

What Is Corporate Worship?
Psalm 100; Hebrews 12:18-29
July 15, 2007

I. Origins of Corporate Worship

A. God's people saved for the purpose of worship (Ex. 15:1-21)

Exodus 3:11-12 ¹¹ But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" ¹² He said, "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

B. A dwelling place for God

1. Delivered and planted on God's mountain

Exodus 15:17-18 ¹⁷ You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. ¹⁸ The LORD will reign forever and ever."

2. A place for God's name (also Ex. 20:24; II Chr. 6:20)

Deuteronomy 12:5-6 ⁵ But you shall seek the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation there. There you shall go, ⁶ and there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution that you present, your vow offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock.

C. Worship – entering His gates

1. *Psalm 100:4* ⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!
2. **How?** *Psalm 24:3-4* ³ Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? ⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

II. The Church: God's New Dwelling Place

A. Christ and the presence of God

1. *John 1:14* ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
2. *John 14:6* ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

B. God's Name in the Church

2 Corinthians 6:16 ¹⁶ What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

C. Corporate worship: God meets with us (Matt. 18:20)

“This is why the church’s worship services are so very different from any other kind of meeting we have. Public worship is, first and foremost, a spiritual meeting between the triune God and his covenant people. The Father draws near to his people through his Son by his Spirit, and God’s people draw near to the Father by the Spirit through the mediation of the Son (Eph. 2:18). True worship is nothing less than communion between God and his people.”¹

III. Corporate Worship = Heavenly Worship (Hebrews 8-12)

A. A better sanctuary (Heb. 8:1-2)

B. Heavenly holy places (Heb. 9:11-12, 24)

C. A call to enter the holy places (Heb. 10:19-25)

1. **Confidence – by the blood of Jesus (vv. 19-22; also 4:16)**
2. **not neglecting to meet together (v. 25)**

D. Come to Mount Zion

1. no more boundary

Colossians 1:21-22 ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,

2. come to heavenly Jerusalem

“The gospel church is called mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is free, in opposition to mount Sinai, which tendeth to bondage, Gal. 4:24. This was the hill on which God set his king the Messiah. Now, in coming to mount Zion, believers come into heavenly places, and into a heavenly society.”²

IV. Application

A. Hear his voice (12:25-26)

Psalm 95:6-8 ⁶ Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! ⁷ For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

B. With reverence and awe (12:27-29)

C. With thanksgiving and joy

Psalm 100:1-4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! ² Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! ³ Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. ⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!

D. Copy and shadow (Rev. 21:1-3)

¹ Larry Wilson, “The Real Point of Worship,” *New Horizons* 28, no. 5 (May 2007), 20.

² Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), 6:959.