proper spiritual diet. Psalm 1 tells us that the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly is blessed and that he who delights in the Lord and meditates in His word will be like a tree planted by rivers of water. He will be able to grow and prosper even in the hard times.

If those who profess to be Christians simply spent as much time in Bible Study, prayer and serving the Lord as they do in the various ways they amuse themselves - TV, games, hobbies, entertainment, etc., - then I have no doubt that there would be revival in our land. The churches would not be hurting for workers. Non-Christians would be evangelized. Missionaries would be on the field instead of trying to raise support, and the moral slide of our nation would be reversed.

I can also guarantee that if you take the Bible seriously and apply the criteria set forth in Philippians 4:8 to what you see, hear and read there will be major positive changes in your life. Do the things you watch on TV, hear on the radio, or read in books, magazines or newspapers fit the standards of whatever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or good report, virtuous or praise worthy? If not, then what are you letting influence your life? Change your spiritual diet and your spiritual health will improve, and as your spiritual health improves so will your daily worship of God.

Set Your Mind

However, to change your spiritual diet will require a change in your mind set. Consider the importance of what Paul wrote in Romans 12:1-2, *"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

Your transformation into someone who worships God in daily life is dependent upon the renewing of your mind. That is why hearing, reading, studying, memorizing and meditating on the Scriptures are so important. In order to think, pray and live properly you must not only have a knowledge of the truth, but your mind must also be focused upon it. The Christian faith is not an intellectual assent but an informed walk of life that trusts God. The Christian quest to have every thought taken captive to the obedience to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5) will result in proper daily worship of God.

Some might think this to be extreme, but so be it. Paul did not consider it so and I consider him to be good company. He was not afraid to be called a fool for Christ's sake (1 Corinthians 4:10), so neither should you or I. Remember that the goal of our lives should be to be true worshipers of God in every aspect of our lives. What other people think of us for being that should be of little or no concern to us. We are to have our minds set on the things above, not on the things of the earth (Colossians 3:2).

Live in the Body

The last practical suggestion I have this morning to help you to be a true worshiper of God in daily life is to live in the body of Christ. God did not save anyone from their sins so that they could be a hermit. He saved you so that you would be part of the church, the body of Christ. Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 are all clear that each Christian needs other Christians around them in order to become what God intended for them to be. Each believer has different gifts that are to be used in conjunction with those of other believers so that the whole body will be built up in the love of Christ and can stand firm. It is within the church that all the one another commands are carried out. If you remove yourself from the body, then there are at least three negative consequences. First, the body is left handicapped because your gifts and ministry are removed from it. Second, you will shrivel up spiritual just as surely as your arm would if you cut it off from your body. Third, these two consequences result in the glory of God being diminished

1 Thessalonians 5: 14 makes it plain that Christians need each other. Each of us needs to be encouraged when we are fainthearted. We need to be helped when we are weak. We need to be warned when we are tempted, and we need to be admonished when we fall into sin. We need to be around those who are spiritual and will help bear our burdens when we have fallen so that we can be restored (Gal. 6:1-4).

I pray that the goal of your life is the worship of God; that you will make His priorities your priorities; that you will develop a proper spiritual diet; that you will set your mind on Him, and that you will actively live in His body.

Sermon Notes: *THE WORSHIP OF GOD IN DAILY LIFE*
Selected Scriptures

Introduction

It takes _____ and practice to make true worship a normal part of life

True worship is to occur in _____ kind of situation, both when blessed and troubled

Set the Goal

This is to be no _____ between secular and sacred for believers - everything is sacred - 1 Cor. 10:31

Do not be _____ to this world! Be careful about what influences you! Romans 12:2

Stand _____ for Christ and against social pressure even if coerced

Do not love the world - 1 John 2:15-17, and stand _____ against its enticements - Colossians 3:5-8

God saved you to conform you to the image of _____ and be a people for His praise & glory

You cannot love _____ God and mammon - Matthew 6:24

Set the Priorities

Being a true worshiper of God must be the _____ goal - which sets your other goals, priorities & activities

Priority #1 - Love the Lord God with _____ your heart, soul and mind - Matthew 22:35-38

Love = *ajgavph* / agape, a committed choice seeking the _____ interested of the one loved, not a fuzzy emotion

Love of God is demonstrated by _____ to Him - John 14:15, 21

Priority #2 - Loving your neighbor as yourself, Matt. 22:39-40; Phil. 2:3-4. _____ a basis for self-esteem /pride

Practical Suggestions

1) Keep the Lord as your _____ priority in everything - Colossians 3:23-24

He is to be _____ in mind in everything you do.

2) The second priority of relationship God has placed upon man is the _____ - marriage, children, relatives
_____ over religion - Mark 7:10-13. Husband must fulfill role to be qualified for church leadership

Parent-child relationship: Parents teach, train and model _____ - children are to obey and learn

God provides and Jesus builds His church - parents put God first and _____ their children His commands

3) Use your _____ gifts - your gifts, ministry and empowerment all come from God to serve Him & people

Discover your gift: _____ with the Lord in holiness, do what you desire, see if God uses it in others

Welcome suggestions and challenges for new ministry, but don't be pushed & don't compromise _____

4) Do good to all men - Galatians 6:7-10 - with _____ on fellow believers

Set Your Spiritual Diet

Psalm 1 - Avoid counsel of ungodly, delight in the Lord and meditate on His _____ in order to be fruitful

If Christians spent as much time in God's word and prayer as in amusing themselves, there would be _____

Take the Bible _____ & apply Philippians 4:8 to your life, and your spiritual health will improve

Set Your Mind

A change of spiritual diet requires a changed / _____ mind - Romans 12:1-2

The Christian faith is not an intellectual assent but an informed walk of life that _____ God

Don't be afraid to be called a _____ for Christ's sake (1 Cor. 4:10), keep your mind set on the things above

Live in the Body

God has saved and equipped you to _____ Him and others within and through His church

Not being involved in Christ's body: 1) handicaps it, 2) causes you so _____ up, 3) diminishes God's glory

1 Thessalonians 5: 14 - every Christian needs other _____ - for encouragement, help & admonishment

Set the right Goal & priorities, have a good spiritual diet, set your mind right, _____ live in Christ's body

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) List how many times references are made to "worship." Talk with your parents about how the practical ways you can express worship to God in daily life.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What does it mean to worship God? How do you worship God in daily life? Are you a true worshiper of God? Why or why not? If not, what needs to change so that you will be one? What are your goals in life? List them. What would you like to accomplish in the next 10 years? Five years? Two years? What would you do if you knew you only had 6 months to live? Are your goals godly? Are they of eternal value? How do your priorities match your goals? How do they match God's priorities? If they do not match, why not? How will you change them? How do you protect yourself / resist the pressures of the world? What is your current spiritual diet? What is your spiritual health as a result? Describe a good spiritual diet. Does your spiritual diet need to change, if so, how? What is your plan to make those changes? Who will hold you accountable? What is your mind set on? What should it be set on? What are your spiritual gifts? If you do not know, how will you find out? How are you using them? If you are not using them,

what will you do to change that?