

The Pattern and Manner of Worship

I. The Pattern of Worship

The pattern of worship in Scripture is the pattern of Salvation.

A. We may discern this pattern **biblically**.

1. The pattern of the Mosaic sacrificial system moved through a symbolic gospel pattern. (Leviticus 9)
 - a. God calls the worshippers to come at and according to His command. (Lev. 9.1-5 '...drew near and stood before the LORD.'
 - b. The Most Holy Name of God Almighty is invoked that He may manifest His glory to them. (Lev. 9.6)
 - c. There is the pattern of cleansing and atonement in the sin offerings. (Lev. 9.8-11, 15)
 - d. There is the pattern of God's people being offered up to Him in the whole burnt offering and the grain offerings. (Lev. 9.12-14, 16-17)
 - e. The pattern of communion and fellowship as God feeds His people in the peace (and wave) offerings. (Lev. 9.18-21; cf. Lev. 19:5-8)
 - f. The people go forth from worship commissioned as it were, bearing the Name of God placed upon them in the benediction (Lev. 9.22-24; cf. Num. 6.23-27)
2. This pattern is reflected in Isaiah's "drawing near."
 - a. God "calls" him into His presence by a vision.
 - b. God's Name is invoked by the seraphim.
 - c. Confession of sin, God provides "symbolic" cleansing from the altar; assurance of pardon.
 - d. Isaiah offers himself up to God (his reasonable service in light of such forgiveness in salvation (Rom. 12:1))
 - e. God ministers His Word to Isaiah.

- f. Isaiah is commissioned as God's messenger in this ministry of the Word; he now bears the name of God as the messenger and prophet of God.
- 3. It is against this backdrop that we find the worship described in Ezra and Nehemiah (Nehemiah 7.73b-8:1ff; cf. Ezra 3)
 - a. The sacrifices are begun according to God's command (cf. Lev. 9)
 - b. It is in this context that we see the ministry of the Word and other elements of worship, circumstances, and matters of form and content described.
- B. We may describe this pattern **theologically**.
 - 1. This makes sense since Christ says that *true worship* is the point of our Salvation. (John 4.21-24)
 - 2. The pattern of our Salvation is reflected in the pattern of worship.
 - Having seen the pattern set out for worship, we may trace the way that reflects the pattern of Salvation.*
 - a. God initiates in Salvation; it is He Who **calls**.
 - Of course, we think here especially of "effectual calling."*
 - b. Worship is a drawing near, and in Salvation God:
 - i. *brings near* to Himself those who were afar off,
 - ii. redeems a people for the glory of His own **Name**.
 - c. Those whom God effectually calls he thereby unites to Christ, and, working faith in them, He justifies them (declaring them **forgiven** on account of Christ's perfect righteousness and atonement).
 - d. We have been bought with a price and are not our own, we are now continually **offered up** to God as living sacrifices.
 - e. Being effectually called we are united to Christ by faith and have not only this union with Him, but also ongoing **communion** with Him in grace whereby we have fellowship with Him and he continually ministers to us: having adopted us as His own children, He also sanctifies us and assures us of our Salvation.

- f. Being in such union and communion with Christ, having His name upon us, we live out our **commission** to **serve** Him daily in all that we do as we look forward to the consummation of our communion with Him in glory.
- C. We may outline this pattern **summarily**.
1. The outline of worship
 - a. Call to worship
 - b. Invocation
 - c. Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon

“Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.” Hosea 14:2, KJV.
 - d. We are offered to God in all of worship, but this is especially seen in our offering "the calves of our lips" in prayer and praise and confession of the faith.
 - i. “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.” Hebrews 13:15, KJV.
 - ii. Romans 12:1
 - e. Ministry of the Word and Sacraments
 - f. Benediction.
 2. The commanded actions of worship are both a part of the structure described here and also woven into the fabric of this biblical pattern of worship.

II. The Manner of Worship

Worship is not simply a matter of outward obedience; it is preeminently a matter of the heart.

A. Worship requires *effort*.

1. The terms 'serve' and 'service' are distinctive terms for worship in the Scriptures.
 - a. Exodus 20.4
 - b. Matthew 4.10; cf. Deuteronomy 6.13
 - c. Hebrews 12.28-29; cf. context of worship 12.18ff, 22ff

2. These terms are used to describe the work of the servant or the slave.
 - a. Thus, worship as service is *holy or sacred labour*.
 - b. We must be diligent and attentive as God's servants in worship, exerting ourselves in these spiritual exercises of worship.
 - c. We must not be lazy or inattentive.
 - i. Keep in mind the fierce condemnation of God against His people, declared by the prophets, for their heartless, lazy, inattentive worship.
 - ii. Malachi 1.13
 - iii. Amos 8.5
- B. Worship requires *holiness (and thus repentance)*.
 1. Isaiah 1.11-18
 2. Psalm 96.9; cf. 1Ch 16:29
 3. Ps 29:2
- C. Worship requires *reverence and awe, fear and wonder (and thus humility)*.
 1. Hebrews 12.28-29
 2. 2 Kings 17.35-36
 3. Psalm 5.7
 4. Psalm 33.8
 5. Psalm 96.8-9
- D. Worship requires *joy and rejoicing*.
 1. Psalm 100.1
 2. Psalm 63.5
 3. Psalm 107.22
 4. Deuteronomy 28.45-47
- E. Worship requires thankfulness and gratitude
 1. Psalm 100.4-5; 105.1; 106.1; 107.1; 118.1; 136.1-3, 26; 95.2
 2. Hebrews 13.15
 3. Revelation 11.17

4. Cf. Romans 1.21-23

Ingratitude is here described as leading to idolatry, false worship.

F. Worship requires *knowledge*.

1. Psalm 100.3

2. John 4.22

3. The persistent pattern of the Scriptures: Dogma (Doctrine) leads to Doxology