

The Holy, Loving Worship of God (Deuteronomy 12:1-12)

Introduction: *Can you have both joy and obedience in worship?*

For the Word of God insists that worship must be joyful. And it's equally insistent that worship be offered only according to his word.

1. Feeling: *You shall rejoice in the Lord your God (v. 7, 12, 18)*

“Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; come before His presence with singing” (Psa 100:1-2, see Ps 95:1-3, 37:4, 16:11-12).

“The happiness of the creature consists in rejoicing in God, by which also God is magnified and exalted. ... The end of the creation is that the creation might glorify [God]. Now what is glorifying God, but a rejoicing at that glory he has displayed?” (J. Edwards, *End for which God Created the World*).

“This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me” (Mark 7:6-7). “Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, therefore you shall serve your enemies” (Deut 28:47-48).

“By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.” So Aaron held his peace” (Lev 10:3). Worship is not just about full hearts, but also about obedient wills.

2. Form: *Take care to obey all that I command you, neither adding nor taking away*

(a) Not like the Canaanites (v. 2-5, 30-31)

Don't go and try to be like your culture, because your culture is abominable in the eyes of the Lord.

(b) Not “every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes” (v. 8-12)

And not only are you not to do what they think is right in their eyes, you are not to do as you think is right in your eyes. “This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Mark 7:6-7).

Worship is not having a full heart and doing what you please. Worship is having a full heart and doing what pleases God.

(c) Not adding or taking away (v. 32)

“All these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not *obey* the voice of the LORD your God, to *keep His commandments* and His *statutes* which He commanded you. And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever. Because you did not serve the LORD your God with *joy and gladness of heart*, for the abundance of everything, therefore you shall serve your enemies” (Deu 28:45-48).

Conclusion

All these services for *men* have left men weaker and weaker. The services for *God* made men strong in faith and love.