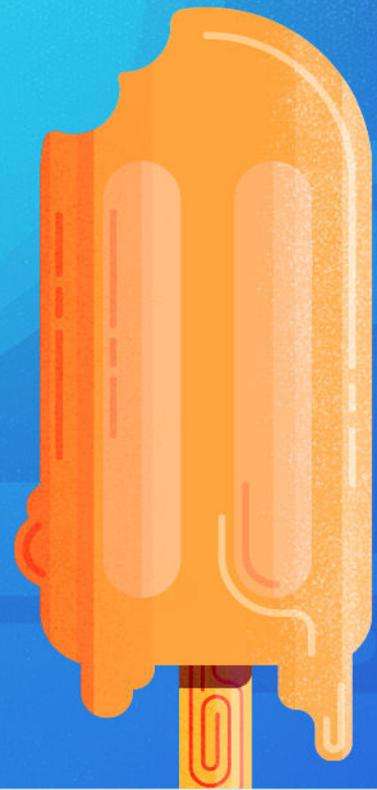


# Koinonia

## focus

AUGUST 2016 NEWSLETTER  
SOUTH BAPTIST CHURCH



## A Biblical View of Worship Part 3 “Its Foundation”

*Selection from Pastor Mark Kirkpatrick's  
Master of Ministry Seminary Writing Project*

Drew Dyck states, “I believe that once you strip away all our shallow desires and vain pursuits, it’s God we’re after. And not just any god. ... We need a great and awesome God. A God worth worshipping. We thirst for transcendence and long to be loved. In full portrayal of God found in Scripture, we find both.” Passage after passage of Scripture affirms this evaluation from Dyck. God is declared to humanity in Scripture as both transcendent and immanent. He is both great and near. It is in this reality that the foundation of worship is found.

One of the best pictures of this reality found in Scripture is in Isaiah 6. This chapter records the unique setting of Isaiah’s commission as a prophet of the Lord. Matthew Henry explains, “Perhaps, having seen little success of his ministry, he began to think of giving it up; and therefore God saw fit to renew his commission here in this chapter, in such a manner as might excite and encourage zeal and industry in the execution of it, though he seemed to labor in vain.” In this setting Isaiah records, “I saw the Lord ...” (Isaiah 6:1).

Worship must begin here, with the Lord. The life changing worship recorded in vs. 5-8, did not occur as a result of the dynamic setting (throne room of Heaven), or because of awesome singing or the cry of

the seraphim. Rather, in the center of all that is described, it is the Lord who is recognized! Every awesome element described in these verses emanates from the Lord. Isaiah saw the Lord. Tom Kraeuter offers this definition of worship in his book *Worship Is ... What?*, “Worship is the response of man when he encounters either God or God’s actions.” God created man to worship Him, to make Him known, and to bring Him glory. In Psalm 63:1-4 David declares, “O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus I will bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.”

However, all too often in churches and in personal quiet times, worship is reduced to some kind of self-centered, self-serving experience. Bob Kauflin writes: “Idolatry can be active in my heart when I’m gathered with the church. Whenever I think I can’t meet with God unless ‘X’ is present ... if ‘X’ is anything other than Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit, I’ve moved into idolatrous territory. ... Musical excellence, musical performance, preaching skill, creativity, and

## CHURCH EVENTS

- Aug 1-5 - VBS
- Aug 14 – Business Meeting
- Aug 14 – Church Picnic
- Aug 25 – GSRM Chapel Service
- Aug 26 – Singles Ministry Night
- Sept 6 – Ladies Bible Study: “Armor of God”
- Sept 7 – Youth Group Kickoff
- Sept 25 – Missionaries Les & Carol Carew

experiences among other things are potential Sunday morning idols.” Worship must be founded upon the Lord. In Isaiah 6:1-4, Isaiah says: “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: The whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.”

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This was not some weak, uninteresting god that Isaiah saw. It was not some boring encounter, rather it was awesome and life changing! Such a dramatic experience may not occur at every opportunity for worship, nor should it be the measure for authentic worship, but God is the same today as He was when Isaiah saw Him in this vision. He is the “same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). He is just as awesome, glorious, majestic and holy. And worship is what flows from this understanding. “When we say God is transcendent, we mean that he is separate from His creation and not dependent on the created order in any way.” Paul describes the transcendence of God in Romans 11:33-36 when he says: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.

“But He is also immanent, present within

the universe that He has made (Psalm 139:7). Nevertheless, creation is not God (pantheism), nor does God depend upon it. Creation, instead depends upon our Creator for its continual existence (Ephesians 4:4-6).” God is altogether transcendent and there is none else like Him! And yet in His mercy God has made Himself known unto man in His Word and the Person of Jesus Christ. God is both transcendent and immanent. He is both very great and very near! Isaiah experienced this reality as the Lord sent His angel to cleanse his impurities. Isaiah further describes the reality of the transcendence and immanence of God in Isaiah 40:10-11. He says, “Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work is before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” A. W. Argyle in God of the New Testament said, “The emphasis of the Bible falls upon God’s activity, God’s initiative, God’s approach to man preceding man’s approach to God. Both

in the Old Testament story and in that of the New, He is an intensely personal God who visits His people and hears and answers their prayers.” He has in His love and mercy chosen to initiate a relationship with man, through Jesus Christ. In this, God has perfectly manifested Himself to mankind. In Jesus Christ, eternal God has come near. Paul explains it this way in Philippians 2:6-8, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” This is the great unchanging foundation of worship.

Kraeuter observes however, that the church has in many ways “degenerated into external ritualism, where we have become, so good at these things (assembling, music, programs, etc.) that we can do them often without even thinking. Therein lies the problem. People have become more interested in the forms of their worship than in the God they are to worship.” God’s people must be concerned less and less with these peripheral things and approach God’s presence through the only mediator Jesus Christ, if worship is to be for His glory.

## Sunday Nights

*Hope and Encouragement for the Believer from the book of Hebrews*

On Sunday nights during the summer months, we are going through the book of Hebrews. The context of the original audience indicates that these early followers of Jesus were contemplating abandoning their faith so the writer of Hebrews exhorts them to trust in Jesus in the midst of persecution and hard times. These words are just as faithful and true for believers today and this study will help

those who face hardships in following Jesus.

Our Sunday Night Bible Studies provide an opportunity to grow together as we study God’s Word. It is also an excellent opportunity to connect with one another in a smaller more personal setting. If you are not already attending, please consider attending this Sunday!

## Annual Church Picnic

Sunday August 14 following our morning worship service and a special business meeting, we will be having lunch as a church family on the grounds under a big tent! As has been our tradition in recent years we are encouraging everyone to wear picnic attire for the church service. We are also asking each family to bring a dish to pass as the church will be providing and grilling the main meat course.

## Pastor’s Graduation

On Friday May 13, Pastor Mark participated in the graduation ceremonies for Louisiana Baptist University and Theological Seminary, in Shreveport, LA. After a year and a half, Pastor Mark finished his course work and earned his Master of Ministry Degree. The Lord blessed in enabling Pastor to do this extended education on a tuition free scholarship. And he blessed along the way in each of the classes as Pastor finished with a 4.0 GPA!

