



2018 Q4 Oneness In Christ - Lesson 11 Unity In Worship

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So when we talk about this idea of “worship”, are we talking about the devotional practices in your home? We used to call that “family worship”. Are we talking about the tenor of the church service...whether we sing hymns or praise songs...whether we play the pipe organ or a guitar, or heaven-forbid, drums (/gasp)? Is that what we mean when we talk about the incredible importance of who and what we worship?

In the commentary of the teacher’s quarterly, we are asked to review Revelation 4:8-11...which I will read from The Remedy:

“These beings could act unbelievably fast—both physically and mentally—which was symbolized by each having six wings, and eyes all over, even under their wings. And they lived constantly—day and night—in a continual state of appreciation and love for God, saying: “God is holy, holy, holy—Lord Almighty, who has always been, who is, and who is to come.” Whenever these four living beings honor God’s character of love and thank him who governs the universe from the throne—the one who is the source of life and lives forever—the twenty-four elders are filled with awe and humbled in hearts, and demonstrate their devotion by falling down in love before him who sits on the throne, and they worship him who is the source of life and who lives forever. They cast their gold crowns before him—**demonstrating that their lives, their perfect characters and their healed minds come from him**—and proclaim: “You are worthy, our Lord God Almighty, to receive all honor, praise, glory, and power because you created all things, and all things have their origin in you and are sustained by you.”

The Nature of Worship - The Bible uses multiple words in Greek and Hebrew to describe different aspects of worship. The Hebrew words for worship emphasize honor, respect, and reverence by focusing on the actions of bowing down, prostrating, or otherwise humbling oneself before another person. However, worship in the Old Testament is not confined to bodily actions. It also includes the concepts of obedience and service that demonstrate the reality of our worship. Isaiah clearly indicates that simply going through the motions of worship activities [without obedience] is not worship at all (Isa. 1:10–17, Isaiah 58).

In New Testament Greek, we find a similar variety of words that can mean to bow down, revere, show honor and devotion, or to serve. The most common word for worship in the New Testament is proskyneo, which literally means “to kiss toward.” It likely reflects the custom of showing honor to a king or official by bowing before them and kissing their feet, an action understood as an admission of dependence or submission to the person in authority. In using this word to describe the worship of



God, we can therefore deduce that more than the physical action of kissing or bowing down is intended. To worship God is to recognize the greatness and majesty of God, to understand that He is the Creator and we are created - He is infinite, we are finite, to admit one's own helplessness and absolute dependence upon Him. Such admission also carries with it the implication of willingness to accept God's lordship over our lives. True worship has several important features.

First and foremost, it is directed at God and Him alone (we will talk more about the important aspect of **which** God in just a bit).

Second, it is never forced...it is a spontaneous response to the character of God and His redemptive, healing actions on our behalf. It begins from the heart and not from the expectations of others (like a compliance committee?).

Third, worship is not simply a Sabbath morning activity or a part of a worship service. It is a lifestyle. We are to live and breathe our responses to what God has done for us.

The living creatures in the throne room, pictured in Revelation 4, worshiped continually day and night. This imagery underscores the idea that each word and action of ours should bring honor to the name of God.

I have read this to you before, several years ago...but it made such an impact on me when I first read it decades ago, before I even knew anything about the law of worship, that I think it bears repeating in the context of this week's lesson. Noted speaker and author, Louis Giglio, wrote a little pocket book about this concept called *The Air I Breathe: Worship as a Way of Life* (2006). He starts his book this way:

"You, my friend, are a worshipper! Every day, all day long, everywhere you go, you worship. It's what you do. It's who you are. I don't know whether or not you consider yourself a 'worshipping' kind of person, but you cannot help but worship – something. It's what you were made to do. Should you for some reason choose not to give God the worship He desires, you'll still worship something – exchanging the Creator for something He has created. Worship is simply about value...Worship is our response to what we value most. This person, this thing, this experience, this...whatever...is what matters most to me - it's the thing I put *first* in my life. And we are not just talking about the religious crowd, churchgoers, Christians...we are talking about everybody on planet Earth...a multitude of souls proclaiming with every breath what is worthy of their affection, their attention, their allegiance...proclaiming with every step what it is they worship. So how do you know where and what you worship? It's easy. You simply follow the trail of your time, your affection, your energy, your loyalty. At the end of that trail you'll find a throne...and whatever or whoever is on that throne is what's of highest



value to you – on that throne is what you worship. Sure, not too many of us walk around saying, “I worship my stuff. I worship by Xbox. I worship my job. I worship this pleasure. I worship her. I worship my body. I worship me!” But the trail never lies. We may say we value this thing or that thing more than any other, but the volume of our actions speaks louder than our words – our worship is more about what we DO than what we SAY.”

To me, taking this honest inventory of how and where my time, energies, talents, and resources are being used can be a sobering, humbling, convicting process full of revelations and...opportunities for character growth.

Why is this idea of worship **so** important?

Why does who and what we worship really matter so much?

SABBATH

Saturday’s lesson states,

“Gratitude to God expressed in community worship transforms people’s hearts and minds into the likeness of the character of God and prepares them for service.”

This is absolutely true - regardless of **which** God and which character of God is being worshipped!

The apostles worshipped the God revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus...their hearts and minds were transformed, and they lived in community of other-centered love and spread the gospel far and wide. But what about some other examples?

Some church folks in the Dark Ages worshipped God...their hearts and minds were transformed, and what did they do? They burned people at the stake in order to “save” them and send their souls to heaven.

In 1994, Christians in Rwanda worshipped God...their hearts and minds were transformed, and what did they do? They actually used churches as killing fields as pastors, priests and nuns would lead people to their churches for sanctuary and then call in militia to kill them, or trap them inside and burn them alive!

Are we beginning to see how very important our worship is - not just that we are worshipping God, but which God we are worshipping! Why?

Because as the quarterly rightly states, it transforms our hearts, minds, and characters...we become like that which we worship, esteems, and admire - it’s a LAW and no one is exempt - this outcome is



100% predictable. Just like you can predict with 100% certainty what will happen if I drop my glasses - how is that? How can you so accurately predict the future? Are you clairvoyant? Do you have a prophetic gift?

No...but you do have a firm understanding of the natural law of gravity...and I'm telling you, once you start to understand the natural laws we discuss in this class, impacts of living in harmony with and deviating from these natural laws...the world starts becoming a whole lot more predictable - people (behaviors and reactions) become more predictable, relationships become more predictable, outcomes become more predictable - it's almost like you have some secret, insider information...a decoder ring...or a crystal ball.

You know, this class has a potluck and bible study every month just to get to know each other better, and dig deeper into the past month's lessons...see me after class or go to our web site if you want to be added to that email list so you get reminded about those. But several months ago, Linda was leading and had us go back and identify and discuss the specific natural laws we have defined...and I thought it was such a good idea. We had folks at that study who had never been to our class and didn't really know what we were talking about, we have new folks joining this class or discovering these class videos every single week...so we try to be really cognizant of that and just keep reviewing some of these concepts so we don't end up speaking our own secret, non-inclusive language that only members of the club understand. Is it okay if we review and define some of these natural laws to maybe refresh our own knowledge and maybe bring some others up to speed?

What do we mean when we use the term "natural laws" and what makes them so?

God runs his universe on certain principles, certain fundamental laws, certain constants that life and our reality are designed to operate upon. These laws are not enacted, legislated, or imposed...rather they are an inherent aspect of God's original design, and emanate from the very nature and character of God Himself. These are the principles that life is designed to operate upon and our health and happiness is dependent upon being in harmony with them.

You may know about or recognize some like the laws of health, the laws of physics - the law of gravity for example. So help me out here and throw out some of the more specific design laws we have defined in this class.

Law of Liberty - Love cannot exist in an atmosphere without freedom...again this law emanates from the very nature and character of God for **God. Is. Love.**

What happens when liberty is violated?



There are a couple of very predictable, testable outcomes you can count on happening when someone's liberty is violated:

- 1) Love is always damaged and eventually destroyed,
- 2) A desire to rebel is instilled, and
- 3) If freedom isn't restored, then individuality is eroded.

Does a person have to know about the Law of Liberty in order to experience these outcomes?

Does a person's liberties have to actually be violated...or can even the possibility or threat of liberty bring them about?

Once you are convinced that this law is real, that it works, that it is a constant that never changes, then you have a standard against which to test theories, doctrines, and beliefs about God. We are going to connect these dots on why and how important this concept is when considering the type of God we choose to worship.

Law of Worship - By beholding we become changed (modeling) - we become like the God we worship. This law is the foundation of this week's lesson...and, by the way, it is the reason why God's church triumphant, the remnant, the priesthood of believers can be wholly united – in heart, in mind, in purpose, and in character, but differ, sometimes dramatically, in doctrine, in beliefs, in practices, etc.

Law of Respiration - Requires that you breathe in order to live.

Why is this a requirement? It seems so unreasonable!

Does the law of respiration condemn those who tie plastic bags over their heads?

What are the "wages" of doing that?

Can the law be changed to meet the person with a bag over his head in that state so they can remain healthy and alive?

Can God's law be changed to meet the sinner in his sin?

What if a person was suffocating with a plastic bag over their head and they had a loving brother who tied a bag over his head in order to pay the legal penalty of the broken law of respiration which cannot be changed?

Would that action result in saving the other brother?

What is the only option for salvation? The sinner must be transformed back into harmony with the law - the plastic bag must be removed.

Law of Exertion - if you want something to get stronger you must exert or exercise it, because if you don't use it you lose it.



What does God want for us?

He wants us to grow in ability and develop a Christlike character by trusting in Him, which requires what?

That we exercise our trust in him, exercise our will by choosing to accept His truth updates, cooperate in agreement with him, practice his methods! This was the reason for the tree in Garden of Eden.

“All who put to use the ability that God has given them, will have increased ability to devote to his service. Those who do nothing in the cause of God will fail to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. If a man should lie down and refuse to exercise his limbs, he would soon lose all power to use them. Thus the Christian who will not use his God-given powers, not only fails to grow up into Christ, but loses the strength which he already had; he becomes a spiritual paralytic. It is those who, with love for God and for their fellow men, are striving to help others, who become established, strengthened, settled in the truth. The true Christian works for God, not from impulse, but from principle; not for a day or a month, but during the entire life.” {RH, May 23, 1912 par. 13}

“The mind must be exercised on the solemn truths of God's word, or it will grow weak.” {RH, March 4, 1884 par. 11}

“But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.” Hebrews 5:14 (NASB)

Law of Sowing & Reaping - Cause and effect.

“If you plant in the field of your natural desires, from it you will gather the harvest of death; if you plant in the field of the Spirit, from the Spirit you will gather the harvest of eternal life.” Galatians 6:8 GNT

“The Spirit of God keeps evil under the control of conscience. When man exalts himself above the influence of the Spirit, he reaps a harvest of iniquity. Over such a man the Spirit has less and less influence to restrain him from sowing seeds of disobedience. Warnings have less and less power over him. He gradually loses his fear of God. He sows to the flesh; he will reap corruption. The harvest of the seed that he himself has sown, is ripening. He has a contempt for God's holy commandments. His heart of flesh becomes a heart of stone. Resistance to truth confirms him in iniquity. It is because men sowed seeds of evil, that lawlessness, crime, and violence prevailed in the antediluvian world.



All should be intelligent in regard to the agency by which the soul is destroyed. It is not because of any decree that God has sent out against man. He does not make man spiritually blind. God gives sufficient light and evidence to enable man to distinguish truth from error. But He does not force man to receive truth. He leaves him free to choose the good or to choose the evil. If man resists evidence that is sufficient to guide his judgment in the right direction, and chooses evil once, he will do this more readily the second time. The third time he will still more eagerly withdraw himself from God and choose to stand on the side of Satan. And in this course he will continue until he is confirmed in evil, and believes the lie he has cherished as truth. His resistance has produced its harvest (MS 126, 1901).”—Ellen G. White Comments, The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1112.

Law of Love - the law of giving...the more you give, the more you receive - this is the principle of giving upon which life is built to operate, and we many examples throughout nature (water cycle, breathing, food cycle, circulation).

“One of the divine plans for growth is impartation. The Christian is to gain strength by strengthening others. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Proverbs 11:25). This is not merely a promise; it is a divine law, [what kind of law?] a law by which God designs that the streams of benevolence, like the waters of the great deep, shall be kept in constant circulation, continually flowing back to their source. In the fulfilling of this law is the secret of spiritual growth... {Amazing Grace 285.4}

Law of Restoration – When a resource has been used or expended, it must be rested and restored. Mothers/parents, caregivers, Sabbath.

Again, when Isaac Newton “discovered” and documented the Law of Gravity in 1687...that did not mark the creation or origination of that law, only the recognition and naming of an existing constant...and folks were surprised that there was a law - they thought stuff stayed on the ground or fell to the ground because that’s just how things work, it’s just reality.

MONDAY

False Worship

The second paragraph states,

“Satan seeks to establish a false system of worship, one that takes people away from the true God and, even if subtly, direct worship toward himself.”

How does he establish a false system of worship...how does he subtly direct worship toward himself?



The first paragraph mentions Jesus' third temptation in the wilderness as an example...what is tempting about devil worship?

Are most Christians...or even atheists...tempted to openly worship Satan?
What does Satan truly desire?

2 Thes 2:3-4 says,

“Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.”

Since we don't believe that he flies up to heaven and physically bumps Christ off his throne, how does Satan accomplish this...how does he “set himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God” ...and have so many people buy it?

Reading that same Thessalonians text in the Remedy gives us some clues:

“Don't be fooled by any idea like this, because, before the Lord returns, Satan will counter everything Christ taught, and a rebellion against God's law of love will occur: a man-made theological system of imposed law will form, and this system—which promotes god-concepts outside God's law of love—will be exposed. This man-made system is destined for destruction, because it opposes God's design for life and instead exalts a human concept of law and punishment over the way God built things to operate. This distorted view of God will become so accepted and orthodox that it will set itself up in God's spirit temple—the minds of people—and it will be proclaimed that God is like Satan in character.”

So, he gets people...not just people...he gets **Christians**, Christ-followers, Christ's ambassadors to accept and proclaim and teach that God is like Satan in character and in methods. Then he gets them to agree and endorse and value those coercive methods (marked in the forehead), and practice/carry out those coercive, punitive methods (marked in the hand) - as described in Revelation 14:9-11

“And a third messenger followed the first two and proclaimed in a voice that was heard throughout the world: ‘If anyone gives worth and honor to the beastly system of coercion by choosing the methods of the beast and thus marking themselves as ‘loyal in heart’ by embracing the character of the beast, or marking themselves as ‘loyal in deed’ by practicing his methods, they will reap the full fury of unremedied sin when God no longer shields them from their destructive choice. They will experience immeasurable torment of mind and burning



anguish of heart when they stand in God's fiery presence and are bathed in unquenchable fire of truth and love—all in the very presence of Jesus and the holy angels. The memory of their suffering and the lesson of their self-destructive choice will never be forgotten throughout all eternity. There will be no peace of mind—day or night—for those who prefer the methods of the beast and model after him, or for any who choose to mark themselves as followers of the beast.”

“By accepting the pagan imposed law constructs as representative of God’s kingdom, people actually worshiped the dragon, as these distortions about God originated from him; and since the beast used the dragon’s lies as the basis for its authority, they also worshiped the beast. They marveled, ‘Who can compare to the beast? Who can fight against it?’” Revelation 13:4

This is the true essence of false worship - worshipping a god whose character, methods, and principles are those of Satan.

TUESDAY

The First Angel’s Message

This is the true essence of false worship - worshipping a god whose character, methods, and principles are those of Satan. Is this happening right now...and can we come up with some examples?

Let’s bring this around full circle here...we were just talking about the natural design Law of Liberty. We said violations of it had some very predictable results...and these results are proveable, reproducible, and therefore the law is “testable”...right?

So what does that mean and what does that look like in practical application - how can we use this knowledge practically to gain some insight and wisdom?

Well, once you are convinced that this law is real, that it works, that it is a constant, that it never changes, then we have a standard against which we can test our theories, our doctrines, our beliefs about God. God will NEVER violate His own character of love, which means God will never violate freedom or the law of liberty. This standard, this law of liberty is one of the spiritual weapons you can wield in warfare against evil forces - remember, we are in a war over the knowledge of God - who is God, what is He like, can He be trusted.

Is God like Satan has alleged OR Is God like Jesus revealed Him to be?

This is THE question. Well now we have a standard against which we can test our theories - Is God a power monger, is God a being of stern justice who must use His power to inflict penalties - Does God



say, “All I want is your love, but if you don’t love me I will kill you, I will burn you in hell and torture you until you die?”

In every false religion of the world, the central fallacy is a distorted picture of God. He is either a being who is too busy to care, detached and disinterested or a cruel being of absolute power that must be appeased. And what is the final contest over?

What will be the culmination of events as the Bible predicts?

A conflict of worship, over two systems - over two pictures of God - 1) The Beast System which violates liberty, you can neither buy nor sell (sanctions)...and 2) God’s system of love, greater love has no man than he give his life...This is how we know what love is....For God so loved the world that he gave...These are they who do not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. And what is the result of worshiping a God who does not value our freedom?

What is the price we pay for accepting lies about God?

What is the consequence to believing in a God who will use His power to destroy, a God who must be appeased in order to forgive?

It is a violation of the Law of Liberty, and these outcomes are just as predictable as what happens in human relationships - love is damaged and eventually destroyed, rebellion is instilled, and individuality is eroded. Jesus states that at the end of time, the love of most will grow cold.

Paul states they will have a form of godliness, but deny its power.

Why will love grow cold?

Why will they have a form of godliness but without any power?

Because they have accepted Satan’s version of God, and preach it from the pulpit! When we have a form of godliness but worship a god who is like Satan alleges, love is destroyed and over time:

We either become shadow people

- people who have lost their ability to reason
- people who worship out of fear of punishment (from God...or a compliance committee?)
- people who become non-thinking empty shells, afraid to have an independent thought - God said it, I believe it that settles it, we don’t ask questions we take that on faith
- people who rigidly clinging to rules, rituals and ceremony without understanding of what they mean
- we become like that god we worship, and will use power to control others, dominate others, coerce others into our way...to cleanse/purify his church?



- we will bomb abortion clinics, fly planes into buildings
- we use our power to silence freedom of thought and opposing views
- no one can buy or sell save him who is like this god OR
- We rebel completely, reject the idea of God altogether, and become a postmodernist agnostic, evolutionary-teaching atheist.

This is Satan's goal – to destroy love and trust for God, and thus destroy humanity!

Love cannot exist in an atmosphere without freedom. God cannot be saying – love me or I'll kill you. If you hear a such concepts, test them, do experiments. If you see doctrines or practices or methods employed that violate the Law of Liberty, test them... perform some diagnostics and root cause analysis. We are to **practice** God's law in our lives. We are to live a life in complete harmony with God and his natural laws, so if someone is teaching such distortions and you are confused, challenge and test those teachings and see what happens.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study & Fellowship

The first Christians were faithful in studying the Scriptures for what they said about Jesus the Messiah.

They were in constant fellowship to share with one another the blessings God had given them and to encourage each other in their spiritual walk with God. In the Word they mined the sacred truths that became the foundation of their message to the world.

THURSDAY

Breaking of Bread & Prayer

Acts 2:42-47 “They committed themselves to studying the truth taught by Christ's ambassadors, encouraging each other, sharing meals together, and talking with God daily. Everyone was filled with awe at the miracles performed and signs shown by Christ's ambassadors. They were filled with love for one another and were united, sharing with each other what they had. They sold what they owned and pooled their resources for the benefit of all, and provided for everyone's needs. They fellowshiped and studied together in the temple courts each day. They had meals together in their homes, with hearts full of gladness and affection for each other, giving praise to God. They were so kind and gentle that the people enjoyed having them around. And every day the Lord brought more people to them to partake of the Remedy and be healed.”