

The Adventure of Sacrificial Worship  
Deuteronomy 12  
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It may surprise you that often in Scripture, God is displeased with how people attempt to worship Him . . .

As early as Genesis 4 we are told that God “did not look with favor” on Cain and his offering . . .

In Leviticus 10 God destroyed Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu because they offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, contrary to His command . . .”

Often, God is displeased with how people attempt to worship Him . . .

in 1 Sam, we are told that King Saul attempted to worship God his own way, twice . . . and because of that, Saul would lose his kingship and eventually his life . . .

B/c God is often displeased with how people attempt to worship Him . . .

Later in history we are told of King Uzziah, who entered the Temple and tried to burn incense to the LORD . . . and was stricken with leprosy . . .

Often, God is displeased with how people attempt to worship Him . . .

In the NT we are told, in the book of 1 Corinthians, of people who were sick and some who had died, because they worshiped God in way that was displeasing to Him . . .

It may surprise you that often in Scripture, God is displeased with how people attempt to worship Him . . .

And that begs the question . . . what is worship?

Some say that worship is to be highly emotional . . . and highly entertaining . . . so they get praise bands, and, try to work the church up into an emotionally charged state . . .

Frankly, not all the music is great, but it sure can be entertaining . . .

But is it worship, or entertainment . . . and how do you tell?

But there is another extreme . . . where emotions are suppressed . . . and the church sings songs people don’t understand, with words, expressions, and syntactical structures just not used today . . . in an effort to make the people focus on a holy God . . . by using language they never use doing the week . . .

Where instruments employed in the worship of God are certainly not new . . . so a piano might be allowed . . . but a guitar is out . . . as are drums, particularly an electric guitar or a drum set . . . b/c those are considered unholy, or a draw to the world . . . certainly not to be used in worship . . .

There is that word again . . . worship . . .

Or, others are telling us today that worship is a family issue . . . and church is what a family does together . . . there is a whole home-church movement, has been for over 20 years now . . . where families don’t go to church per say . . . but rather they meet together with other families or by themselves in their living room . . . and hold “church” all by themselves . . . on Sunday morning . . . and that is called worship . . .

Others argue that worship is a genre of music . . . go to any Barnes & Nobles, or even Wal-Mart, and you'll be able to find praise and worship music . . . that you can get and listen to while you drive down the road . .

Some say that worship must include silence . . . meditative, reflexive, introspective . . .

Others say that worship is explosive, it is powerful, it is emotional . . .

Some say that worship must include candles, chants, and incense . . .

Others say that biblical worship must have no candles, no chants, and certainly no incense . . .

is that worship?

There are those in our area that say that you must speak German in your worship . . .

There are others who say that you must speak in tongues in worship . . .

Some say you raise your hands in worship . . .

And others say they would never raise their hands in worship . . .

Some shout Amen and Hallelujah and call it worship . . .

Others sit in reflexive meditation in church, literally almost never move a muscle . . . Certainly never utter a sound, and call it worship . . .

And some of you might be saying, "What on earth is a Baptist pastor doing talking about worship . . .

"B/c we all know that Baptist preach . . .

"And they yell . . .

"And Baptists certainly eat . .

"But they most certainly do not worship . . .

"Charismatics worship . . . Pentecostals worship . . . even Catholics worship . . . but Baptists simply do not worship . . ."

and all that begs the question . . what, exactly, is worship?

Who is to say?

Here's where we are going . . . it's a revolutionary idea . . . we are going to see what God says is worship . . . and that's all we should really care about anyway . . .

What if what God said about worship went against what you always thought?

What if what God says goes against what you were taught?

What if what God says hits you right between the eyes . . .

What if the way you think you are worship God is not the way He wants to be worshiped?

Would you leave our church and go find a church that fits your preconceived ideas, prejudices, or theological errors?

What if what God said offends you . . .

In Scripture, there are two different Hebrew and Greek words that describe worship . . .<sup>1</sup>

Those words carry two different ideas . . . or meanings . . .

The first is the idea of service, or labor . . . the words used of worship describe the roles the OT priests and Levites played in the worship service . . . as they offered up blood sacrifices . . . as they offered up grain sacrifices to God . . . as they offered up prayers of confession of sin to God . . . all those actions are described as worship . . .

Worship, then, is active . . . it is something we do . . . it is a verb . . . it is not entertainment, where we pay someone to make us laugh, or cry, or rejoice . . .

Worship is to be active . . . we must be involved in it . . . the Bible knows nothing of worship as a spectator sport . . .

The second group of words refers to bowing, to bending the knee . . . or paying homage . . . the English word “worship,” in fact, comes from the Old English word “Worthship . . .”

In Scripture, those who come in contact with God fall on their faces or on their knees before Him . . . they bow to Him . . .

They acknowledge that He is the superior . . . and we humans are the inferior . . .

That, by the way, is the meaning of Philippians 2 . . . when every knee bows to the name of Christ . . . all of creation will understand

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<sup>1</sup>Frame, *Worship in Spirit and Truth*

and in that day show submission to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity . . .

Everything, in heaven, in earth, and beneath the earth will, in that final day, bow to the Name that is above every name . . . so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Php 2:9-11)

that is nothing but worship . . .

Worship, then, is also honoring someone who is superior to us . . . we are not the center of attention, but rather, we are involved in worship by focusing on God . . . it is not about us . . . but it is about us recognizing that we are not the center of this . . . but God is . . .

we are here to worship to primarily please God . . .

so worship is active, we must be involved in it . . .

and worship is us focusing upon God . . . and who He is . . .

So worship is performing service to honor somebody other than ourselves . . . It is both adoration and action . . .

God alone is worthy of our adoration and our worship . . .

The first of the 10 commandments says, ““I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me. (Deu 5:6-7)

God is have a position in our lives that is uniquely His, and His alone . . .

The 10 Commandments are not a to-do, or a not-to-do list . . . no,

they are the covenant requirements . . . they are the basic guidelines by which God claims ownership of those who want Him as their God . . .

Jesus, by the way, claimed that ownership . . . claimed to be God . . . . Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. – Mat 11:28

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" – Joh 14:9

He is the great King who has called a people to Himself . . .

And He has supreme authority in our lives . . .

And He claims authority to govern every aspect of our lives . .

There is to be no competition in our hearts and lives with God . . .

Our chief responsibility is to honor Him above all . . .

Our loyalty and affection are His and His alone . . . "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Deu 6:4-5

Jesus reinforced this when He says, "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. Mat 6:24

God claims lordship, ownership over every aspect of our lives . . .

As the apostle Paul says, "So, whether you eat or drink, or

whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 1Co 10:31

so the focus of worship is God . . . and we are to see ourselves as serving Him . . . as paying homage to Him . . . giving Him our adoration . . .

Worship must then be God-centered and Christ-pleasing . . .

If there was a section in your Bible where God said how He wanted to be worshiped . . . since worship is supposed to be about Him . . . and not about us and our prejudices, our preconceived ideas, our culture, and our preferences. . . would you want to know what God says?

Would you still want to hear what He has to say?

And since worship is about Him . . . are you willing to worship Him the way He demands?

If so, please open your Bible to Deuteronomy chapter 12 . .

(Quickly walkthrough Deut . . .)

READ vv. 1-11 . . .

God wants His Worship . . .

1. To Be Serious . . . v. 11 . . .
  - 1) this is to be a all-important time . . . a somber time . . . a time we take very seriously, because God takes it seriously . . .
  - 2) which is why I do not use prepared jokes in the pulpit . . .
  - 3) Worship includes something dying . . . a sacrifice . . .

- 4) When Adam and Eve plunged creation into sin and were banished from the Garden of Eden . . .
- 5) God, we are told by Moses in Genesis chapter 3, covered Adam and Eve in the clothing made from animal pelts . . . an animal was slaughtered for Adam and Eve . . .
- 6) Cain and Abel brought offerings to God in acts of worship . . .
- 7) After the Flood, Noah built an altar and sacrificed animals and birds to the LORD – Gen. 8
- 8) When God called Abram to leave the Ur of the Chaldees, and to seek another place, Abraham, sacrificed animals and the LORD, in a fiery appearance, passed between the pieces of the animals . . . thereby promising that Abraham’s descendants would possess the Promised Land . . .
- 9) When God gave His Law to Moses, His covenant relationship with His people . . .
- 10) God included an elaborate system of offerings of animals, of grains, of wine, of oil and incense . . .
- 11) There were offerings of blood for the whole nation . . .
- 12) There were offerings made daily, weekly, monthly and annually . . .
- 13) There were offerings made by individuals for sin . . . for consecration . . . and for communion with God – (Lev. 1-7) . . .
- 14) The offering for communion, called the “peace offering, or the “fellowship offering” were animals that were sacrificed to God, and then partially eaten by the worshiper and the priests as a meal of fellowship with God . . .
- 15) Everyday, literally, animals were being sacrificed before God as acts of worship . . .
- 16) that was anything but a time for jokes, comedy, and

- entertainment . . .
- 17) And God is telling His people in Deuteronomy that they are to be sacrificing to Him at their worship . . .
- 18) They are to bring their burnt offerings . . . that is, animals that would be slaughtered, and their blood poured over the altar and their carcasses burned with fire as a sin offering . . .
- 19) v. 6 . . . Your sacrifices . . . other animals that would be slaughtered for any number of sin offerings . . . and their blood shed . . .
- 20) God’s people were to be reminded that God is holy . . . and we are not . . .
- 21) And His people were to bring with them sacrifices . . . animals that would die as sin sacrifices . . .
- 22) And you need to remember that those sacrifices did not atone for people’s sin . . .
- 23) No, according to the book of Hebrews . . . For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. – Heb 10:4
- 24) Those sacrifices reminded the people just how sinful they were . . .
- 25) But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Heb 10:3-4
- 26) The blood sacrifices did not, they could not, ever, cleanse anyone from sin . . .
- 27) But Jesus Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, our High Priest who offered Himself as our sin sacrifice on the cross . . .
- 28) He is the one and only sacrifice that washes sinners of their sin . . . and makes them saints . . .
- 29) But when Christ appeared as a high priest . . . he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal

redemption . . . how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God . . .”

- 30) In Jesus we meet with God . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. – Joh 1:14
- 31) His death for sin and His glorious resurrection have completely satisfied the wrath of God against us for our sins . . .
- 32) Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. – Rom 4:25
- 33) He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? – Rom 8:32
- 34) Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. – Rom 5:18-21)
- 35) So these sacrifices in Deuteronomy do not remove sin . . . they are acts of obedience in worship of God that point to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. . .
- 36) But the worship of God must first deal with sin . . .
- 37) And that must be a blood sacrifice . .
- 38) Without the shedding of blood, we are told, there is

no remission of sin . . .

- 39) The soul that sin, we are told, it shall die . . .
- 40) And God commanded that animals were to be slaughtered daily as sin offerings to Him . . .
- 41) those animals' blood did not remove sin . . .
- 42) it reminded of sin . . .
- 43) And this certainly wouldn't pass the muster from our animal right friends . . . but we are not discussing how PETA thinks God should be worshiped . .
- 44) Nor are we discussing how you & I think God should be worshiped. . .
- 45) No, Moses is telling us how God demands to be worshiped . . .
- 46) And He is demanding that we remember we are sinners . . . and that God is not a sinner . . .
- 47) And we cannot come to Him just any old way . . .
- 48) Like He is the great grand-fatherly guy up in the sky, who just dotes on us . . .
- 49) And laughs are our sins . . . “Oh, aren't your just adorable little imps . . . Here, have some candy . . .” as he pats us on the head and then drops off to sleep in His easy chair . . .
- 50) No, if you think God is that great grayed-haired . . . the Big Guy upstairs, who doesn't care about your sin, or how you have broken His Law . . . my friend, you have the wrong God . .
- 51) B/c the God of the Bible demands that His people come to Him and bring a sacrifice for their sin . .
- 52) We are to offer sacrifices to Him . . . He does not

- offer sacrifices to us . . .
- 53) The idea we can come to God, and be loved by Him because we are just so adorable in the first place is deplorable . . .
- 54) We are not lovely . . . He is . . .
- 55) We are not holy . . . He is . . .
- 56) We are not pure . . . He is . . .
- 57) And a flippant, rush out the door and get to church where I hear a message about how great I am . . .
- 58) Or how important I am to God . . .
- 59) Or how important I am to His church . . .
- 60) Or how I can have a meaningful life . . .
- 61) Or how I can have my dreams fulfilled . . .
- 62) Or how I can have a great marriage and well-behaved kids . . .
- 63) Is anything but worship . . .
- 64) Worship must focus on God . . . what He wants, how He demands to be worshiped . . .
- 65) And He wants it to a serious time . . .
- 66) A time of remembering who we are . . . and what we are . . . and remember who HE is . . . and what He is . . .
- 67) And we come before Him as the needy . . . as the wrong . . . as the weak . . .

- 68) Worship that pleases God cannot be done flippantly . . .
- 69) In 1 Corinthians we are told that the church was coming to worship without seriousness . . .
- 70) As if God and they were just buddies . . .
- 71) And Paul tells them that some of them have died because they have gone into worship without taking the time to deal with what that means . . .
- 72) Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. – [1Co 11:28-30](#)
- 73) [King David, you may recall, tried to worship God the way that King David wanted to worship God . . .](#)
- 74) [The ark of God needed to be moved . . .](#)
- 75) [And instead of seeing what God wanted, what God had already said, David had the ark loaded up on a cart,](#)
- 76) [“. . . and And David and all Israel were rejoicing before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets. And when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to take hold of the ark, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark, and he died there before God.](#)
- 77) [And in one of the greatest displays of understatement in Scripture, we are told, and I quote, And David was afraid of God that day . . .](#)
- 78) [I should say so . . .](#)

- 79) Worship means more than you & me coming to hear about us . . . and how hard our lives are . . . and how wonderful heaven is . . . or how much we love each other . . .
- 80) Worship is us coming together to remember that God there is a God . . . and we are not Him . .
- 81) and we are His creation . . . who chose wilfully to reject Him . . . and what our sin has done to us . . . and what a wonderful and powerful God He is . .
- 82) B/c God takes worship very seriously . . . we, too, must take it seriously . . .

2. Worship Must also be Joyous . . .

- 1) Look at v. 12 . . .
- 2) He says the same thing in v. 18 . . .
- 3) READ v. 18 . . .
- 4) He says that worship is to be a community event . . .
- 5) They are to worship God . . . and rejoice with their fellow believers . . . their fellow worshipers . . .
- 6) And here is where I am going to step on some toes . .
- 7) B/c frankly, many of us here don't really seem that interested in other people . . .
- 8) Really, some just come in, sit down, and never say anything to anyone else . . . except those with whom you talk to every week . .
- 9) Listen, if week after week after week, I am shaking your hand, as you sit in the same old place, something is dreadfully wrong . . .
- 10) Listen, fleeing this building like it is on fire week after week is a joke . . .
- 11) Maybe you want to leave . . .

- 12) God wants you to say . . . b/c that is worship . . .
- 13) After the official service, to greet each other, and learn names so you can pray . . .
- 14) B/c worship is a community . . . a family event . . .
- 15) So you are to be greeting each other . . .
- 16) And singing, yes to God, but is God the only one who hears you sing?
- 17) No . . . those around you are to hear you sing . .
- 18) And hear you sing like you mean it . . .
- 19) None of this mumbling a few hymns under your breath . . .
- 20) How can you possible call that worship? I'll tell you . . . b/c you call it worship . . . God calls it a travesty . . .
- 21) Worship, He says, is to be focused on Him . . . and it must include you rejoicing with others . . .
- 22) Singing together . . .
- 23) Praying together . . .

B/c God is often displeased with how people attempt to worship Him . . .

Tell me, what does God want you to change about how you are worshiping Him?