

New Testament Worship Part 1

Chapter 1 Fulfilling of the Old

The central focus of the Old and New Testament is Jesus Christ. So in our quest to establish an intimate life style of worship I found it helpful to concentrate my efforts on Him for he is the way, the truth, the light and the object of our worship.

The central theme of the redemption of mankind (or drawing men unto Himself) is the binding that holds the bible together. It starts in Genesis and ends in the book of Revelation where it states

“ Behold the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them.” (Rev 21:3)Emphasis mine.

As we will see in our first scripture the Old Testament is filled with types and shadows, and the four Gospels are the account of Jesus and his earthly ministry that ***fulfilled*** those types. The rest of the New Testament is the application, by the church of all that Jesus accomplished or fulfilled. Therefore we shall focus the bulk of our study on the New Testament portion of scripture.

The first scripture reference we shall look at is found in Mathew 5: 17. The words are those of Jesus himself:

“ Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

The scripture says that Jesus did not come to abolish Old Testament practices **but** he did fulfill them. As this happened it changed our outlook or should have on many Old Testament themes, worship of God and the presence of God being but a few of them.

I think it's important to note that a lot of the types and shadows brought forth in the Old Testament were not for showing us *how* but to show us *what* Jesus has accomplished by His life, death and resurrection.

Using the type of the Tabernacle that represented the place where they went to meet with God in the Old Testament was not to show us *where* we needed to go to get with God. Rather it showed us in the completed work of Jesus where *we are* seated, in heavenly places with Christ (Eph. 2:6). This is what Jesus has done for us and all we need to do is put aside all the areas of the flesh and soul that so easily keep us from that place. So now we can enter into the place provided for us because Jesus has made the way (Heb. 4:16). The task of getting there is already completed.

We can see in Mathew 27:50,51 that when Jesus said "*it is finished*" on the cross and gave up His spirit the Bible says that the veil of the Temple was rent in two. This means that the place where the priests went once a year to meet with God was now open to all who would come by way of Christ Jesus. We no longer need to go to a certain place to meet with Him. Jesus explained this to the woman at the well. In Johns' Gospel chapter 4 and verse 21 He said to her concerning worship in one of the clearest explanations of New Testament worship

" you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the father".

That was the place, he was trying to get her to understand it was not a physical one. He went on to say that the hour was now here when true worshipers would worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Meaning that true worshippers would not have to go to a specific place to worship the Father but it would come from the heart, the inner man and it would be sincere, not a religious exercise. This was also the essence of John the Baptist's ministry. To prepare people for the coming of the Lord by turning their focus from what they did on the outward to what they *were* on the inside. He told them that their actions were worshipping God but their hearts were far from him. Think of it, you can do something,

anything really that would simulate a heart that is after God and seem as though you are a worshiper of God yet your heart may be far from Him.

As we continue our text in Mathew chapter 5 and go to verse 21 we see Jesus Teaching the same message. Jesus begins to challenge what we think about certain sins in contrast to what God thinks about them. He says

*“ you have heard it said by those of old that if you murder someone you would be in danger of judgement. But I say to you that whoever is **angry** with his brother is in danger of judgement.”*

It was our heart attitude that was the focus of Gods attention, not our actions. Remember what the Lord said to Samuel when he was about to anoint the next King of Israel “ *the Lord does not see as man sees; for **man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.***” (1 Sam. 16:7)

Jesus was bringing them past religion to a place where they actually looked within themselves and asked the question why do I do what I do. That place within themselves that they looked to is the heart of worship that God is seeking in all of us. It’s the place that true worship comes from. It is worshipping in spirit and in truth.

This is a New Testament type of thinking. To begin to make an inward assessment of our hearts and why we do something as opposed to what we do is the central part of the rebirth of the heart that was written in the Old Testament when it said “ *I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh*” (Ezekiel 36:26). A stone is hard, rigid and not plyable. It speaks of being callouse and unbending. New Testament thinking is all about attitude and why we do what we do, not just what we do. There is no rule or regulation that can dictate an attitude and **that** is the difference between seeming to be right and actually being right. It is not something that can be seen from the outward appearance as the Lord said to Samuel, but must be spiritually discerned.

When we as a people come together corporately, with our hearts in a place of love and adoration for Him and our reasons for loving and

worshipping Him are in check, we will experience togetherness with Him like we have yet to encounter. For who can ascend the hill of the Lord but he who has a *pure heart* and clean hands.(Psalm 24:3,4)

Jesus came so we could get to the heart of the matter and draw closer to Him. That has always been the desire of God that we would be in close fellowship with Him, shedding the religious practice of worship and beginning to worship Him in spirit and in truth. The father is seeking those kinds of New Testament thinking Christians to worship Him. (John 4:23, 24).

This new move of worship is not just to make the sound more excellent or the songs better. No when we hunger for Him from our hearts the songs will come and the sound will be excellent. Our hearts will spill over with songs that express our love and adoration for Him. We will desire to be with Him in His presence and never want to leave. For God is seeking such to worship Him.