Good morning, Family. Over the next few weeks, we are going to be taking a deep look into worship, what worship is, its elements, its essence, the proper way to respond to God’s command to worship Him. We will look carefully at the where, the why, the how, and the who of worship. We will follow the instruction found in scripture on worship, and each week in our study, we will incorporate some Hebrew words of worship to help us understand it better. So, what is worship? Well, it is so much more than an hour on Sunday. It is more than music or raising our hands in honor and tribute to God. There are customary methods and expressions associated with honoring God, but worship is so very much more. Romans 12:1-2 tells us this:

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Worship is a lifestyle! It is a response to the mercies, goodness, and holiness of our loving Father. It is not just setting apart portions of our week to honor God, but it is setting apart ourselves as a living sacrifice in service.

Look at the first verse of Psalm 150: “Praise God in His sanctuary.” The Hebrew word for “sanctuary” literally means “a place set apart.” Not only does it speak to the call to gather for corporate worship, but it also speaks to the sanctification of our private worship. John Piper writes, “True worship is a valuing or a treasuring of God above all things.” Our true worship is based on a right understanding of God’s nature. Psalm 150 has been described as the “grand finale” of the Psalms, like the final part of a 4th of July fireworks display. With stirring music and bursts of heavenly light, Psalm 150 gives us the where (v. 1), the why (v.2), the how (vv. 3-5), and the who (v.6). of worship. It begins and ends with “Praise the Lord!” In fact, Psalms 146-150 all being and end with “Praise the Lord!” That phrase in Hebrew is actually two words with significant meaning. The first word is “hallel,” which we translate as “praise,” but which conveys greater meaning than that: It literally means “to boast in the Lord.” In fact, Psalms 113-118 are called the “Hallel” so as to define the word adequately: Deep, joyous praise and adoration for God. The second word is “jah,” which derives from “Yahweh” and means, simply, “the Lord.” So literally, Hallelujah means to praise the Lord *joyfully, adoringly, and triumphantly*. Let me ask you, Christian, “How’s your hallelujah?” Is it a lifestyle set apart?

Listen, Family. God delights in the praises of His people, and He delights in the people of those praises, as the prophet Zephaniah confirms:

“The Lord your God is with you,

the Mighty Warrior who saves.

He will take great delight in you;

in his love he will no longer rebuke you,

but will rejoice over you with singing.” (Zephaniah 3:17)

Worship and praise are an eternal tribute that we get to enjoy here. In the Old Testament, the word *Hallelujah* appears exclusively in the Book of Psalms 24 times. In the New Testament, it appears exclusively in Revelation 19:1-6:

19 After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting:

“***Hallelujah!***

Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

2 for true and just are his judgments.

He has condemned the great prostitute

who corrupted the earth by her adulteries.

He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

3 And again they shouted:

“***Hallelujah!***

The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.”

4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried:

“Amen, ***Hallelujah!***”

5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying:

“Praise our God,

all you his servants,

you who fear him,

both great and small!”

6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

“***Hallelujah!***

For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

In these lines, all the saints of Heaven boast unreservedly in our God eternally!

Here on Earth, biblical worship according to Jesus in the Gospel of John must be done in Spirit and in truth. We must love Him for who He is with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. David tells us in Psalm 96:9, Worship the Lord in the beauty of His Holiness.” Both personally and corporately, we must honor God with holy lives and attitudes, in obedience and in surrender, in awe and reverence. Worship is a choice we make. We are created to worship, and to worship our God in spirit and in truth is a declaration of allegiance: “I choose to worship! God, you have invaded my existence with your glory, and I surrender my allegiance to you. Immerse me in your will.” Worship is not about our preferences but our posture. Family, we should come before the Lord in corporate worship with hearts prepared to honor God because that’s what we’ve done all week—lived immersed in His will.

Worship flourishes best in the embrace of our need for God. We praise Him best when we prize Him most. We are transformed in the renewing of our minds by surrendering allegiance to Him. Worship is NOT about us. We should worship our God even when we don’t feel like it. Thirteen times in Psalm 150 we are instructed to “Praise the Lord.” Not once does the psalmist say, “Praise the Lord on days when you feel good.” Worship is a matter of obedience to our God. So, I ask again, Christian, “How’s your Hallelujah?” Our message to the world is the availability of salvation, the joy of salvation, and the goodness of God. Do we live all our days immersed in His will? Joy-filled because of His salvation and His goodness? Can others SEE our Hallelujah? They can if we call to mind what He has done. The can if we call to heart who He is. They can if we live in the satisfaction of His grace. So, Family! Boast in and joyfully praise God today! Proclaim your joy in Him and your gratitude for Him with confidence! Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Church, worship of Him, both corporately and privately, cultivates a deep awareness and an honoring of our Holy God. May our Hallelujah be louder than all other noise of His creation!

1 Corinthians 1:30-31

30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

Galatians 6:14.

14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which[a] the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Scripture in support of this sermon:

Psalm 150

1 Praise the Lord.

Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty heavens.

2 Praise him for his acts of power;

praise him for his surpassing greatness.

3 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,

praise him with the harp and lyre,

4 praise him with timbrel and dancing,

praise him with the strings and pipe,

5 praise him with the clash of cymbals,

praise him with resounding cymbals.

6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord.