

## Sermon #72 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title:        **PUBLIC WORSHIP**

Text:        Leviticus 26:1-4

Subject:    *Public Worship*

Date:        Sunday Evening — November 17, 2019

Reading:    *Mark Medley and Mark Henson*  
                  *Psalm 84:1-12*

Introduction:

I want to talk to you tonight about — **PUBLIC WORSHIP**. Most every religious order calls its regular meetings “Worship Services.” We do, the papists do, and the Campbellites do. When men and women go to church, they are, at least they say they are, going to worship. But religious activity is not synonymous with worship.

**It is Sunday morning.** — A crowd has gathered at the church building for the regular weekly meeting. The service begins with a song or two and the pastor takes the floor. It’s time to welcome the people. “We’re glad to see Sis. Long-Tongue back today. We sure missed you. Deacon Hurt Feelings, we’re so happy you are back with us. Brother Nowhere-Else-To-Go, we are so delighted you are here.”

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After several minutes of this pandering to the flesh, he reads a few verses of Scripture and goes through the motions of prayer in his “pastoral prayer,” followed by another hymn and announcements!

- Monday — “Boy Scouts meet.”
- Tuesday — “The ladies’ missionary society has a luncheon.”
- Wednesday — “Prayer meeting. Our attendance has been falling off lately; let’s all turn out this Wednesday.”
- Thursday — “Visitation night. — When we go they come.”
- Friday, “The deacons’ board meets.”
- Saturday — “We clean the church. And, oh, yes, don’t forget next Sunday. Everyone bring one.”

When all else is done and the preacher finally gets around to giving a little sermonette. Everyone is looking at the clock, wondering, — “How long is this going to take. The roast is in the oven. The lines are backing up to the doors at all the good restaurants. The ball game starts at noon. Doesn’t he know when

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to quit? It's time to go home!" This is what men call "a worship service!"

What nonsense! Worship is, at least in part, "the act of paying honor to God as God." Who is honored in the religious activities men call "worship services"? — Man! There is nothing in the average church service that is even remotely related to the honor of God.

The words used in the Word of God for "**worship**" speak of a "bowing or falling down," of "reverence and obeisance," of "humility and surrender," of "praise and honor to God."

**In the typical "worship service" of the modern church** everything is done for the exaltation of the flesh, the pampering of human pride, and the recognition and praise of men. We greet men, turn around and shake hands, recognize everything men do. In general, churches and preachers do everything possible to bow and scrape before human flesh as though man were God and God Almighty were a

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beggar, groveling before sinful worms to get a little attention! Today, we praise men and women for blessing us with their presence in the house of God. In the Bible, men praised God for the privilege of coming.

Most “worship services” today are nothing more than religious pep rallies designed to get more people to come, raise more money, perform more baptisms, and build bigger buildings than the next church around the corner. Oh, that men would worship God!

Can a church have a true worship service? Yes, sir! I am no expert. I do not pretend to know a great deal about this business of worship. But I do have some suggestions about what we can do, some things that may help us to worship God when we gather for public worship.

1. **Make the entire service a “worship service.”**

You cannot have both religious promotionals and Divine worship. We cannot both entertain men and worship God. It is impossible to have for our

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motive both the honor of man and the glory of God. Let God's glory be the theme in all our services, from the first hymn to the final "Amen."

— Maybe, just maybe, if we seek the glory of God, we will be privileged to see the glory of God.

2. **Eliminate all excess baggage.** Anything that interferes with the worship of God must go. How will the people know when to meet if we do away with the announcements? They might consider reading the bulletin! I put the announcements in print (and don't insult your intelligence by reading them to you). How will the visitors know they are welcome if we don't recognize them? Strangely enough, people know whether or not they are welcome before we sing them a song, have an "old fashioned hand shaking," have them to stand and be recognized, or hand them a card to fill out and drop in the offering plate!

"But, preacher, if we don't keep people pumped up, enthusiasm will die. We have to promote the church and our programs, or people will lose interest." —

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No, sir. That is the way it is in the world, but not in the house of God. Spiritual enthusiasm (if you will permit me to use such a word) is found in and maintained by the gospel of Christ. It is inspired by God the Holy Ghost. It is derived from the knowledge of the love, mercy, grace, and glory of God in Christ. Enthusiasm, faithfulness, or generosity stirred by any other means but the gospel itself is not genuine and will sour, not enhance, true worship.

3. **Stick to the gospel.** Heresy in music is just as bad as heresy in the pulpit. A hymn or special music that is not thoroughly consistent with the gospel is out of place in the house of God. Anything short of the gospel does not belong in a worship service. Even our prayers, (Especially our prayers!), should be filled with the gospel. It is amazing what the gospel will do for men when it is the sum and substance of their worship.

Oh, that men would worship God! Let us deliberately and continually clean the house of the Lord, taking everything that has nothing to do with the worship of

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our God, the glory of God, and the preaching of the gospel out to the garbage dump and burn it.

With those things said, I want you to turn with me to Leviticus 26. Our text will be verses 1-4. I want to talk to you today about I want to talk to you about worship, specifically about **PUBLIC WORSHIP**.

**WORSHIP**

Worship is never defined in the Word of God. So, I will not attempt to define it. But there are several words used in the Book of God that give us an indication of what is involved in the business of worship. I have already hinted at this. The different words translated “*worship*” in the Bible mean...

- “to bow down in reverence, awe, and obeisance,”
- “to stand in awe before God,”
- “to kiss the hand of our Master like a grateful dog licks his master’s hand,”
- “to prostrate one’s self before the Lord,”
- “to supplicate the throne of grace,”

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➤ and “to serve the one true and living God of heaven and earth.”

**All right, let’s read our text** (Leviticus 26:4).

(Leviticus 26:1-4) “Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up *any* image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I *am* the LORD your God. (2) Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I *am* the LORD. (3) If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; (4) Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.”

**We recognize that there is no sense in which believers are under the law.** We do not observe holy days, new moons, and sabbath days. We do not offer sacrifices upon material altars. We do not recognize any place on earth as a holy place. We have no earthly priesthood, no earthly altar, and no



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earthly sanctuary. We do not practice circumcision as a matter of obedience to God, or observe any of the carnal ordinances of the Mosaic Age. We do not live under the rule of the law's terror. Why? Because "*Christ is the end of the law.*"

But that does not mean that the types and shadows of the law are of no value to us. Not at all! The types and shadows of the law are full of instruction. In this passage we are given very clear words of instruction concerning the worship of our God in the assembly of his saints.

**Proposition:** There is nothing on this earth so important to your soul as the worship of God in the assembly of his saints.

**GREATEST PRIVILEGE**

1<sup>st</sup> — **The greatest privilege men and women have this side of eternity is the privilege of worshipping God in the assembly of his saints** (Psalm 5:7).

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(Psalms 5:7) “But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: *and* in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”

Multitudes today who profess to be Christians, lovers of God, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and promoters of righteousness, willfully absent themselves from the house of God and despise the blessed privilege of public worship. They justify their actions and excuse their disobedience by pointing to personal responsibilities, inconveniences, or objectionable things connected with the local church. A person determined to walk in a course of disobedience never lacks for excuses to do so! But you will never find justification for neglecting the worship of God in Holy Scripture.

- In Nehemiah’s day, the children of Israel who had long been without the privileges of worship in the house of God, made a covenant and took an oath saying, “*We will not forsake the house of our God*” (Nehemiah 10:39).

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- The Shunammite woman rode a donkey every sabbath day to hear God’s prophet at Carmel, though her husband objected to it (2 Kings 4:23).
- In David’s time, the saints of God “*passed through the valley of Baca*” to worship God at Zion (Psalm 84:6).
- In Daniel’s day, the children of God ran to and fro “*to increase knowledge,*” to know more of the Lord God (Daniel 12:4).
- Zechariah tells us that in his days, the inhabitants of one city went to another, saying, “*Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord and to seek the Lord of hosts*” (Zechariah 8:21).
- Our Lord and his disciples went to considerable trouble and inconvenience to meet together and worship God. On the day appointed, he and his disciples were found in the house of God, worshipping (Mark 1:21; Luke 4:16).

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- The Ethiopian Eunuch journeyed from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship God, seeking to know him of whom the prophets spoke (Acts 8:25).

**Illustration:** *Chiapas Mission*

**Call it fanaticism if you choose**, but I say without fear of contradiction that anyone who talks about being a Christian, who talks about worshipping God, who talks about being a believer, and yet willfully neglects the worship of God, ought to blush with shame for his obvious hypocrisy! All who know God in the experience of his grace delight in worshipping him.

**DAVID**

David, the man after God's own heart, was cut from a different bolt of cloth. He found great pleasure and satisfaction in daily prayer and meditation. Daily, private, personal worship was a characteristic of his life. With the rising of the morning sun his heart was lifted up to God. Every morning he directed his

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prayer to the throne of grace and looked to his Lord with a heart of faith. Every evening he gave thanks to God and laid his head upon his pillow in the sweet rest of faith. That is the way to begin and end every day!

**Blessed is the man or woman who worships God in private.** Let all who know and trust the living God worship him daily. Let all who follow Christ in the path of faith and obedience follow him also to the solitary place of private prayer. I would do everything within my power to promote and encourage private worship among the saints of God. Let every priest of God offer the daily sacrifices of prayer and praise to the Lord. — **But their is something even more important than private worship.**

Does that last statement surprise you? I know that most people who are genuinely concerned for the glory of God and the worship of God rank personal, private worship above all things in the life of faith. But **I am convinced that public worship, if it is**

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**true worship, is even more important than private worship.**

David, the sweet singer of Israel, gave the highest possible regard to the matter of public worship.

(Psalms 5:7) “But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: *and* in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”

Without neglecting private worship, he said, “*As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.*” He could not force others to worship God, and would not if he could. “*But,*” he says, “*as for me, I will come into thy house.*” That is to say, “I will come into the place of public worship in the assembly of God’s saints, to worship the Lord my God.”

And when he came into the place of worship with the saints of God, David was determined truly to worship the Lord. He says, “*In thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.*” David was resolved in his heart, at

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every appointed time, to come with God's saints into the place of public worship, so that he might worship God in heaven, in the temple of his holiness.

Let's look David's words a little more closely, and ask the Spirit of God to apply them to our hearts, so that his words may become the expression of our own hearts' resolve.

**"I will come into thy house."** — The house of God is the congregation of the saints, wherever they gather in public assembly to worship God (1 Timothy 3:15).

**"I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy."** — It is not enough merely to "go to church". We must come into the house of God in faith, trusting the Lord's mercy. And there are a multitude of mercies with God in Christ. Sinners need mercy. We must come to the place of public worship as sinners trusting God's abundant mercy in Christ. If we do not come as sinners seeking mercy, we will not worship. But sinners looking to Christ for mercy always find a

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multitude of mercy in him (Luke 18:13-14). In him we find...

- Everlasting, Covenant Mercy (Jeremiah 31:31-34)
- Sin-Atoning, Redeeming Mercy (Romans 3:24-26)
- Effectual, Saving Mercy (Micah 7:18-20)
- Immutable, Preserving Mercy (Malachi 3:6)
- Daily, Providential Mercy (Romans 8:28)

Truly, *“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not”* (Lamentations 3:22), and every worshipper in God’s house finds it to be so.

**“And in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”** — We must come to the house of God with reverence and godly fear to worship him, that is, to see him, to hear him, to adore him, to praise him and to obey him. This was David’s resolve. May it ever be yours and mine. May God give us grace to make



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public worship our delight and truly to worship him in the assembly of his saints.

I want, by the Spirit of God and by the Word of God, to show you that **public worship is the single most important aspect of the believer's life.** You've heard me say that many times. I want you to see it and see it clearly.

When David was banished from Jerusalem, the place of public worship, he envied even the sparrows who made their nests in the house of God. His heart longed not for the throne, the riches, or the power that had been taken from him, but for the assembly of God's saints in public worship. When the blessed privilege of public worship was taken from him for a short time, nothing was more important or precious to God's child (Psalm 84:1-4, 10).

(Psalms 84:1-4) "How amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! (2) My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the

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living God. (3) Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God. (4) Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.”

(Psalms 84:10) “For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

**The fact is, all who are born of God love the assembly of God’s saints in public worship and love the ministry of the gospel.** There are no exceptions. God’s people will not willingly absent themselves from the worship of God.

It is true, there are many who very strictly attend, and even love, the outward service of public worship, who do not know the Lord. Their outward worship is nothing but a show of hypocrisy, for they never worship God in private. But **anyone who wilfully**

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**neglects and despises the public assembly of the saints for worship, also neglects and despises private worship.** And those who do not worship God do not know God.

Most of us are very busy with countless cares and responsibilities. The cares and pleasures of life in this world consume almost all our time and attention. Most religious people attend church when it is convenient, give God a little tip, and sing, “Oh, how I love Jesus!” But anytime something more important comes up (a good football game, a special television show, a visiting relative, or a sick dog!), they absent themselves from the house of God with little regret. They say to themselves, “I can always go to church next week. The Lord knows my heart.” Of that much you can be sure: the Lord does know our hearts, and he will judge us accordingly!

For those things that are really important to us,

- Work
- A Dinner
- A Social Affair

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➤ A Golf Game

we set dates, make appointments, and arrange our lives accordingly. But when it comes to the worship of God, people have a different attitude. The difference is obvious. You care about those other things.

**Those who are truly God's people love the house of God and the worship of God.** They arrange their lives around the worship of God. Nothing ever comes up, over which they have control, to keep them from the house of God. They see to it that when the saints of God gather for worship, they are among them, unless their absence is genuinely unavoidable. Their faithfulness in the matter of public worship is **much more than a matter of duty.** It is their delightful choice.

Public worship is the single most important aspect of their lives in this world. Nothing is more important to the children of God in this world than the public assembly of the saints for worship; and that public

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assembly of the saints for worship is the local church, the congregation of the Lord, the house of God.

**FIVE REASONS**

**Why do God's people place such importance upon the public worship of the local church?** Let me show how five reasons for this. Then we will get to our text.

1. **This is the place where God meets sinners in saving mercy.** It is true that God uses personal witnessing, tracts, recordings, books, and other instruments of gospel instruction to call his elect to life and faith in Christ, but generally God saves his sheep in the congregations of his saints when they are gathered for worship (Acts 2:1, 37-41). Sinners in need of mercy should seek mercy where mercy is always found in great, overflowing abundance; and mercy is always found in the house of God.

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God's saints know themselves to be sinners in need of mercy; so they come, with all their needs, to the house of mercy, seeking the Lord.

2. **This is the place where our family gathers.**

Every true local church is a family of believers. When the church gathers for worship, it is the gathering of our family for sweet and blessed fellowship in the gospel. Family members need each other, comfort each other, and help each other, because they love each other.

3. **This is the place where the Lord Jesus Christ**

**meets with his people.** Our Savior promised that, wherever his people gather in his name, he would be with them (Matthew 18:20). **To gather in Christ's name is** to gather by faith in his name, for the honour of his name, and to worship in his name. If only two or three gather to worship the Son of God, he will meet with them. The old man, **Simeon**, found God's salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the temple, the appointed place of public worship (Luke 2:25-32); and if we would see Christ we must come with his

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saints when they gather in the place of public worship.

4. **This is the place where God deals with men.** Each local congregation of believers is the house and temple of the living God (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 1 Timothy 3:15). God reveals his glory, gives out his law, makes known his will, bestows his blessings, and instructs his people in his temple, his church. It is in this place that God speaks to men by his Spirit through his Word.

**In all ages the people of God have been known and identified by their public gatherings for worship.** Wherever God has had a people in this world, he has had a congregation to worship him. Sheep are always found in flocks. The only sheep who are alone are either lost or sick. And God's elect are sheep. No matter how few, they have always gathered together in public worship. In the public assembly they bear public, united testimony to the world of their Savior's grace and glory. As an assembled body of believers they strengthen, cheer,

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comfort, encourage, edify, and help one another by prayer, praise, and the preaching of the gospel.

**From the beginning of the Bible to the end there is a clear line of succession in this matter of public worship. Cain and Abel** came to worship God in a public assembly. **Noah's** first act after the flood was an act of public worship to celebrate God's saving grace. Wherever the **patriarchs** pitched their tents in days of old, they erected an altar for worship. **Throughout the Mosaic economy**, the Jew who did not worship God in the tabernacle or temple was cut off from the congregation. **Throughout the book of Acts**, wherever God's children were scattered by persecution, they soon gathered in public assemblies for the worship of God.

**Public worship is one identifying mark of true believers.** With David, every saved sinner is resolved to worship God, saying, "*As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.*" By this let each examine himself. Those who willingly and



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habitually absent themselves from the worship of God do not know God. A person may be outwardly faithful to the church of God who does not know God, but no one is faithful to Christ who is not faithful in the public assembly of his church for worship.

5. **The neglect of public worship is the first step towards total apostasy** (Hebrews 10:23-31). Seldom do men and women turn away from Christ and the gospel of his grace suddenly. Usually the charms of the world take men by degrees, gradually. Apostasy is usually so gradual that those who forsake Christ do not even realize they have forsaken him. How many there are who never attend, or seldom attend, the worship of God, who yet foolishly presume they are children of God! But their continued forsaking of the assembly of God's saints is proof that they never really knew the Lord Jesus Christ in saving faith (1 John 2:19). Those who wilfully neglect the assembly of God's saints for public worship, though they may know the truth of God, tread underfoot the Son of God, count the blood of the covenant a useless thing

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and despise the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:25, 26, 29).

(Hebrews 10:23-31) “Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) (24) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: (25) Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (26) For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, (27) But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. (28) He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: (29) Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

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(30) For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. (31) *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

(1 John 2:19) “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

**OUR DUTY AND CHOICE**

2<sup>nd</sup> — **The Worship of God is the duty of all men.**  
— **Yet, no one can worship the Holy Lord God who does not worship him freely.**

Leviticus 26:1-4 is not a kindly, wise recommendation. It is the command of God. Look at the text again.

(Leviticus 26:1-4) “Ye shall make you no idols

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nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up *any* image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I *am* the LORD your God. (2) Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I *am* the LORD. (3) If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; (4) Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.”

**The Lord God commands us to worship him and him alone, because he is God.** — “*For I am the Lord your God.*”

We are to worship him and worship him exactly according to his Word, in precisely the way he requires. The reference here to graven images, standing images, and images of stone appear to have direct reference to that which is recorded in Exodus 20:22-26.

(Exodus 20:22-26) “And the LORD said unto

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Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. (23) **Ye shall not** make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. (24) **An altar of earth** thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. (25) And **if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.** (26) **Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.**”

**We are to set aside a fixed time to worship our God.** — “*Ye shall keep my sabbaths.*” The Jews of old were required to arrange their lives around the appointed day for the worship of God. No excuses were accepted. It mattered not who came visiting, what came up, or what pressing demands arose. God said, “**Ye shall** keep my sabbaths.”

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No, we do not keep sabbath days of any kind in this Gospel Age. The Lord strictly forbids that in Colossians 2:16. Christ is our Sabbath. We rest in him. Yet, just as the Jews of old marked their calendars by fixed days of divine worship, we are to worship God at appointed, fixed times, arranging our lives around those times.

There is no precept in the Word of God requiring that we worship on Sunday; but that has been the day set aside for public worship since apostolic times. John calls it “*the Lord’s day.*” In the Book of Acts the disciples met on the first day of the week. Probably, they did so because the Lord Jesus arose from the dead on Sunday. **Why is it important for us to have a set time for our worship services?**

- So that everyone will know when to come.
- Because we are apt to neglect that for which we do not set a time. — If we do not set a time for the worship of God, we will not worship him.

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- From the very beginning of human history God's saints have had set times for public worship.
- We set a time for those things that are important to us.
- We set a time for important things, so that we will not allow other things to interfere with them.

Not only does the Lord require that we set aside a fixed time to worship him, allowing nothing to interfere with it, **he also requires that we do so with reverence.** — “*Ye shall reverence my sanctuary.*”

There are several passages of Scripture that came to my mind when I read this command.

(Ecclesiastes 5:1-2) “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. (2) Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”

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(Habakkuk 2:20) “But the LORD *is* in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.”

(Hebrews 12:28) “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

Our great, all-glorious God deserves our utmost reverence; and he demands it. But **what is reverence?** The definition is very broad — including profound awe, respect, love, adoration, esteem, special regard, and honor. When The Lord God commands us to reverence his sanctuary, he is telling us to stand in awe in his sanctuary.

**How do we reverence God’s sanctuary? How do we reverence God in his sanctuary?**

1. Though **this building**, this house of worship is not a sanctuary (a holy place), it is the place where we



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come together to worship our God. As such it ought to be revered by us.

- Repair
- Adornment
- Use

2. **This assembly** (every local church) is God's house, his temple, his sanctuary (1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:22). When we come together to worship our God, we ought to do so with reverence. Everything about us ought to display reverence for our God and his worship.

I do not mean that we should cringe before God, but that we should respect him. I do not mean that we should put on a show of respect for men, but that we should truly be respectful and reverent in the house of God.

- Attendance — Punctuality
- Attentiveness
- Attire

**PUBLIC WORSHIP**

*Leviticus 26:1-4*

➤ Adoration

**Yes, it is our duty, as well as our privilege to worship God.**

- To Celebrate His Praise
- To Confess Our Faith
- To Encourage, Comfort, and Edify His People
- To Spread His Gospel

**Yet, in its very essence, worship is a free, voluntary thing.** It is something that cannot be forced, except by the sweet force of irresistible grace.

(Ezra 2:68-69) “And *some* of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which *is* at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to set it up in his place: (69) They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests’ garments.”

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*Leviticus 26:1-4*

**As the grace of God operating towards his people is free, so the grace of God operating in his people is free.** — We know and rejoice in the fact that every blessing of grace and providence, as well as every blessing of heavenly glory is free (1 Corinthians 2:12; 3:21; Romans 8:32; Ephesians 1:3). What God does for us he does simply because it is his will to do so. He gains nothing by it and would lose nothing if he did not do it. Grace is God's good pleasure, the good pleasure of his will toward us. Even so, whatever the believer does for his God he does simply because it is his good pleasure to do so. He is not motivated by either the fear of punishment or the hope of reward. All that he offers to God is offered freely.

**As we have freely received the grace of God, so we must freely proclaim the grace of God to all men** (Matthew 10:7-8). Paul said, "*I have preached unto you the gospel of God freely*" (2 Corinthians 11:7). God's servants are worthy of their hire (Luke 10:7; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; 1 Timothy 5:18). But God's servants are not hirelings! I cannot imagine anything

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*Leviticus 26:1-4*

more offensive to a gospel preacher than to have someone ask him, how many people, or how much money he would have to have to go anywhere to preach the gospel! Neither can I imagine a gospel preacher asking for anything as a condition for his services as a preacher! We preach the gospel freely, trusting God to supply our needs as he sees fit. And **God's saints worship him freely.** (Psalm 54:6-7).

(Psalms 54:6-7) “I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for *it is good*. (7) For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen *his desire* upon mine enemies.”

Both private worship and public worship are to God's people free, uncoerced acts. Worship that is forced, or performed out of the dread of punishment or the desire of gain is not worship at all, but only the pretentious act of a mercenary servant.

**Sinners who have been saved by the grace of God give freely of their means to maintain and**

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**promote the worship of God** (Ezra 2:68-69; 7:13-15; 2 Corinthians 9:7).

(Ezra 2:68-69) “And *some* of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which *is* at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to set it up in his place: (69) They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand drams of gold, and five thousand pound of silver, and one hundred priests’ garments.”

(Ezra 7:13-15) “I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and *of* his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are **minded of their own freewill** to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. (14) Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which *is* in thine hand; (15) And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation *is* in Jerusalem.”

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(2 Corinthians 9:7) “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

Those to whom much is forgiven love much; and **love is manifest in two ways: doing and giving!** God does not need any of us. What can a man do for, or give to God? Nothing! But the Lord allows us the privilege of giving to the cause of Christ, ministering to his people, maintaining the repair of his house, and caring for his servants. These things God receives as done unto himself and his people do freely, as unto the Lord.

(Psalms 122:1) “ I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.” — **I WAS GLAD BECAUSE...**

- There was a place to go.
- Someone asked me to go.
- I wanted to go.

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- I could go.
- I went.
- I was blessed.

**OUR OWN BEST INTEREST**

3<sup>rd</sup> Look at verses 3 and 4 and learn this. — We do not worship and serve our God for gain. Yet, **it is in our own best interest to worship him.**

All spiritual declension and decay in our souls begin with the neglect of divine worship. And our souls' fatness and prosperity come as a direct result of worshipping our God. We cannot grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, except by feeding at his banqueting table, spread in his house. We cannot walk with God, if we refuse to walk with him in his house.

(Leviticus 26:3-4) “If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; (4) Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field

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shall yield their fruit.”

(Proverbs 3:1-18) “My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: (2) For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. (3) Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: (4) So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

(5) Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (6) In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

(7) Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. (8) It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. (9) Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: (10) So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.



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(11) My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: (12) For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

(13) Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding. (14) For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. (15) She *is* more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. (16) Length of days *is* in her right hand; *and* in her left hand riches and honour. (17) Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness, and all her paths *are* peace. (18) She *is* a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy *is every one* that retaineth her.”

**APPLICATION**

**PUBLIC WORSHIP**

*Leviticus 26:1-4*

Let me remind you of that which we have seen in the Book of Leviticus which is essential to the worship of our God.

1. We must worship God, celebrating all his attributes, giving thanks and praise to him for all his wonderful works.
2. We must worship at his Altar — Christ.
3. We must worship through the mediation of his Priest — Christ.
4. We must worship through his Sacrifice — Christ.
5. We must come with a need that he alone can fill.
6. We must have a prophet to deliver his Word.
7. We must keep his sabbath — Repentance — Rest.

Amen!