**Worship: What is it and why does it matter? — Part 1**

1. The Newness of New Covenant Worship (John 4:16-26)
   1. Worship in the New Covenant is radically changed because of the incarnation and the cross-work of Jesus Christ (“The hour is coming and now is”)
      1. He is the New Temple in that He provides the ultimate sacrifice for sin.
      2. He is the New Temple in that He is the fullest manifestation of the glory and presence of God.
   2. Worship in the New Covenant is primarily concerned with *manner* rather than *location* (“Not in Jerusalem…but in spirit and in truth”)
      1. The reason for this shift
         1. Because God’s desires and purposes for worship are now being fulfilled in a way the Old Covenant could never do.
         2. Because New Covenant worshippers fulfill all of the Old Testament expectations for the ideal worshipper (“The true worshippers”)
      2. That nature of this shift
         1. True worship is done “in spirit”
            1. To worship “in spirit” means worship from a heart which has been born again (see John 3:6)
            2. God desires “spiritual” worship, because it accords with His nature (“God is spirit”)
            3. Is this new?

No, in the sense that God has always desired worship from the heart and not mere external rituals (see Ps. 50-51)

Yes, in the sense that this Old Testament ideal was rarely experienced but is now experienced by all members of the New Covenant.

Yes, in the sense that now those who worship the Father do so in a way that is *exclusively* spiritual, not determined by any location or outward forms.

* + - 1. True worship is done “in truth”
         1. To worship “in truth” is to worship in accord with God’s revelation.
         2. New Covenant worship is centered around God’s ultimate revelation, His Son (Heb. 1:1-2; John 14:6). It is Christ-centered worship.

1. God’s Ultimate Aim in Creation and Redemption is His Worship
   1. God’s goal in creation is His own worship
      1. He is worthy of worship and devotion because all things belong to Him and are under His authority as creator (Rev. 4:9-11; 14:7)
      2. He is worthy of worship because of who He is in His eternal being and as He has revealed Himself in creation!
   2. God’s goal in redemption is His own worship
      1. Aspects of this work
         1. God’s salvation enables His people to worship Him rightly; to restore them to their original purpose
         2. God’s salvation heightens His people’s responsibility to Him, as they belong to Him as a Creator and as a Redeemer.
      2. Biblical Examples
         1. In the Exodus (Ex. 3:12; 4:23; 9:1; 10:3)

*“The book of Exodus proclaims that God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt so that they might serve or worship him exclusively. They were redeemed in order to engage with God, initially at ‘the mountain of God,’ then in the wilderness wanderings, and finally in the land which was to be his gift to them.” (David Peterson)*

* + - 1. In the New Covenant (Lk. 1:68-25; Phil. 3:3; Heb. 9:14; 12:28-29)
      2. In the New Creation (Rev. 22:1-3)

**Implications**

1. Our understanding and presentation of the Gospel must highlight the significance of worship at its core.
   1. Our biggest problem is failure to worship our Creator (Rom. 1:18-22).
   2. The essence of our repentance is turning back to God in worship (Rev. 14:7).
   3. And the whole reason why we are saved is unto being a worshipping people of the Father.
2. The greatest gift of salvation is to be made into a worshipper of God (cf. Ps. 43:3).

1. Our identity is primarily this: we are Redeemed-worshippers.