

Worship Part 3 – Worship

By

Former Pastor Dr. Joel Minto *

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* Pastor Joel has a Doctorate in Biblical studies from **Master's Divinity School** and is a contributor to Selah Life Ministries

So we conclude our series on “avad” by looking at its final intended meaning; worship. This has not been an exhaustive look at the way this word is used but it does show the complexity of a single word when uttered by God. I read somewhere that the Eskimo peoples had over 100 meanings just for the word we translate from their language as snow. We in the west have a very limited sense when we consider this word worship. In fact most of us are quick to remind anyone who will listen that that is what we do on the Christian accepted daySunday. We go, we sing, we pray we listen to a sermon we pay our tithe and we all say that we worshipped. The problem is, worship is not a place but rather a state of mind. Do you find it interesting that God commanded us to “avad” 6 days and then to rest on the seventh and we do just the opposite we worship one day and do anything else the other 6 days. Of course that is if in fact we are doing “worship”. We treat the word worship as a noun, you remember in school we defined it; a person or a place or a thing. So for us worship first becomes a thing we do then a place where we do it. It becomes something we can package and program. Remind you of some of the meetings that talk about how we will structure a service to promote it to the crowd? Worship has become a spectacle of showmanship with just the right lighting the bands and thought provoking music that gets us in the mood to worship. If you look at the Greek word for worship it is “proskyneō”(proskū-ne'-ō) . This word is a verb not a noun, in fact in Greek the noun for worship doesn't even exist in the New Testament. For readers and hearers of the Greek or Hebrew in Jesus time and before, worship was an action, not a person place or thing. Strong's definition is summed up as “bowing the knee in obedience and submission” Now that's action and certainly not seen or done at the Sunday “worship” service.

I have often been amused by Church bulletins and bulletin boards that say that revival is scheduled for next month beginning on the first Monday of the month. I always chuckle and wonder who is good enough to schedule that. We do the same thing with worship, we post it on billboards and marquees in front of the church advertising that worship will begin each Sunday at 8:45 and 10:00. It is packaged and delivered to us each Sunday morning, evening and even on Wednesday night. It has become an entity unto itself. But it is not the bending of the knee in subjection to someone that is greater than me that we see at these times. Worship is the humbling of myself before an all mighty creator. Skip Moen says it this way “Worshipping is directly connected with paying homage, trembling before a vastly superior person, kneeling in total submission, serving from obeisance and duty. Worshipping is demonstrating reverence through physical, emotional and spiritual responses. Worshipping is what I do when I confront who God is.” That is what “avad” is and why it occupies our service our work and our worship. We were made to worship to “avad” When did you last see a person's life that the entire essence of who they were could be defined by this word.....I have yet to see that person. Only in Jesus was it seen. Why is it that we always ask God to join us in our worship? I think it's because He is on the outside tending to those who are homeless, those who are lost, those who need His care more. He is serving those who need Him most, He works to serve others.

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In the Bible when we see men fall on their face in fear of God they were worshipping someone greater than themselves and someone that desired and deserved their adoration and devotion. No one needed to lead these people to that conclusion they found it themselves. We “worship” quietly sitting in our seats worrying what someone might think of us if we were to fall to our knees.

So I like everyone reading this have a lot to learn about “avad”. How I work, how I serve, all ultimately demonstrates how I worship. Worship is my attitude. It is an attitude that my life does not belong to me, it belongs to God. There is no better example of worship than the prayer that Jesus prayed to God on the night before his crucifixion....”nevertheless, not my will, but Your will be done.” Can we pray that same prayer?