

1. Fundamentals of Worship: No Other Gods

Psalm 95:6-7; Isaiah 6:1-5

INTRO:

1. It's often called the "Worship Wars"
2. Controversy and division over public worship, both in the churches of Christ, and across Christendom
3. Involves at least two common issues:
 - a. what can be done?
 - traditional vs contemporary forms
 - instrumental music, worship teams and groups,
 - other "performing arts" like drama or dance
 - b. who is it for?
 - attract the lost or unchurched in the community (evangelism?)
 - for the church itself (edification?)
 - or someone else?
4. At a time when so many are saying, "I think," "I like," "I feel like," or "I believe," let's try to go back before all these emotionally charged and often divisive issues, and try to see what worship is fundamentally supposed to be about

I. OUR CREATOR

- A. Psalm 8:1-9 -- a psalm of worship toward the awesome, majestic, Creator God
- B. Psalm 95:1-7 -- another worship psalm, showing acknowledgment of God as creator and maker
- C. This is not a discussion of His existence. This is for those who are already fully convinced of His existence, His personal nature, His involvement in history, and His self-revelation in the Bible.
- D. His nature involves being timeless, unimaginably powerful and knowledgeable, and creative
 1. Recommend Louie Giglio's DVDs on "How Great Is Our God"
 2. Even modern science is grappling with the concept of "intelligent design."
 3. For us, Genesis 1-2 is about "intelligent design!"
 4. And worship is toward an "intelligent designer" who has revealed Himself to us!

II. NO OTHER GODS

- A. In Exodus the Israelites are about to come out of Egypt
 1. Pharaoh claimed to be a "god"
 2. Temples were everywhere honoring "gods"
 3. But there had been no actual, historical demonstrations or evidence of their existence
 4. The people were giving credit to the wrong sources for their land, river, crops, weather, etc.
- B. The God of the Israelites provided tangible, historical, observable evidence of His existence and power.
 1. In the 10 plagues
 2. At the Red Sea Crossing
 3. At Sinai
 4. These evidences were not to convince the Egyptians, but the Israelites!
- C. The "Gods" of the Egyptians, including the Pharaoh, were a "no show!"

III. TEN COMMANDMENTS

- A. First four commandments are about Him and man's relationship to Him -- Exodus 20:1-8
- B. #1 "No other gods before me" (see Exodus 20:23)
 - 1. Albert Barnes says "before me" literally meant "before my face."
 - 2. I take that to mean that God was saying, "I don't want to see you worshiping any god other than me!"
- C. #2 "Not make any graven image" -- i.e., of the one, true God or any other! He cannot be represented by such images, and images of any other would violate command #1! (example of golden calf - Ex. 33:4)
- D. #3 "Not take . . . name in vain"
 - 1. Empty pledges and commitments, falsehoods, etc. that would connect His name to lies, falsehoods -- showing a deep lack of respect for both His nature and character
 - 2. Adam Clarke: "It also necessarily forbides all light and irreverent mention of God. . . every prayer and reference that is not accompanied with deep reverence."
- E. #4 "Remember the Sabbath Day" -- specified that they should take specific, ordained times (designated by Him) to honor and worship Him.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We need to "see Him as He is!" -- Isaiah 6:1; Habakkuk 2:20
- B. He is One who inspires, deserves, and demands extreme reverence, honor, and even awe!
- C. The final word on this comes from Jesus: John 4:23-24