

TO WORSHIP GOD FULLY, SERVE HIM

Worship, the term itself, was defined in our previous article. In part, we quote Wm. E. Vine again, "...broadly it may be regarded as the direct acknowledgment to God, of His nature, attributes, ways and claims, WHETHER BY THE OUTGOING OF THE HEART IN PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING OR BY DEED DONE IN SUCH ACKNOWLEDGMENT" (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, emphasis added).

The correctness of Vine's observation was validated from the words of Jesus as he rebuffed Satan: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve" (Matthew 4:10). Using two different Greek verbs, *proskeneo*, "worship" and *latreuo*, "serve," Jesus clearly used the terms interchangeably.

To further emphasize the fact that our worship of God must consist of more than just praising him with our words but also involve our active service to him, notice two declarations by Paul. First, before the Jewish Sanhedrin, Paul said. "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets" (Acts 24:14). Second, writing to Christians in ancient Rome, Paul said, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son" (Romans 1:9). The words we have underlined above, "worship" and "serve," are translated from the same Greek verb, *latreuo*. In both instances, Paul had in mind his allegiance to God and his praise of God demonstrated by his service to God in preaching the gospel of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. And, notice, that the translators of the King James Version, (others, also) translated the same Greek word both "worship" and "serve."

Clearly, we cannot simply attend a meeting in a "sanctified building" (one set apart for worship), be present while a couple of prayers are offered, listen to a sermon (the shorter the better), sing a few hymns, reach for some loose change or a couple of dollars as a contribution and assume that our worship of God is complete.

To the contrary, we must learn with Paul to serve God with our spirit in the gospel of God's Son, Jesus Christ. (We will next explore the meaning of worshipping God with one's spirit in the gospel. Mean-while, think on Jesus' words at John 4:24.)

—Jerry F. Bassett