

Connected to Christ

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ADULT CONNECTION



AUGUST 2017

WORSHIP



first baptist
FORT WORTH

Donald J. Wills
Senior Pastor

The purpose of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth is to **introduce** people into a loving relationship with Jesus, **instruct** them in spiritual growth through God's Word, **inspire** them to serve for God's kingdom, and **incorporate** them in authentic worship to glorify God.

A Note From Our Pastor

Dear FBC family and friends,

The theme for the month of August is one that is often misunderstood or narrowly focused on one aspect of the subject matter. It is worship. Worship is not a single event at a particular time or place on the church's schedule. Worship is the whole of the Christian life as an expression of love and devotion to our Lord and Savior. It is expressed through corporate worship together as a congregation, but also through evangelism, our giving, serving, living, investing, and so forth. Paul writes in Romans that whatever it is we do and are doing, do as to the Lord. That is true Worship!

As a reminder, the layout of this Curriculum begins with a 7-day approach for both the teacher and the members to get the most from each study. We also acknowledge that teachers may have their own methods for preparing the lessons and we encourage them to prepare in the way that makes them most effective in presenting God's Word and the weekly lesson. We also encourage each teacher and member to use the suggested 7-day approach for their own personal study and encouragement.

David writes in Psalm 40:3, "He has put a new song in my mouth, Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the Lord." Our worship should lead others to come to faith in Christ. Make Christ your central focus of conversation, conduct, and character.

-Blessings
Pastor Don



Suggested Plan for Using this Bible Study Guide Effectively

Introduce

Day 1: Read and meditate on the Scripture, asking God to guide you throughout the week as you study His Word and allowing Him to speak to you through the Spirit. Read the **INTRODUCE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Instruct

Day 2: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and read the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary. Concentrate on memorizing the focal verse for that particular week.

Day 3: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and answer the focal questions in the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary.

Inspire

Day 4: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and begin thinking about tangible ways you can incorporate the principles you learned in your daily life. Read the **INSPIRE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Incorporate

Day 5: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and apply the theological principle that you learned from this week in a tangible way. Use the **INCORPORATE** portion of the lesson commentary to guide you.

Day 6: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and in the journal section describe how God allowed you to apply this passage in a real and tangible way this week.

Day 7: Review the Scripture and share with others in your Connect Class on Sunday morning at 9:30am. Be ready to share your experience about how God allowed you to apply the lesson for that week.

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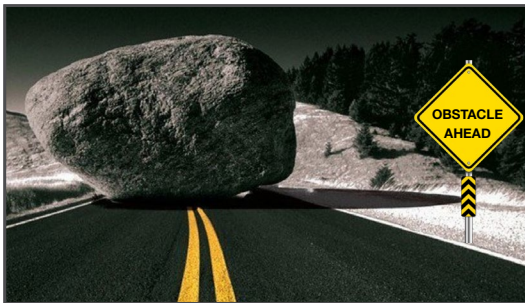


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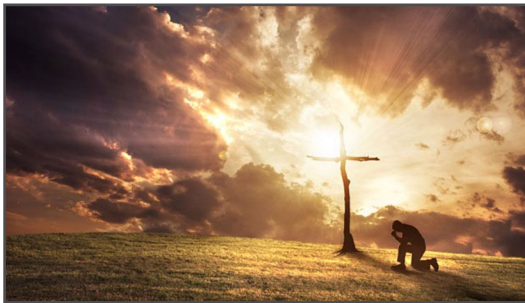


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August 6, 2017

Written by: Ricky Johnson



The Object of Our Worship

Deuteronomy 5:1-11

Focal Verse:

"You shall have no other gods before Me."

Deuteronomy 5:7

Introduce

When it comes to raising our four children, I have realized that Katy has so much more patience than I do. Of course, being around them significantly more than I am also helps. Every parent knows that the number of times they tell their children the rules does not change the number of times they decide to disobey. Even though some say this is just kids being kids, the reality is that this applies to adults as well because we all have a rebellious and sinful nature. Yet, God has proven Himself to be patient towards us as the pinnacle and most-loved part of His creation insomuch that He sent His Son to die for us even though we continue to sin ([Rom 5:8](#); [2 Pet 3:9](#)).

The prevalence of sin in the world and the need to refocus our worship can be illustrated through the tendency of children to disobey their

parents. For example, I might tell my four and five-year-old to play with their younger sister in the living room because she is getting to the age where she loves the company. I specifically tell them to play with *her*—not *her toys*—while she sits and plays alone. I leave for five minutes and,

when I return, they are making a mess of the living room as they play with her toys while the baby plays by herself.

So what do I do when I see this happening after I have just given them instructions? I explain in a louder voice that I had told them to play with their sister and then remind them of the exact instructions that I had previously given them—emphasizing the reason why I gave them. Regardless of the



Introduce

number of times I explain the rules or even reprimand them for breaking them by using varying techniques to get their attention, it doesn't change their behavior and they remain self-absorbed in their own world. Therefore, I must refocus their attention on the instructions and the overarching goal of showing respect to me by their obedience.

While we use the techniques most effective for our parenting styles, Katy's presence seems to influence them differently, leading to a higher rate of success when it comes to their obedience. They are not perfect angels in her presence, but the way she interacts with them is slightly different than the way I do. This can somewhat be attributed to the natural maternal relationship between a mother and her children. She has found ways to connect with each of them just as God has reached out to His children in a desire to have a relationship with them. God has given us boundaries to follow and punishes us not to limit our fun, but to focus our worship on Him and allow us to live a more abundant life.

Israel's worship of and relationship to God had its ups and downs leading to this point in [Deuteronomy 5](#) because they failed to trust God and allowed fear and idolatry to affect their worship. When God called Moses to Mount Sinai as their mediator to receive His instructions, verse 5 reveals that they were afraid to go up to the mountain because of "the fire" that literally separated them from God for they had sinned and were unclean. Their continued disobedience showed man's propensity to sin and "fall short of the glory of God" ([Rom 3:23](#)). As Moses was about to reiterate the Word of the Lord and the Ten Commandments, it was time for their hearts to be ready to hear what God had to say and worship Him alone through their

obedience. Throughout our lives, therefore, we must continually make sure that the object of our worship is the Lord which is demonstrated in our obedience to His Word.

Key
Question

How do you prepare your heart for worship?

Instruct

Deuteronomy 5:1-5

What have you worshiped?

In [Deuteronomy 5](#), Moses reminds the Israelites of their **covenant with God** by referring to the Ten Commandments once again. In the time between the giving of the Ten Commandments in [Exodus 20](#) and Moses' reminder in Deuteronomy 5, the people sinned repeatedly and often shifted their focus and worship to anything else but God. Both Leviticus and Deuteronomy tell us very specific details for the regulations that the Lord wanted the Israelites to follow. Although they incorporated them into their culture, the most basic principle of worshiping God alone seemed to be the hardest one for them to keep.

Ten Commandments

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Exodus 20: 3-17



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Instruct

In our world today, sin can overcome us even before we realize we have been ensnared by it. Most of us probably have no problem with the “big” sins, such as not committing murder, but the Bible teaches that if we have broken one commandment then we have broken them all ([James 2:10](#)). It is the continued breaking of even one commandment—the committing of any sin that hinders our worship of God. Sin keeps us completely separated from Him and obscures our worship ([Isa 59:2](#)). So many things vie for our attention that it only takes one distraction to turn our focus away from God: our children’s schedules keep us too busy, our work demands more of our time, we don’t have enough time to catch up on all our shows on television, and the list continues.

What or who have you been worshipping?
Has anything in your life distracted you from
worship?

Question
1

Moses reminds the people that they made a **covenant** to live for God and follow His commandments (v. 2-3). In return, God would take care of them and lead them to the Promised Land. While this **covenant** was made with the previous generation, Moses explained that they were just as bound by it as their parents. God had honored His side of the covenant, but time after time the Israelites sinned and worshiped idols. In reality, anything can become an idol. For me, technology can easily become a pitfall that would trap me, my focus, and my money. I constantly desire to keep up with and have the latest Apple device, and I make the excuse that I use them for work so I must have them. While this is true, the dependence on and desire for the latest phone or tablet has

the potential to become an idol simply because it could easily become more important than the time I spend in God's Word. As a Christian, we know that our faith in Christ should be cultivated, both individually through prayer and time in His Word, but also corporately through our church attendance and worship with fellow believers. We must constantly rid our lives of idolatry and give God the priority.



What do you do to maintain focus on God?
How do you worship Him daily and give Him
the priority in your life?

Question
2

Deuteronomy 5:6-7

Who should you worship?

Because our routines and choices in life can easily distract us from what should be the priority, we must concentrate on cultivating the relationship we have with the Lord our God through daily prayer, Scripture reading, and fellowship with other believers. Without a relationship with God who is the Father of Jesus Christ, we will always focus on our own selfish and fleshly desires. We can see this distraction within Israel where many people adopted the belief systems and worship of various gods of the nations around them which continued to be problematic throughout the Old Testament. After being slaves for 430 years in **Egypt** ([Exod 12:40](#)), they had forgotten the promises that God had made to them and they also failed to see how He was still at work providing for them despite their subjugation. For this reason, Moses

Instruct

had to remind the people of the Lord's promises and make it clear that Yahweh, not the gods of Egypt, was the only One who would deliver them from their **bondage** (see also [Exod 3:14](#)).

How has God proven Himself to you to be the only God worthy of your worship?

Question
3

Because the people had forgotten the Lord and turned to worship the other false gods of those around them, the first command that Moses relates to the people begins by identifying the exact One we are to worship: **I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage** (v. 6). Like Israel we live in a culture with many "gods" whether through religion, secularism, or idolatry; therefore, it is imperative to define the exact nature of our worship. Thus, God gives Israel evidence by reminding them of His miraculous power and provision that **brought** them **out of Egypt**. We can know with certainty the right God to worship based on the evidence that He has provided us by sending Jesus Christ who died and was raised again on the third day as a testament of His love for us.

Why is it important to define who God is in our society today?

Question
4

Not only does Moses specify Who the people ought to worship, but he also gives them the reasons why they ought to worship. Israel had witnessed first-hand how God freed them from their chains of **bondage** in **Egypt**; they were once slaves, but now are set free. Moses, therefore, reminds the Hebrew people that they are to **have no other gods before**

Him (v. 7). Thus, the first commandment describes explicitly their object of worship as being *only* the **Lord their God** and that they are to worship Him for His faithfulness and provision. In the same way, we have also been set free from **bondage**—not physical bondage, but spiritual. We once were enslaved to sin and unrighteousness, but through the sacrificial gift of Christ who paid the penalty for our sins we have now been set free to serve the Lord in righteousness ([Rom 6:17-18](#)). Consequently, we have much for which we ought to give God the praise and glory in our lives and worship Him.



For what reasons can you worship the Lord God?

Question
5

Today, unfortunately, our country has shifted its focus to inclusivity and a recognition of every belief system imaginable. Identifying America as a “Christian” nation is no longer true—and this has been the case for a long time. Christians trying to spread the gospel must battle a culture which inundates us with false doctrine and relativism. Just as the Israelites were completely surrounded by the Egyptians and their gods, many in our culture accept everything but the Truth because they are inundated with false concepts and philosophies ([2 Tim 4:3](#)). Sin is thrust upon us through television shows, books, and even through what our “friends” on social media share for all to see. We allow these things into our lives, becoming desensitized to what we know to be wrong. If we truly have a

Instruct

transformed relationship with Jesus Christ, then we ought to realize that God has freed us from the **bondage** of sin just as He freed the Israelites from **Egypt**. This same God demands our undivided attention and worship because nothing and no one else can do these things for us—we are even helpless to do them ourselves. Therefore, we should avoid letting our culture influence us and distract us from our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We must always remember that even when people around us choose to deny Him, we are to worship *only* the Lord our God – for *only* He can save and transform our lives so that they can be more abundant and fruitful.

In what ways have you safeguarded your walk with the Lord to maintain a right relationship with Him?

Question
6

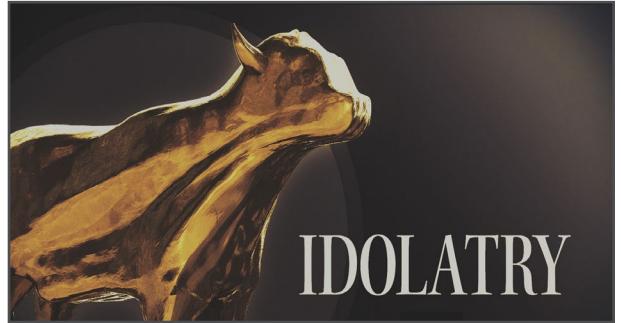
Deuteronomy 5:8-10

How should you worship?

To guard ourselves from falling into the pitfalls of idolatry, we must understand what it truly means to worship. Worship is not merely something we do on Sunday mornings, but a lifestyle that we live all the time. As we face the godlessness of this world, we must be intentional about living lives that honor God. Verses 8-10 teach us three primary ways in which we can engage in the worship of the Lord: 1) through dedicated **service** to Him, 2) through our obedience, and 3) by showing **mercy** to others as He has shown us. Hence, Moses tells the children that bowing down to any idol is explicitly forbidden by God (v. 9). In the

Sermon on the Mount, Jesus conveys the same idea when He states, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

First, we worship God by serving Him alone. Moses begins by warning the Israelites not to create



carved images or **anything** that misrepresents God and distorts His **image** by stealing their attention away from Him. Because we are created in God’s **image**, we have no need of any man-made **image** to remind us of His presence ([Gen 1:27](#)). Instead, we as humans in our disobedience have exchanged the true worship of God by **bowing down** to idols and are worshiping creation rather than the Creator ([Rom 1:20-23](#)). Therefore, Moses reminds the people that past generations had failed to worship God and turned to idolatry which led to their downfall; thus, he pleads with the people not to follow this same path which incurs the wrath of God for their rebellion. On the contrary, they are to worship Yahweh alone because He is jealous—that is He alone is uniquely to be worshiped.

In-Depth Information



In human terms, jealousy is a negative emotion that conjures thoughts of envy and greed. However, this Hebrew term in this context means that God is unique and there is no one else like Him. God is not jealous, so to speak, of the powers of other gods because there are no other gods. Consequently, He alone should receive the worship of His creation.

Instruct

Today, we can allow the secular world or our misrepresentation of the Truth keep us from worshiping God; therefore, we must be intentional in cultivating our relationship and knowing His Word so that we can apply it in our lives through our obedient service to Him. As a result, we must continue to grow in our faith and relationship with Him by living holy lives and serving through the local church so that others around us may come to know Him as the one true and living God who alone is worthy of worship. Thus, we should seek God with our whole heart, staying close to His commandments so as not to sin against Him ([Psalm 119:10-11](#)). For the psalmist rightly says, “But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night” ([Psalm 1:2](#)).

In what ways can you worship the Lord by obediently serving Him?

Question
7

Second, not only are we to serve and obey the Lord, but we should also extend mercy to others just as He has shown it to us. Although every one of us has sinned against God, He has shown **mercy to thousands who love Him and keep His commandments** (v. 10). In other words, God has forgiven our sins and removed His wrath from us when we confess and repent. Therefore, we too ought to show **mercy** through our forgiveness in hopes of pointing people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.



In fact, the New Testament makes this explicit when Paul says: “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” ([Eph 4:32](#)). In sum, the commandments found in these verses demonstrate how we can worship God through our service, obedience, and mercy shown to others.

Why is it important to worship God by showing mercy to others around us?

Question
8

Deuteronomy 5:11

How can we be a better example of worship?

Our worship of the Lord is also designed to allow us to share the gospel effectively because it highlights the change that Christ has brought about in our lives. To be a better example of worship, we must be consistent in our daily walk by living holy lives and being regular in our service and corporate worship in church. The way that we live shows how much we revere or respect the Lord. If our worship of the Lord is not consistent with our walk, then our testimony will suffer and we won't be able to witness and evangelize effectively, instead will be characterized as hypocrites. Consequently, we must also guard our speech against irreverence. For this reason, Moses reminds the children of Israel about the third commandment which prohibits the use of God's name improperly—that is **taking the name of the Lord in vain** (v. 11).

Taking the name of the Lord in vain can occur by either using the name of God flippantly as a curse word or statement of shock or by swearing a false pledge that we don't keep. First, the children of Israel revered God's name so much that they wouldn't even pronounce or say the divine

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name given to Moses at the burning bush ([Exod 3:14](#)). God wanted the people to know His name which relates His character as the only God who exists (I am that I am), but He also desires that we use it in reverence. Today, however, many people—even Christians—use God’s name in frustration or anger as a way of cursing or as an interjection to express shock or surprise. Still others swear by God’s name and then lack integrity—bringing dishonor to His holy name through their deceitful disobedience.

On the contrary, we must be extremely guarded so that we use God’s name to bring honor to Him. Rather than using it as an expression of dismay or disdain, we should use it as an exclamation of praise to declare all the good things He has done for us. When we call ourselves Christians, we also must be careful to watch how we live. When we identify ourselves by bearing the name of His Son, we must make certain that we live in holiness which represents and brings honor to Him. In [Lev 19:2](#), Moses instructs the people to “be holy for I the Lord your God am holy.” The way that we act and what we say demonstrates the importance of our faith in our lives to those around us—whether in the workplace, family, friends, or even on social media. Therefore, we need to speak about God with reverence and live holy lives as a testimony so that we can point others into a relationship with Him.

How can you be a better example of worship?
How do your actions reflect upon the Lord—
whether what you do or say?

Question
9

In the introduction, I used the illustration in which I had to refocus the attention of our children so that they would show respect for what I had asked them to do as their father. Like our children, each one of us must take care to keep our worship focused on the Lord. Although we face many obstacles in this world which detract from our worship of the Lord (see next week's lesson), we must maintain focus to cultivate

our relationship with Him through quality time in prayer, Bible study, corporate fellowship, and service in the church with other believers. To spend quality time with the Lord, we can't view these things as legalistic checklists that we mark off each



thing we do, but we are to view it in terms of a relationship. Therefore, we must rid ourselves of any idols which distract us from worshiping the only true and living God who loves us so much that He sent His Son to die in our place.

In what practical ways can we demonstrate worship in our daily lives? First, look for opportunities to serve; serve in your local church using your spiritual gifts, share the gospel, and serve in the community to point others into a relationship with Jesus Christ. Second, live an exemplary life of integrity and holiness which represents what He has done for us. Obey what God has commanded—not because His love is dependent upon it, but because we desire to show reverence and respect for Him as our Savior. Therefore, we need to live consistently with Christ's character

Inspire

so that it brings honor to Him and allows us to minister effectively rather than being charged as hypocrites. By the way that we live our lives, therefore, the world around us can tell whom or what we worship. Thus, we must ask ourselves: who or what do I represent as the object of my worship by the way I live?

Incorporate

Spend time in prayer this week thanking God for desiring to have a relationship with you. How can having the proper focus in worship help you grow in your walk with God and show others in Whom you believe?

Ask God to help you regularly make time to spend with Him personally in prayer and study of His Word. Also, ask Him to give you appointed times and people with which to share your faith. In what areas do you need to invest more time in your worship?

What are specific steps you can take that might allow for more dedicated time of personal worship to God?

August 13, 2017

Written by: Mike Neal



The Obstacles in Our Worship

Deuteronomy 1:19-46

Focal Verse:

"So I spoke to you; yet you would not listen, but rebelled against the command of the LORD, and presumptuously went up into the mountain."

Deuteronomy 1:43

Introduce

At 7:00 am, John's alarm blared announcing the time had come to drag himself from bed, but he hit the snooze button until 7:30 because it was Sunday and his day to sleep late. After thirty minutes, he reluctantly sprang from his bed and began to get ready for church, but found every member of his family still sleeping. Frustrated, he began to roust them from bed, thinking all the while it would just be easier to let them sleep. After settling a dispute over the bathroom and helping his son search for clean clothes, John hopped into the shower only to find it ice-cold because his wife and children had consumed all the hot water. Grumbling under his breath as he ate a small bowl of cold cereal, John herded his family into the car.



Before he pulled out from the garage, his wife pointed out his wrinkled pants covered with lint. Knowing that he would be badgered throughout the drive, he went to change them. Plopping back in the car, he declares, "Happy now?" As he began driving to church, he entered 35W with no problem because there was virtually no Sunday morning traffic, but as he approached 820 barricades stood surreptitiously in the way. With the children yelling and fighting in the back seat, John mumbles, "Great, we're going to be late for the donuts. All the cream-filled ones will surely be gone."

Arriving at church, John and his wife got to their Bible study class to find all the seats taken except the front row. With a disgusted look, he sits and

Introduce

thinks how boring the lesson is while he continually looks at his watch. Nothing, he surmises, can be worse than this boring drivel. Finally, the class ends and he goes to the sanctuary and waits for the worship to begin. And begin it did—with a loud bang from the drums and orchestra which startled him and caused him to jump. John thinks, “If I’ve complained once, I’ve complained a hundred times about how loud this is.” With a sneer on his lips, he grudgingly listens to the sermon, thinking it’s too long, it’s not useful, and it’s definitely not entertaining. He leaves the service with a bitter taste and gloomy outlook especially now because he would need to wait in line at his favorite restaurant.

John faced several obstacles in his worship of the Lord because he hadn’t spent time preparing during the week and he had allowed circumstances to dictate his attitude. Although some of us may face obstacles like this on Sundays, we must realize that worship is a lifestyle that we should live daily. We need to meet with God through prayer and Bible study every day—not out of sheer habit, but because we love and desire a relationship with Him just as He does each one of us. This type of attitude displayed by John that many have on Sundays is a symptom of a larger problem, so we must take steps to have the right focus and perspective. We can learn much by looking at Israel’s obstacles in worship that they faced during their time in the wilderness while journeying from Egypt to the Promised Land. Learning from their example, we must avoid these common obstacles in our own worship of the Lord.

Key
Question

What obstacles hinder our worship of the Lord?

Deuteronomy 1:19-21

WE FEAR THE CIRCUMSTANCES:

As the book of Deuteronomy opens, the children of Israel stand on the precipice of entering the **land** which the **Lord God** had promised their **fathers** ([Deut 1:20-21](#)). He had delivered them from slavery in Egypt and miraculously sustained them in the **terrible wilderness**, supplying all their needs and protecting them from their enemies. After they departed from **Horeb** (a.k.a. Mount Sinai) where He had given them the law to make their lives more abundant and fruitful, God directed them to **Kadesh Barnea** where they assembled on the southern border of the Promised Land before taking possession of it ([Deut 1:19](#)). As Moses will recount in [Deut 1:29-33](#), the people had experienced the abundance of God's blessings, but the **fear** of their unknown circumstances caused an enormous hurdle in their worship of the Lord.

Despite repeatedly seeing first-hand God's protection and provision, Israel still complained and feared. Looking not to the Lord for their provision, they focused on their circumstances and trusted only what they could see with their eyes; they then based their actions on their own wisdom, failing to realize what God had already done



for them. Because of their **fear**, they often lamented, "Have you taken us away to die in the wilderness?" ([Exod 14:11](#)). Just before receiving manna

Instruct

and quail, they grumbled again, “Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt” ([Exod 16:3](#)). As they waited at **Kadesh Barnea**, therefore, Moses encourages them **not to fear or be discouraged** ([Deut 1:20](#)). However, Israel still feared because they focused on their circumstances rather than the Lord. Because **fear** produced worry in their lives, it made Israel reluctant not only to trust God, but also to act upon His **commands**. Even today, many people **fear** both known and unknown circumstances which severely cripples their worship and service of the Lord, leading to depression and self-pity. Instead of allowing **fear** to dominate our lives, we must learn to trust God and follow His guidance—especially because we know that He has our best interests at heart. When we eliminate **fear** by focusing on the Lord, we can then obediently worship Him.

What are some common fears that people have today that hinder their worship and service of the Lord? What are some fears that you may have?

Question
1

Deuteronomy 1:22-25

WE FOLLOW CONDITIONALLY:

As Israel camped at **Kadesh Barnea**, some came to Moses with a **plan** to scout **the land** to see which **way** would be the best to **go** and what type of fortified **cities** they might face (v. 22). This **plan pleased** Moses as well so he appointed **twelve men, one from each tribe**, to bring back a report (v. 23). Although they knew that God had given them this **land** and

personally witnessed how He had always fulfilled His promises, most of the people followed God conditionally based upon their perception of their own strength and human limitations. Consequently, ten out of the **twelve** team members viewed things from their own perspective and limited themselves to only what they could do on their own. The men actually brought back samples of **some of the fruit** and reported that

the land which the Lord had **given** them was **good** (v. 25). The men brought back grapes so large they carried them on a pole between them and they confirmed the land did indeed flow with “milk and honey” just as the



Lord had said ([Num 13:23, 27](#)). Yet, they feared the mighty people who inhabited the land as well as the seemingly impenetrable cities ([Num 13:28](#)); consequently, despite bringing back this glowing report, the possession of the land fell into the skeptical and bureaucratic hands of a committee that depended upon human strength and ingenuity to make their decisions rather than the Lord.

In what ways do people follow God conditionally? How does this hinder our worship of the Lord?

Question
2

People generally follow God conditionally for two reasons: they depend solely upon their own strength rather than the Lord’s or they allow

Instruct

personal preferences to dictate their response based upon what they selfishly desire. Looking at our own human resources, whether financial, mental, or physical, we will always experience apprehension because we are prone to weakness and failure. This type of attitude often hinders people from worshiping God through witnessing and ministry. It also limits people from thinking “big” in terms of kingdom growth, expecting God to do great things through His people and working through us to accomplish His will. In addition, personal preferences and selfish attitudes obstruct our worship of God because they limit our service to Him and others; instead of serving we focus on what benefits and pleases us. With a self-centered outlook, we can never truly worship the Lord because it’s all about us and not Him.

How does looking at our own abilities limit our worship of the Lord as a church?

Question
3

Deuteronomy 1:26-28

WE FAIL TO TRUST:

Because they had an inward-looking perspective, the people began to have self-pity and revolt which led to having an attitude of victimization in which they became despondent and refused to act; thus, they **rebelled against the command of the Lord** and refused to take possession of the Promised Land (v. 26). Not only did they refuse to follow God, but they also continued to **complain**—even wrongly surmising that **the Lord hates** them and had **brought** them **out of Egypt** to die **at the hand of the Amorites** (v. 27). The people revolted this way because they listened

to the ominous report of the ten spies who told about a people **greater** and **taller than** they as well as **cities** which are heavily **fortified** and couldn't be defeated (v. 28). The people lacked trust in the Lord to do through them what He had promised. When we lack trust, we turn to other sources for solace and comfort which typically cause even more despair. In this case, the people turned to their own human strength as their source of comfort which ultimately led to them forfeiting their blessings of inheriting the land which God had given them.

In-Depth Information



The **Anakim** became synonymous with people of great stature—being both tall and strong. In antiquity, other cultures often referred to this people group as “giants.”

To what other sources do people turn when they fear and need comfort? In what ways does a lack of trust hinder our worship of God?

Question
4

Deuteronomy 1:29-33

WE FORGET GOD'S PROVISION:

Moses attempts to reassure the people that they can count on the Lord, so he urges them **not to be terrified** of the **Anakim**—though they may be a formidable presence for human strength, they are no match for the Lord (v. 29). He reminds them that God will **go before** them and **fight** for them just as He did both in **Egypt** and the **wilderness** (v. 30-31). In fact, Moses points out that God provided and protected them just as they would their own children (v. 31). A quick review of God's interaction with Israel while freeing them from bondage proves how much He cared for His people.

Instruct

As Pharaoh and his army pursued the Israelites, God parted the Red Sea and allowed them to pass on dry land, but collapsed the waters drowning the Egyptians ([Exod 14](#)). In the **wilderness**, the Lord divinely led the children by **a cloud** of smoke in the **day** and **fire by night**, providing both food and water in this inhospitable land ([Deut 1:33](#); [Exod 13:21](#); [15:22-25](#); [16:4-5](#)).



During their journey, he then fought on behalf of the people to protect them by defeating the Amalekites ([Exod 17:9-13](#)). Throughout their journey in the wilderness, they had seen God's provision but short-term human memory had caused them to forget what God had already done for them and transfer that knowledge to what He will do for them in the future.

Why is it important to remember the ways that God has provided for us?

Question
5

Too often, we have short-term memories like Israel and we forget what God has done for us in the past. When we forget, it usually causes us to become fiercely independent and leave God out of our lives—thinking that we know best and we can handle and resolve whatever comes our way. This frequently leads to more trouble in our lives and causes us only to turn to God in the direst of circumstances. Although we shouldn't live

in the past, we must give God glory for what He has done and use that experience of seeing Him at work to inform our decisions and the course of our lives.

What lessons have you learned from the Lord that have guided the way you worship by the decisions that you make in your life?

Question
6

Deuteronomy 1:34-40

WE FORFEIT OUR BLESSINGS:

The Lord **heard** the children of Israel's complaints and saw their resistance to His provisions. Because Israel had rebelled and refused to follow God's commands, He became **angry** with them (v. 34). Literally, every person twenty years and older forfeited their inheritance of the Promised Land because they obstinately refused to trust in the Lord ([Num 14:29](#)). Accordingly, God vowed that **not one of this evil generation** would step foot in the land long ago promised to their **fathers** (v. 35). Even Moses, who became angry with the people and disobediently struck the rock to bring forth water instead of speaking to it like the Lord had commanded, could not enter the Promised Land (v. 37; see also [Num 20:10-12](#)). Only two men who **wholly followed the Lord** were allowed to enter the land and see God's promises come to fruition (v. 36). Joshua and Caleb were the only two spies to proclaim boldly that with the Lord on their side they could



Instruct

take the Promised Land; therefore, Israel should follow God's directives. Instead of following God, however, Israel played the **victim** and counted its woes as they complained. The people complained that God had brought them and their children into the wilderness to die (v. 39). Rather than acting proactively and following the sound advice and wisdom of the Lord, Israel presented herself as a **victim** grumbling that God hated them and everyone was against them. Consequently, only their children were to inherit the Promised Land while they wandered in the wilderness for forty years (v. 40). Today, many people see themselves as **victims** of unfortunate circumstances or simply because they have gotten a "raw deal" in life. This hurts our worship with the Lord because it causes us to remain inactive so that we can draw attention to ourselves and our plight, receiving pity and sometimes assistance; in addition, it also causes us to complain instead of praise Him. Although we can't lose our salvation, failing to worship God through our obedience can cause us to forfeit the joy of serving the Lord and the peace that we will have in knowing that He will provide for our every need.

How can playing a victim or constantly complaining cause us to forfeit our joy or peace?

Question
7

Deuteronomy 1:41-46

WE FIGHT WITHOUT GOD:

Like a typical child, Israel began to cry out to the Lord after the punishment was specified, stating now that they would willingly **go and fight just as the Lord had** commanded them (v. 40). For parents who have children,

this is a common technique when a child is caught red-handed and punishment is doled out; they attempt to apologize, plead, and reform so that they can escape punishment. They're not truly sorry for their actions—only the fact that they were caught. Likewise, Israel wasn't remorseful over what they had done, but didn't want to lose their inheritance of the Promised Land. God, however, didn't relent in His punishment, but declared that He would **not go up nor fight** for them and they would surely be **defeated** by their **enemies** (v. 42). Despite this clear warning, Israel did **not listen** and



without the Lord attempted to advance into the land, but were soundly defeated by the **Amorites** (v. 43-44). In fact, the thrashing was so severe and humiliating that Moses describes them as being **chased like bees** from the land. Once again, they failed to learn a lesson and **wept before the Lord**, but He would **not listen** to them, still confining them to the area in Kadesh just south of the border to the Promised Land.

In many ways, our culture mimics Israel because people want things handed to them without the consequence of whether they obey or not and they don't take responsibility for their own actions—they blame the environment, their circumstances, and others. For us to have true and unfettered worship with the Lord, we must have a humble spirit and be in a right relationship with Him through confession and repentance. We can never have authentic worship if we repeat the

Instruct

same mistakes and focus on our own desires and what we want in life. Instead, we must take ownership of our sins, asking for forgiveness and allowing God to restore us for use in His kingdom. Only when we put aside all fear and trust God fully, submitting to His plan for our lives, can we have authentic worship that glorifies and honors Him.

How does failure to confess our sins and habitually make the same mistakes affect our worship of the Lord?

Question
8

Inspire

To worship God authentically, we must remove all the obstacles that hinder us. First, we must recognize that worship is all about God the Father who sent Jesus to pay for our sins. Too often, we're like John in the introduction who had a self-centered perspective which caused him to complain and criticize rather than worship the Lord. An attitude such as this causes us to seek our own personal preferences rather than allow God to direct our lives. When this happens, we will be in a constant battle with the very God who loves us and wants to use us in ministry. Self-centeredness leads us to become cynical and skeptical whereby we actually become opponents to the things God wants to do. Worship, therefore, is not about music style, entertainment, or even eloquent teaching, but it's about having a relationship with Jesus Christ whereby we honor Him through our lives—the way we act and speak.

Second, we must realize that worship is a lifestyle—not something that we “do” on Sundays at 11 am, but the way that we live in public and in private. God certainly desires corporate worship, but He also desires worship through our obedience and service. We must prepare ourselves continually for worship by reading His Word, praying, and seeking forgiveness for any unconfessed sin. Just as a firefighter or paramedic must be ready to respond to an emergency at a moment’s notice, we also ought to be prepared to worship God in any and every circumstance. This requires that we place our trust wholly in Him and allow Him to guide our lives by listening to Him speak to us through His Word and prayer. When we measure our lives against His Word, it will highlight any faults (i.e. sin) in our lives of which we must confess and repent. Let’s not mimic the world who sees itself as a victim of unfortunate circumstances, but let us see ourselves as truly blessed by God for how He works in and through our lives. When we see worship as a relationship, then we will have the right perspective of honoring and glorifying God with our total being.

Incorporate

To you, what's most important for worship?

To God, what's most important for worship? (Cite Scripture for support.)
How does this differ from what you may have listed in the previous question?

In what ways does authentic worship constitute a lifestyle and not just something we do on Sundays at 11 am?

Prayerfully ask God if anything is hindering your worship of Him. If there is anything, list it here. (Be honest as you'll be the only one who sees this unless you decide to show it to someone for accountability.)

August 20, 2017

Written by: Pastor Don Wills



The Offering of Our Worship

Deuteronomy 6:1-13

Focal Verse:

*"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul,
and with all your strength."*

Deuteronomy 6:5

Introduce

Before the days of iPhones and GPS, we received directions by viewing a paper map or by asking someone who was familiar with the area. If we got lost, however, we didn't have the convenience of taking out our phone to make a call or inputting directions into our GPS so that we could get back on the right path. Instead, we would need to stop and ask for directions or use a pay phone to contact someone who could point us in the right way. Even if we received the correct directions to our destination, however, a very different problem would arise if we didn't follow them; we can find ourselves off course, completely lost, and often in a very difficult and perilous situation.

When my family toured on the gospel music circuit, each of us boys had varied experiences while driving our road bus. There is not much better sleeping than being on a road bus on a cool night with the window slightly open and cool breeze blowing across your face just enough to keep you tightly snuggled in your bunk bed. With the hum of the diesel engine and the slight vibration of the bus as it traveled down the road, it rocked you to sleep like a baby in his mother's arms as she sang a lullaby. However,



that perfect version of a road trip suddenly turned into horror when my brother didn't follow directions and missed the exit on a long stretch of highway with very few exits at 2 o'clock in the morning. With the next exit almost thirty miles down the road, my brother decided to make a U-turn

Introduce

on the interstate across the median, but he failed to estimate the size of the ditch which he would be crossing. At two in the morning, the bus came to a violent stop, the cool air ceased to blow, and the hum of the engine abruptly ended as we had become stuck in a three-foot ditch that my brother could not see in the darkness.

Through many years of traveling and driving old buses, dad woke me and instructed me to crawl under the front end of the bus with a flashlight in which the batteries had not been replaced in some time. The goal was to adjust the height of the leveling valve of the air-ride so that it would lift the rubber cylinders to a height that would clear the front end of the bus above the ditch and we could get back on the road. Despite the adverse condition and the dim flashlight, we were able to successfully extricate the bus from the ditch and return to the right course. In life, we must pay attention to the directives that we have been given and follow them lest we find ourselves in a precarious situation; often, however, our actions don't merely affect us, but they affect everyone around us. If somehow we do get off course and find ourselves in a dangerous situation, we must have the wherewithal to look to the proper source for wisdom that can help us get back on course. In [Deuteronomy 6:1-13](#), Moses reminds the children of Israel that the Lord is their source of wisdom and their guide so that they do not become distracted in life and get off course so they could offer authentic worship to Him and show gratitude for that which He has done in their lives.

Key
Question

In what ways can we offer authentic worship to the Lord by the way that we live?

Deuteronomy 6:1-5

AS AN OFFERING OF WORSHIP THERE IS A WAY TO WALK:

As Moses so often does in the book of Deuteronomy, he reminds the people about their responsibility to follow the **statutes and judgments** that the Lord has given them. The first five verses of chapter six, therefore, provide a road map for the people, showing the proper *way to walk*—that is how they ought to live in the land of Canaan which God is now giving them **to possess** (v. 1). As they cross over into the Promised Land, Moses clearly defines a prescription for offering authentic worship unto the Lord in three ways: 1) they have a *responsibility* to follow, 2) they must display *reverence* for the Lord, and 3) they must fulfill the *requirement* they have been given.

First, Moses has the responsibility not only to abide by these same commandments, but also to **teach** them to the people. As a leader whom God had chosen to free Israel from bondage and guide them to the Promised Land, Moses had the greatest responsibility because he communicated the Word of the Lord to the people which they should hear, understand, and apply in their lives. God has given us leaders, such as pastors, ministerial staff, Bible study teachers, and deacons, who help us to understand and apply His Word, the Bible. This does not mean that we are dependent wholly upon them and aren't held accountable for our own actions.



Instruct

On the contrary, God has placed others in our lives so that we can maintain focus and have the proper perspective in our obedient service and worship to Him.

Why is it important to have leaders in our lives who communicate God's Word to us clearly?

Question
1

Like Moses, the people have a responsibility to **observe** the **commandments** that God imparted to His servant on Mount Sinai. We've all likely heard the phrase: "Ignorance of the law is no excuse." The children of Israel also have no excuse because God has appointed His messenger to relate His commandments directly to them. Because they have received the law in full, they have the responsibility to follow it; any violation of the law, therefore, is attributed to their willful disobedience and not to any ineptness on Moses' part. We, too, because the Holy Spirit dwells in us, have a responsibility to offer worship to the Lord through our obedience to His guidance.

Our responsibility to follow the guidance that God has provided for us both through His Word and through the leaders who **teach** His Word can be compared to taking a hunting expedition to an unfamiliar territory. For example, consider being on a hunting trip in the mountains of Colorado amid twenty-three million acres that we've never hunted or even



explored. To have success on our venture, we will need two crucial things. First, we must take a hunter's safety course. Second, we would need to hire a guide or go with someone who had experience in navigating the terrain, knowing basic direction and survival skills, and tracking the game. Having knowledge about the hunter's safety course and hiring a guide is useless, however, if we don't follow the instructions. Consequently, we must have commitment to heed the guide's advice and follow his directives. If we choose somewhere along the way to disregard his instruction and the path he has shown us, then we could find ourselves lost in the wilderness for hours and days or even worse it could cost us our lives.

What happens to us when we fail to heed the directions and guidance that God has given us?

Question
2

Similarly, in our walk with the Lord, we need to read His Word and follow the guidance He offers through His Spirit. The Bible clearly reveals how we ought to walk, but the real question is whether we are willing to follow His leadership or not. Because we have a guide we can follow physically and spiritually in Jesus Christ, we are responsible for the way that we live. The way that we live, therefore, reflects our worship of the Lord through our obedience. John, for instance, asserts, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." As a result, let us offer our worship to the Lord through our devotion and commitment to follow His commands and heed the call of the Spirit in our lives.

Instruct

Second, we display reverence for the Lord in the way that we walk; therefore, Moses exhorts the people to **fear the Lord** their **God** (v. 2). Fear, in this sense, means to render respect or reverence unto Him. Thus, we show respect unto the Lord by **keeping all His statutes and commandments**. Obedience, therefore, is an expression of our love and reverence to Him—not a legalistic requirement whereby we earn His love (see [John 14:15](#)). Not only were they to walk in obedience themselves **all the days of their lives**, but they were to pass this



along to their children. Just as God indicated in the fifth commandment which bids us to honor our earthly parents, He promises that those who honor Him as their heavenly Father with their obedience would have their **days prolonged** (see

[Exod 20:12](#)). Part of our worship, therefore, is to teach our children and other family members to respect the Lord. The greatest act of worship, therefore, would be a family whose successive generations honored the Lord with their lives.

In what other ways can we show reverence for God in our lives? In what ways should we teach our children and families to fear the Lord?

Question
3

Third, Moses explains the requirement that they must fulfill: they must be devoted to the Lord God alone and love Him with all their being. He

begins by describing the uniqueness of the Lord by reminding them: **the Lord our God, the Lord is one** (v. 4). In essence, the Hebrew phrase means that there is only **one God** and **He is the Lord** (Yahweh). This is another way of stating the first two commandments; Israel is not to worship another man-made or false god or to create idols. The Lord alone is sovereign and worthy of our devotion. Our devotion, therefore, is expressed through our **love**. Our **love** is then expressed by our total surrender in giving every area of our lives to Him and submitting to His will for us. For this reason, Moses describes our **love** for God as emanating from the very depths of our being; we are to **love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength** (v. 5). When we offer our worship unto God, it's not merely a feeling, but it's from the very core of who we have become in our relationship with Christ. Thus, our **love** becomes manifest through our obedience, our service, our attitude, and our desire to have a personal and daily walk with the One who created us.

What does it mean to love God with all our being?
What does this love look like in our daily lives?

Question
4

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

AS AN OFFERING OF WORSHIP THERE IS A WALK TO WITNESS:

Next, Moses demonstrates how our worship is expressed outwardly in our witness in three primary ways: 1) our devotion to Him (v. 6); 2) our diligence or faithfulness to teach our families (v. 7), and 3) our dedication to abide by His teaching (vv. 8-9). First, we must offer our worship through our devotion to Him by internalizing the **words** He has given us

Instruct

by hiding them **in our heart** (v. 6). In [Psalm 119:10-11](#), the psalmist writes, “With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that



I might not sin against You.” If we are devoted to someone or something, we are not faithful only part of the time. We cannot be devoted to God and only follow His guidance some of the time when we see it as convenient or beneficial. On the

contrary, devotion means that we are fully surrendered to the Lord even when things go awry and become difficult. Certainly, we will still fail at times, but we need to be quick to repent and to learn from our mistakes because we have a **heart** that is sensitive to the Lord’s guidance.

What does devotion to the Lord look like in our daily lives?

Question
5

Our devotion to the Lord, therefore, should serve as a witness to others; thus, that devotion is borne through our diligence to teach our children and families to honor the Lord. Moses instructs Israel to teach the commandments to their children **diligently** at all times—when they **sit** in their **house**, when they **walk by the way**, and when **they lie down and rise up** (v. 7). Through this instruction, we can learn two practical principles about teaching our children to worship the Lord: 1) we must

be consistent and 2) we must be persistent. First, we must be consistent in our teaching; this requires that we model in our home the things that we teach and that we consistently teach the same values without shifting or becoming lax. It creates confusion in the home when parents don't practice what they teach or they have constantly changing guidelines that are enforced lackadaisically. In the same way, if we are not consistent in teaching our children to worship God through their obedience, it will cause a conflict about the importance of worship and obedience and it will often end with the child becoming wayward in his thinking. Second, we must be persistent; we must constantly remind our children about the goodness of the Lord and what He has done for us, teaching them to give Him honor and praise in every circumstance. Moreover, we ought to teach them to be persistent in their walk; in other words, their walk with the Lord is the same outside of the home as it is in the home.

Why is it important to be both consistent and persistent in teaching our children about God?

Question
6

Failure to teach our children and model the authentic offering of worship to the Lord can result in subsequent generations being led astray. When we offer worship to God, it ought to have an impact on the lives of those around us. On a beautiful Summer day, we have all probably tried to skip a rock across a lake or body of water. When the rock skims across the water, it creates ripples that emanate from where the rock impacted the water. Just like that rock skipping across the water, we ought to walk through life



Instruct

impacting others by pointing them to the Lord. Our families, friends, and those around us ought to see the impact that the Lord has made on our lives by the way that we offer worship; thus, every moment of life, when breathe, walk, talk, sleep, or are awake, we ought to be a positive impact on others by displaying our devotion to Christ.

How can we positively impact others through our worship of the Lord?

Question
7

Finally, we ought to be dedicated to the Lord's teaching; in other words, our holiness ought to reflect our relationship with the Lord so that others can be drawn unto Him. Moses, therefore, tells them to **bind** their **hand** with the Lord's teaching and have it **as frontlets between** their **eyes** so that they might be a **sign** to others. Moreover, they are to **write** the commandments of the Lord **on the doorposts** of their **houses** and **gates** so that people in the community know that their **house** serves the Lord ([Joshua 24:15](#)). Part of our worship is to point others into a relationship with the only one true and living God. If we live inconsistently with what the Bible says or we behave just as the world around us does, then we will repel them by our hypocrisy instead of drawing them into a relationship with the Lord. Consequently, we must remember that as God's people we are His ambassadors and we ought to represent His devotion, diligence, and dedication to others.

Why is it important to model our worship of the Lord for others in the community?

Question
8

AS AN OFFERING OF WORSHIP THERE IS A WITNESS OF WORSHIP:

In this last section of text, Moses relates how there will be a witness of worship. When we engage in authentic worship, the community around us will see God's sovereignty and benevolence displayed through the *wonder* of blessings He has given us. Although we will address this more in-depth in next week's lesson, here we see God's promise to bless those who obediently worship Him. The Lord will fulfill His promise to their fathers to give them **land**, but He will also bless them with **large and beautiful cities** they **did not build** as well as plentiful **goods** in their **houses**, water in their **wells**, and productive **vineyards** and **olive** groves (vv. 10-11). If they surrender to God with their worship, the nations around them will see God's hand at work—not theirs—because this is something that they could not do on their own. Thus, the blessings that God bestows upon His people will point directly to His provision and protection of those who worship Him.



God gives them *warning lest* they **forget** to share the source of their blessings (v. 12). Moses cautions them to **beware lest** they **forget** who it was **who brought them out of bondage in Egypt**. How often do we forget to offer God praise in our daily lives because we either become too busy, too focused on our circumstances, or too consumed with our needs. God works in our lives every day in miraculous ways, but how

Instruct

often do we take the time to thank Him for meeting even our most basic needs? Frequently, our prayers focus on our needs or intercession for others and we spend very little time praising God for His character, His benevolence, and His grace and mercy toward us. We ought to let the testimony of praise be a daily occurrence—not because we want people to know how much we are blessed in conceited way, but because we want them to know the source of our blessings.

In what ways does Israel forget that God has provided for them throughout the Bible?
In what ways do we sometimes forget how God has provided for us?

Question
9

Finally, Moses describes how we ought to *worship* in the blessings that we have received. He summarizes our worship in three key areas that have been the focus of this entire passage: 1) reverence to the Lord, 2) service in His name, and 3) obedience and integrity for His commandments (v. 13). Rather than rehash all these concepts here, it would behoove us to examine the greatest demonstration of an offering of worship which came through Jesus Christ. As God who dwelt in the flesh, Jesus could have done anything He desired, but He was focused on fulfilling the Father's will—even if it cost Him His life. In fact, Jesus prayed at the Garden of Gethsemane, "Not my will, but Thine be done" ([Luke 22:42](#)).

In His humanity, Jesus didn't look forward to the cross: "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set

before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” It was the joy set before Him that would allow Him to endure the cross; in His humanity He trusted God the Father and knew ultimately



His plan was the best. Our lives, therefore, should mirror the goal and understanding that our Savior had. Live every day as an offering of worship; trust that whatever may come our way that God knows what is best as we yield ourselves to Him—not simply out of duty, but out of love with all our heart, soul, and strength.

In Prayer



*Stop and pray, thanking God for who He is: King, Savior, Provider, Father, etc. Also, thank Him for the ways He has blessed you **this week.***

I could tell you of so many adventures and misadventures on the road as a family involved in gospel music. Just as our journey as a family had its ups and downs, so also does our offering of worship when we take our eyes off Christ and try to direct our own lives. Just as my brother learned when he got the bus stuck in the median of the highway, we also ought to learn to heed the direction of the Spirit who will never mislead us or cause us to stumble along life's way. In what ways can we offer worship to a Savior who's given us the greatest sacrifice so that we can have eternal life through Him? We can worship Him through our imitation of His character. We ought to love others as He has loved us. We ought to seek the will of the Father through our obedience. We ought to live holy lives so that it points others to a relationship with the Father. In addition, we ought to teach others by living a consistent life in accordance to God's commands and being persistent in our walk both inside and outside the home. Moreover, we ought to serve God by serving others so that we impact the world around us and bring the hope of good news through the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we offer such authentic worship, it brings glory and honor to God—the sole reason for which we were created—and it helps others to understand the source of our life and blessing stems only from Him. To God be the glory for the great things He has done, is doing, and will continue to do through His people!

Incorporate

How has the Lord blessed you? How have you expressed your gratitude for His blessing in your life through an offering of worship?

In what ways do you demonstrate your love for the Lord? Do you view your demonstration as an offering of worship or dutiful obedience?

Based on Deuteronomy 6:6-9, how do you approach fulfilling this instruction? In what ways do you model your relationship with the Lord?

August 27, 2017

Written by: Ricky Johnson



The Outcome of Our Worship

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

Focal Verse:

“The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.”

Deuteronomy 28:9

Introduce

As I discussed in the introduction to the first lesson this month, children must have rules and guidelines by which to live. Our kids were all adopted from foster care, which requires Katy and I to provide structure and consistency when it comes to the rules. Whether they realize it or not, they want structure and guidance because it creates a sense of love and care from their parents that they did not have in their lives prior to being placed in our home. Every child desires love and acceptance from their parents, despite how much they may test their boundaries and disobey. Throughout this month, we have discussed the actions of Israel by focusing on how they worshiped and related to God. They were given clear instructions by which to live and they both succeeded and failed at obeying what God had told them to do.

Today's lesson is about the outcome of our worship when we live in obedience to God. Our kids always know what to expect when it comes to the rules of the house. A certain negative action on their part elicits a certain consequence as a result. If they are doing right, then the house can be at peace and they can expect rewards and



blessings as a result of their obedience— although this occurs less often than I would like. In [Deuteronomy 28:1-14](#), Moses outlines the promises that God makes to the people of Israel if they would simply obey His commandments. These blessings cover everything from prosperity to

Introduce

security and promises concerning the well-being of God's people. They are the converse of the curses that follow in verses 15-68 that result from their disobedience. Consequently, Moses reminds them five times to keep the commandments of the Lord ([Deut 28:1-2, 9, 13, 15](#)). God loves His people and wants to see them prosper, but their blessings are conditional; if they keep His commandments and are obedient unto the Lord, they will reap the blessings and rewards that He has promised them.

For Christians today, these verses should serve as a reminder to live obediently so as to please the Lord ([1 Thess 4:1-2](#)). [Psalm 84:11](#) says, "No good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly." Just as the Israelites were promised prosperity as a nation if they kept God's commandments, we have been promised that all things will work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose ([Rom 8:28](#)). We are to live holy lives because God Himself is holy ([Lev 19:2](#)), and everyone around us will know that we are called by the name of the Lord ([Deut 28:9-10](#)). The outcome of our worship, therefore, hinges upon the object of our worship. If we remain obedient unto God and cultivate a right relationship with Him, then the outcome is blessing beyond compare which points others to a relationship with Him.

Key
Question

How does your daily walk reflect an obedient heart to God?

Deuteronomy 28:1-8

The Practicality of our Obedience:

[Deuteronomy 28](#) begins by demonstrating the practical ways that God will bless the nation of Israel by providing for their basic needs; therefore, God will provide shelter, food, monetary resources, and security. First, Moses mentions that their way of life will flourish both in their urban and rural lands (v. 3). Their farms and crops would grow, and the livestock would be plentiful and sufficient for the basic need of food and survival (vv. 4-5). These particular blessings were profound to the people of Israel because to this point in their history they were a nation without land.

Second, God promises to exalt them above other nations and proclaim their reputation as His people. During times of conflict, the **enemies who rise against**

them **will be defeated** and made to **flee before** them **seven ways** (v. 7). Thus, God is the source of their security and strength when they fully surrender to Him. On the contrary, their safety would not be guaranteed if they disobeyed. In [verses 15-25](#), God states the consequences for their disobedience by reminding them that their **land** would not flourish and that they themselves would flee from their enemies in fear for their safety. Once again, God reiterates, as He does often, that He wants to bless them, but this requires them to live faithfully according to His



commandments and to do His will. As a result, the outcome of our worship depends upon whether we remain focused on Him and obedient in our walk so that the blessings of God can flow through us and draw others to Him.

In what ways has God blessed you because of your obedience to Him? What happened in the times that you weren't obedient?

Question
1

Even though modern American culture is very different today from that of Israel in the sixteenth century BC, we can still compare our lives to them because we still face the same types of struggles—albeit in different ways. For example, Israel should have consistently depended upon the Lord for their well-being in every facet of their lives, but they often failed in this endeavor because they were distracted by the idols and beliefs of the nations around them. Although God had delivered them from Egypt and they relied heavily upon Him in the wilderness—even having seen Him act benevolently to provide for them—they still were disobedient and turned away from Him at times. The same truth applies to us today. We ought to depend upon the Lord for everything in all situations, but because we have a world inundated with man-made inventions that steal our attention and time we often fail to worship the one true and living God who wants to have a relationship with us. We should worship Him not only because He has saved us, but also because He continues to sustain us by providing food, shelter, and security. We also live in a country that is much safer than most in this world and have an opportunity to worship Him freely without the threat of persecution. For this we ought to praise

Him and live obediently according to His purpose.

For what specific reasons in our lives can we offer praise to God?

Question
2

In a world of distraction and competing ideologies, people are drawn away from God into disobedience. When we deliberately choose to sin and live according to our own desires, we will face the consequences for our disobedience. Scripture clearly relates the outcome of Israel's disobedience: "But if they do not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation" ([Jer 12:17](#)).

However, we must not lose sight of the object of our worship, but worship Him through our complete surrender to His will and total obedience to His commands; when we surrender our lives, we will depend upon God for everything. Yet, how many times do



we depend upon other people and things rather than God? All the people, money, and technologies in this world do not compare to the ways that God has provided for us. [Proverbs 11:4](#) states, "Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death." Consequently, we must remind ourselves of God's goodness and provision so that we remain faithful to Him in everything that we do.

How should we make God the focus of our lives and not allow the world to distract us?

Question
3

Deuteronomy 28:9

The Holiness in our Obedience:

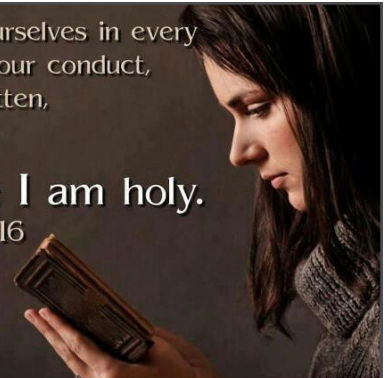
In order to engage in true worship, we must be set apart as a **holy people** whom God has cleansed and forgiven their sins. Therefore, we must be made **holy** just as God Himself is holy. The Bible clearly portrays God as holy, perfect, and superior to everything in creation. During Isaiah's call, for example, he sees God being worshiped in the heavenly temple and the angels exclaiming, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts" ([Isa 6:3](#)). In modern English, we would translate this phrase as "holiest"—God is the holiest One in all the universe and He alone deserves our worship. As a result, we ourselves must be made **holy** to enter into His presence and offer authentic worship to Him.

Why is it important to examine our lives for any imperfections before we enter into worship?

Question
4

To be God's **holy people**, therefore, requires us to be faithful to His **commandments** by **walking in His ways** and being set apart from the world around us. One cannot be **holy** if he lives disobediently and continues to sin. Yet, walking according to God's standards isn't a legalistic checklist so that one fulfills an obligation, but rather it is the outcome of a changed life in Jesus Christ. We don't **walk** in a **holy** manner because we obtain blessings, but we **walk** in a **holy** manner

Be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written,
Be holy because I am holy.
1 Peter 1:15-16



because it honors God and represents Him accurately to the world around us. For this reason, Peter writes, “But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy’” ([1 Pet 1:15-16](#)). Thus, one cannot be set apart from the rest of the world if he acts just like they do and fails to represent the transformation that God has brought about in his life. Therefore, the outcome of living a holy life should be authentic worship that points others to God through the transformation that Christ has performed in us.

In what ways should you strive to be holy just as God is holy?

Question
5

Being obedient to earn rewards or blessings is the wrong motivation because it is selfish rather than God-honoring; therefore, we don’t earn blessings, but they are freely given by God to those who follow His commands. This can be demonstrated through salvation since we are not saved by our good works and obedience, but it comes from a gift of God freely given through Jesus’ sacrificial death. Thus, we can’t earn salvation by any human means ([Eph 2:8-9](#)). Good works, as a result, are the outcome and evidence of our salvation and show to Whom we belong. In the same way, we don’t earn blessings by being obedient, but God gives them freely and abundantly to those who are. Therefore, blessings, just like salvation, are evidence to those around us that God is working in our lives. Therefore, when we are blessed by God for our obedience we ought humbly to point others to Him and give Him praise for the ways in which He has blessed us.

In what ways are blessings a sign to others of God working in our lives? Why and how should we use them to point others to Christ?

Question
6

Deuteronomy 28:10

The Uniqueness in our Obedience:

In verse 10, Moses makes explicit to the people what God implicitly meant in verse 9 when He said he would make them a **holy people**; they are to be obedient so that **all the peoples of the earth shall see that they are called by the name of the Lord**. For this reason, Israel was to worship God alone ([Deut 5:7-9](#)) and avoid allowing other nations and religions to influence their beliefs. As God's representatives, Israel bore the **name of the Lord**; therefore, the things the people did and said reflected upon the **Lord**. For those of us who have children, we can understand vividly how those who bear our name represent us and can either bring honor or disrepute to our **name**. Children, for example, when they misbehave and rebel, bring dishonor and shame because it appears as if they have not been raised properly at home. Oppositely, when they obey and do things well, they bring honor not only to themselves but also their parents. Consequently, in whatever way that a child behaves, he or she reflects the upbringing of his or her parents—whether deserved or not. In the same way, Israel represented God and His power to transform, provide, and protect which would be a sign to the other nations not only of their trust in the Lord, but His activity in their lives.



In the New Testament, it becomes even clearer that we represent Christ Jesus because we bear His holy name and have been adopted as children of God through His death and resurrection ([Rom 8:15](#)). John writes, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” ([John 1:12](#)). He reinforces this point in his first letter when he interjects, “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God” ([1 John 3:1](#)). John’s declaration, therefore, reminds us of God’s promise through the prophet Isaiah: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine” ([Isa 43:1](#)). Because we have a new name in Christ, we ought to exercise great care in how we live so that it brings honor and glory to Him rather than shame; since we are joint-heirs with Christ and children of God the Father, then we have a responsibility to live as His holy representatives. Therefore, we must rid our lives of sinful habits and selfish desires and accomplish the tasks to which He has called us.



In what ways does bearing the name of Christ reflect upon Him just as bearing the last name of our earthly parents reflects on them?

Question
7

Deuteronomy 28:11-14

The Steadfastness of our Obedience:

If Israel remains faithful and obedient to God, He will supply all their needs and they will prosper as a people so that they can be an example to the other nations of what it means to have a relationship with the Lord. In these verses, God reassures them that He will fulfill His covenant to their **fathers** by giving them the promised **land**; not only will He give them the **land**, but He will make it productive so that Israel can increase by bearing children (i.e. **fruit of their body**) and the **livestock** and **produce** from **the ground** will be abundant enough to care for their families. In verse 11, the Hebrew text literally says that **the Lord will cause you to have an excess of prosperity**; in other words, God will bless them beyond their wildest imagination if only they would follow His commands and avoid falling into the false worship of the gods of the nations around them. When God's people are obedient and He blesses them, the other nations will take notice because their gods cannot provide, protect, and make or fulfill promises to them. The gods, or idols they worship, are simply man-made objects which cannot hear, speak, or think; they have no way that they can respond to the plight of people or provide salvation for them ([Hab 2:18-20](#)).

In verse 12, it becomes clear that God is challenging Israel to remain faithful to Him—the true and living God—rather than surrendering to the worship of the gods in the land of Canaan which they will conquer in book of Joshua. God promises that if they obey then He will open **the heavens to give rain** so that the land will be productive in what it produces. In an

agricultural society, this would increase their wealth so that they wouldn't have to **borrow**, instead they would **lend to many nations**. The fact that God can make or withhold **rain** is a direct challenge to the Canaanite god Baal who was thought to control the weather. God, not Baal, had power over the weather and when Israel obeyed God would display His power by blessing them so that the pagan nations in Canaan would be drawn unto Him because they saw how He was active in fulfilling His promises to those called by His name.

In what ways can God use us to display His strength and might to unbelievers today?

Question
8

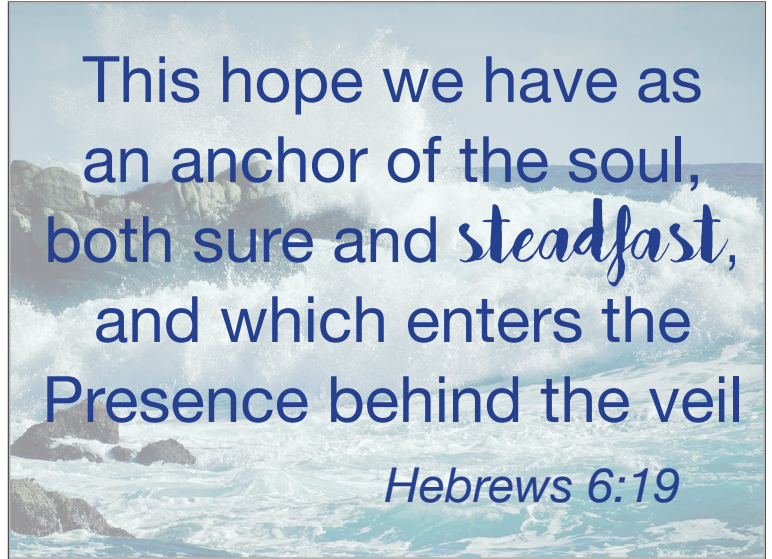
In-Depth Information



Baal's supposed power over the weather can be clearly seen in [1 Kings 18](#) when Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal to make it rain. Elijah also challenges them to build an altar with stone and wood, lay a bull on it, but not set it on fire. They were to pray and ask Baal to send fire (lightning) from heaven to consume the sacrifice. Most of us know how the story ends. The prophets of Baal did everything in their power to get him to act, but they could not. Elijah, however, offered a simple prayer at the right time and God demonstrated the power that He has over the weather. Baal nor his prophets could do anything because they were praying to a false god who didn't exist, but Elijah had a relationship with the one true and living God who could display His power through the weather.

Instruct

In the same way, we are called to remain steadfast and obedient so that we are different than unbelievers so that we can point them to God. To remain steadfast, we must saturate ourselves in God's Word by reading it daily and spending time in fervent prayer, seeking His will. If we don't know what the Bible says, then how can we follow it obediently? Although our salvation doesn't depend upon our obedience and good works, the outcome of our salvation should affect the way that we



live so that it makes us desire to please God. When we know God's Word and we live by it, then we can be His representatives to share the gospel to the nations around us. If we have a consistent testimony whereby we don't live in continuous sin, then God can work through our lives to draw others to Him. Like Israel, therefore, if we have been graciously blessed by God because of our faithfulness to Him, we shouldn't boast in our works, but rather point others to the Lord who has blessed us even more abundantly than we deserve.

How have you worked to remain steadfast in your faith and actions in your daily life?

Question
9

The outcome of worship depends upon our willingness to follow the boundaries God has established for our lives. As we learned in the introduction, we must constantly remind our children that both obedience and disobedience have consequences. Through His Word, God constantly reminds us as His children the importance of our obedience. When we obey, He will bless us so that we can use those blessings to introduce others into a relationship with Him. Therefore, the outcome of our worship should be a lifestyle of service to the Lord. Although we ought to worship together corporately as a church, our worship doesn't stop on Sunday when we leave the sanctuary—rather the worship that we offer on Sunday should be just the beginning of the worship that we offer during the week. As modern Christians, we tend to compartmentalize our lives so that church, work, and our social lives are separate, but God should be the center of everything that we do so that others can observe Him at work in our lives.

Certainly songs and hymns of praise constitute worship, but worship involves so much more than mere music. Worship is manifest through our obedience to the Lord which leads us to serve Him by using our spiritual gifts within the church and community and our acquired talents, such as carpentry, sewing, plumbing, accounting, etc., to invest in others and the church. When we look at our lives, we have seen how God has blessed us tremendously in various ways; therefore, everything with which He has blessed us, our families, our time, our homes, our possessions, our money, etc., should be used to point others into a relationship with Him. So let us ask ourselves what the outcome of

Inspire

worship is: do we use the blessings that God has given us to invest in sharing the gospel and point unbelievers to Him or have we lost focus and allowed other idols and a disobedient spirit to affect the way that we worship the Lord?

Incorporate

Pray by thanking God for His blessings in your life. For what things can you specifically thank Him for which He has clearly provided?

How have you used the blessings that God has given you in your life to point others to Him?

Incorporate

As you study God's Word, what are some of the responsibilities that we have as His children and representatives?

What steps can you take to better safeguard yourself from influences of a world that aims to take you further from Him?

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