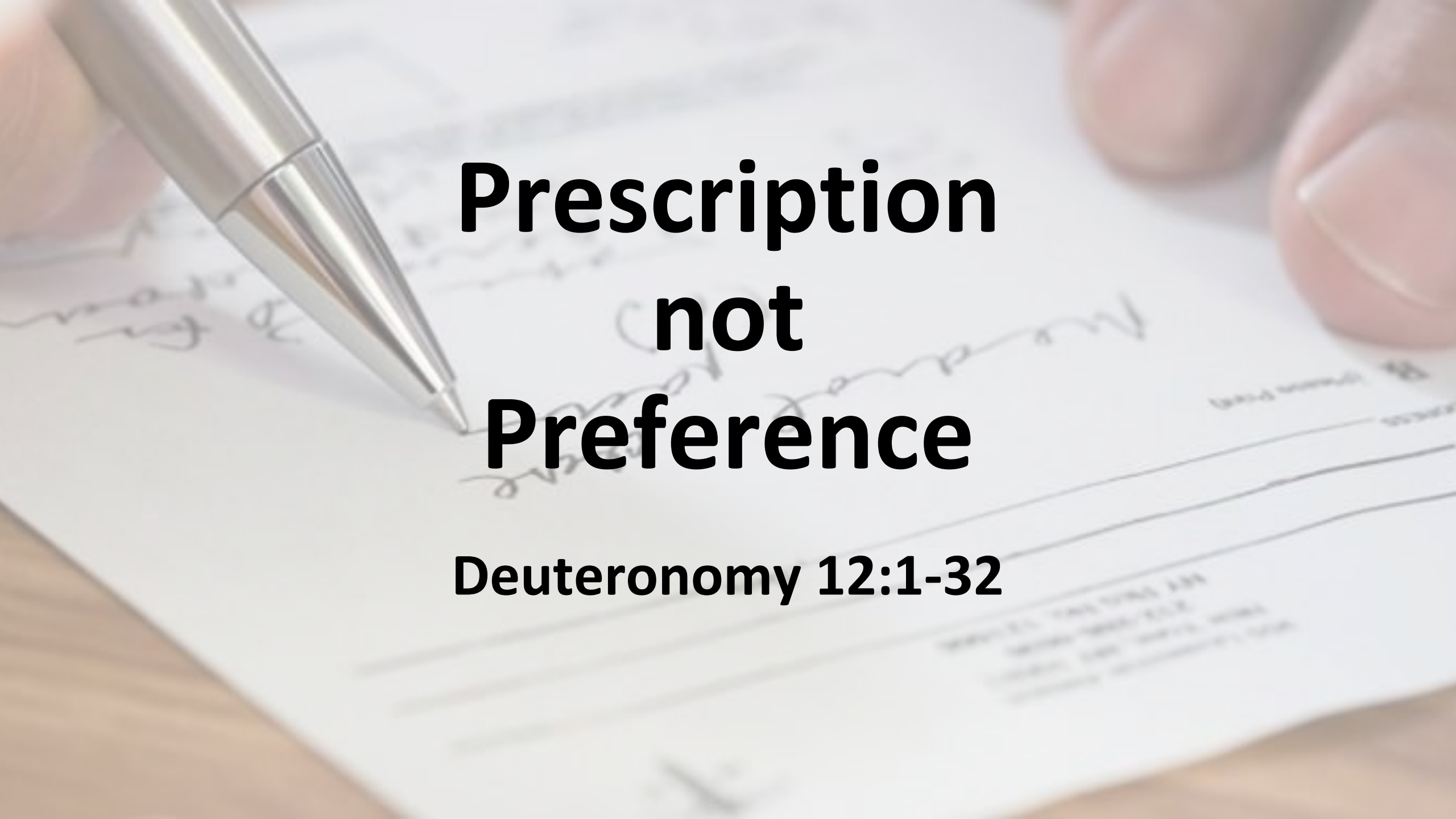


An aerial photograph of a vast, arid desert landscape. In the foreground, a steep, rocky cliff face descends into a deep valley. A winding dirt road snakes through the valley floor, leading towards a distant horizon. A large, dense crowd of people is gathered in the middle of the valley, appearing as a textured mass of small figures. The surrounding terrain is characterized by rolling hills and deep, eroded canyons, with sparse, dry vegetation. The overall scene conveys a sense of scale and a significant gathering in a remote, natural setting.

Deuteronomy

A Call to Covenant Renewal

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a silver ballpoint pen, writing on a piece of paper. The paper has cursive handwriting, and the pen is positioned over the word 'Prescription'. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the document and the hand.

Prescription not Preference

Deuteronomy 12:1-32

Deuteronomy 12:1-4

These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.

You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.

You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire. You shall chop down the carved images of their gods and destroy their name out of that place. You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

Deuteronomy 12:5-7

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, 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. And there you shall eat before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your households, in all that you undertake, in which the LORD your God has blessed you.

Deuteronomy 12:8-11

You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today,
everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes,
for you have not as yet come to the rest and to the
inheritance

that the LORD your God is giving you. But when you go over
the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is giving
you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your
enemies around, so that you live in safety, then to the place
that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name
dwell there, there you shall bring all that I command you:
your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes
and the contribution that you present,
and all your finest vow offerings that you vow to the LORD

Deuteronomy 12:12-14

And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God,
you and your sons and your daughters, your male servants
and your female servants, and the Levite that is within
your towns, since he has no portion or inheritance with you.
Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings
at any place that you see, but at the place that the LORD
will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer
your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all
that I am commanding you.

Deuteronomy 12:15-16

However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, as much as you desire, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you. The unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and as of the deer. Only you shall not eat the blood; you shall pour it out on the earth like water.

Deuteronomy 12:17-19

You may not eat within your towns the tithe of your grain or of your wine or of your oil, or the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vow offerings that you vow, or your freewill offerings or the contribution that you present, but you shall eat them before the LORD your God in the place that the LORD your God will choose, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your towns. And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all that you undertake. Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

Deuteronomy 12:20-22

When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you, and you say, “I will eat meat,” because you crave meat, you may eat meat whenever you desire. If the place that the LORD your God will choose to put his name there is too far from you, then you may kill any of your herd or your flock, which the LORD has given you, as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your towns whenever you desire. Just as the gazelle or the deer is eaten, so you may eat of it. The unclean and the clean alike may eat of it.

Deuteronomy 12:23-25

Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh. You shall not eat it; you shall pour it out on the earth like water. You shall not eat it, that all may go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is right in the sight of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 12:26-28

But the holy things that are due from you, and your vow offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place that the LORD will choose, and offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God. The blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, but the flesh you may eat. Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 12:29-32

When the LORD your God cuts off before you the nations whom you go in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, take care that you be not ensnared to follow them, after they have been destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire about their gods, saying, “How did these nations serve their gods?—that I also may do the same.” You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way, for every abominable thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods, for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods. Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.

Main Idea

Worshipping the LORD *alone*
will mean worshipping Him
according to His prescriptions,
not according to our preferences.

Prescription Not Preference

**The LORD prescribed the
where of worship.**



The LORD's Where
Not at pagan places.

Deuteronomy 12:1-4

These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.

You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.

Deuteronomy 12:1-4

These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.

**You shall surely destroy all the
places where the nations
served their gods**, on the high
whom you shall dispossess mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.

Deuteronomy 12:1-4

These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations

whom you shall dispossess served their gods, **on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.**

The LORD's Where

Not at pagan places.

Not at places of preference.

Deuteronomy 12:13-14

Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, but at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

Deuteronomy 12:13-14

Take care that you do **not** offer your burnt offerings

at any place that you see, but at the place that the LORD

will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer
your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all
that I am commanding you.

Choosing a place of worship
based on personal preference
is not *God-focused* worship;
it is *self-focused* worship.

The LORD's Where

Not at pagan places.

Not at places of preference.

Not at places of convenience.

Deuteronomy 12:20-22

When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you, and you say, “I will eat meat,” because you crave meat, you may eat meat whenever you desire. If the place that the LORD your God will choose to put his name there is too far from you, then you may kill any of your herd or your flock, which the LORD has given you, as I have commanded you, and you may eat within your towns whenever you desire. Just as the gazelle or the deer is eaten, so you may eat of it. The unclean and the clean alike may eat of it.

Deuteronomy 12:26-27

But the holy things that are due from you, and your vow offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place that the LORD will choose, and offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 12:26-27

But the holy things that are due from you, and your

vow offerings, you shall take, and **you shall go to the place**

that the LORD will choose, and offer your burnt offerings,
the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God.

It was going to be inconvenient
to travel all that distance.

But convenience-based worship
is not *sacrificial* worship.

Which means it *isn't* worship!

The LORD's Where

Not at pagan places.

Not at places of preference.

Not at places of convenience.

But at the place of **His** choosing.

Deuteronomy 12:26-27

But the holy things that are due from you, and your

vow offerings, you shall take, and **you shall go to the place**

that the LORD will choose, and offer your burnt offerings,
the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God.
The blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar
of the LORD your God, but the flesh you may eat.

Deuteronomy 12:26-27

But the holy things that are due from you, and your
vow offerings, you shall take, and you shall go to the place

that the LORD will choose, and

offer your burnt offerings,
the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God.
The blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar
of the LORD your God, but the flesh you may eat.

Deuteronomy 12:5-7

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, 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. And there you shall eat before the LORD your God...

Deuteronomy 12:5-7

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**, 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. And there you shall eat before the LORD your God...

Deuteronomy 12:5-7

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, 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. And there you shall eat before the LORD your God...

Deuteronomy 12:5-7

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, 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. And **there you shall eat** before the LORD your God...

It is God's prerogative to prescribe
to His people the place of **His**
worship!

And He chose Jerusalem!

What about the where now?

John 4:19-23

The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

What about the where now?

John 4:19-23

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

What about the where now?

John 4:19-23

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers."

What about the where now?

John 4:19-23

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

But an hour is coming, and now is, when the

**true worshipers shall worship the
Father in spirit and truth;**

for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers."

But where is this where now?

Hebrews 12:22

But **you have come** to Mount Zion
and to the city of the living God,
the heavenly Jerusalem...

We have already come to and dwell in
the heavenly Jerusalem, but...

Hebrews 10:25

Not forsaking our own assembling together,
as is the habit of some...

There may not be a prescribed
place for gathering but there is
still a *people* who gather.

Prescription Not Preference

The LORD prescribed the
how of worship.

The LORD's How

Not according to pagan practice.

Deuteronomy 12:3-4

You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces
their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire.

You shall chop down the carved images of their gods
and destroy their name out of that place.

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

Deuteronomy 12:3-4

You shall **tear down their altars** and dash in pieces

their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire.

You shall chop down the carved images of their gods
and destroy their name out of that place.

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

Deuteronomy 12:3-4

You shall tear down their altars and **dash in pieces**
their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire.

You shall chop down the carved images of their gods
and destroy their name out of that place.
You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

Deuteronomy 12:3-4

You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces

their pillars and **burn their Asherim with fire.**

You shall chop down the carved images of their gods
and destroy their name out of that place.

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

Deuteronomy 12:3-4

You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces
their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire.

You shall **chop down the carved images**

of their gods
and destroy their name out of that place.
You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

Deuteronomy 12:3-4

You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces
their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire.
You shall chop down the carved images of their gods

destroy their name out of that place.

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.

The how matters!

You shall tear down their altars and dash in pieces
their pillars and burn their Asherim with fire.
You shall chop down the carved images of their gods
and destroy their name out of that place.

**You shall not worship the LORD
your God in that way.**

They were to give no
consideration to incorporating
the practices of the culture
around them.

Deuteronomy 12:30

...do not inquire about their gods, saying,
“How did these nations serve their gods?—
that I also may do the same.”

The LORD's How

Not according to pagan practice.

Not according to personal preference.

Deuteronomy 12:8-11

You shall not do according to all
that we are doing here today,
everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes,
for you have not as yet come to the rest
and to the inheritance
that the LORD your God is giving you.

Deuteronomy 12:8-11

**You shall not do according to all
that we are doing here today,**

everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes,
for you have not as yet come to the rest
and to the inheritance
that the LORD your God is giving you.

Deuteronomy 12:8-11

You shall not do according to all
that we are doing here today,

**everyone doing whatever is
right in his own eyes,**

for you have not as yet come to the rest
and to the inheritance
that the LORD your God is giving you.

Worship is not a matter
for self-determination; it is not
by self-direction but is according
to God's prescription!

The LORD's How

Not according to pagan practice.

Not according to personal preference.

Not according to pragmatic appeal.

Deuteronomy 12:30-32

...do not inquire about their gods, saying,
“How did these nations serve their gods?—
that I also may do the same.”

You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way...

for every abominable thing that the LORD hates
they have done for their gods, for they even burn
their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.

Some of the most abominable
things have been justified
with the statement,
“Yes, but it works!”

The LORD's How

Not according to pagan practice.

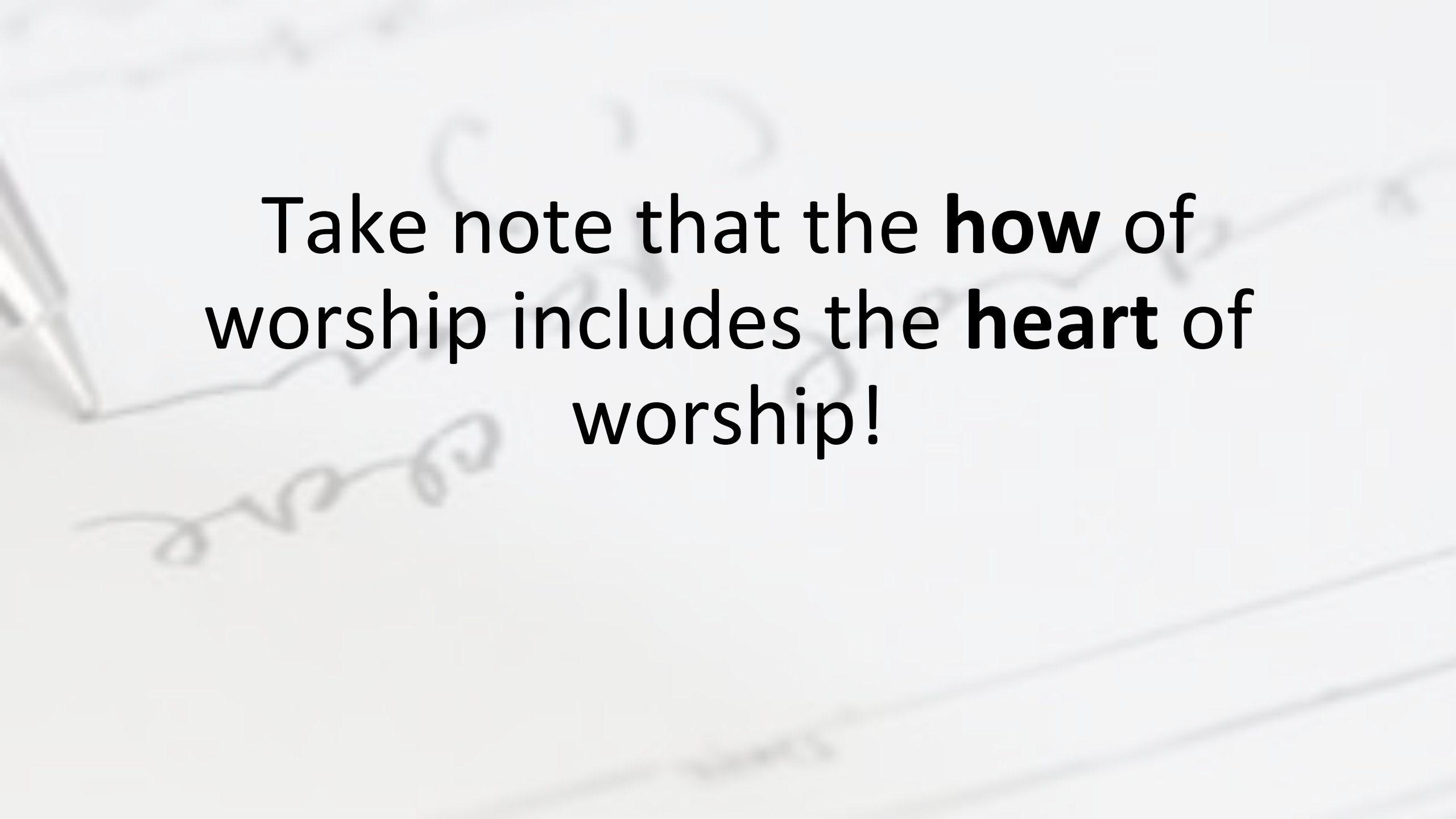
Not according to personal preference.

Not according to pragmatic appeal.

But according to the His command.

Deuteronomy 12:1

These are the statutes and rules that you shall be careful to do in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.



Take note that the **how** of
worship includes the **heart** of
worship!

Deuteronomy 12:7

And there you shall eat before the LORD your God,
and you shall rejoice, you and your households,
in all that you undertake, in which the LORD
your God has blessed you.

Deuteronomy 12:7

And there you shall eat before the LORD your God,

and **you shall rejoice**, you and your households,
in all that you undertake, in which the LORD
your God has blessed you.

What about the how now?

Hebrews 12:28

Therefore let us be grateful for receiving
a kingdom that cannot be shaken,
and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship,
with reverence and awe.

The how still matters!

Hebrews 12:28

Therefore let us be grateful for receiving
a kingdom that cannot be shaken,

and thus **let us offer to God acceptable worship,**
with reverence and awe.

How we conduct our worship
now is not a matter of mere
preference and should not be
treated with casual indifference.

Prescription Not Preference

**The LORD prescribed the
who of worship.**



The LORD's Who
Not with pagan partners.

Deuteronomy 12:29-30

When the LORD your God cuts off before you the nations whom you go in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, take care that you be not ensnared to follow them, after they have been destroyed before you...

Deuteronomy 9:3

Know therefore today that he who goes over before you
as a consuming fire is the LORD your God.

He will destroy them and subdue them before you.

So you shall drive them out and make them perish quickly,
as the LORD has promised you.

Rather than invite them in,
they were to drive them out!

**There was no place for
pagan partnerships!**

The LORD's Who

Not with pagan partners.

Not with *preferred* participants
but with impartiality.

Deuteronomy 12:29-30

...but you shall eat them before the LORD your God
in the place that the LORD your God will choose,
you and your son and your daughter,
your male servant and your female servant,
and the Levite who is within your towns.

Deuteronomy 12:29-30

...but you shall eat them before the LORD your God
in the place that the LORD your God will choose,

**you and your son and your
daughter,**

your male servant and your female servant,
and the Levite who is within your towns.

Deuteronomy 12:29-30

...but you shall eat them before the LORD your God
in the place that the LORD your God will choose,
you and your son and your daughter,

**your male servant and your
female servant,**

and the Levite who is within your towns.

Deuteronomy 12:29-30

...but you shall eat them before the LORD your God
in the place that the LORD your God will choose,
you and your son and your daughter,
your male servant and your female servant,

**and the Levite who is within
your towns.**

True worship is fundamentally
egalitarian; all stand equally
before the LORD!

Deuteronomy 12:29-30

...but you shall eat them before the LORD your God
in the place that the LORD your God will choose,
you and your son and your daughter,
your male servant and your female servant,
and the Levite who is within your towns.

You all come equally before Him!

...but **you shall all eat them before
the LORD your God**

in the place that the LORD your God will choose,
you and your son and your daughter,
your male servant and your female servant,
and the Levite who is within your towns.

What about the who now?

2 Corinthians 6:14-16

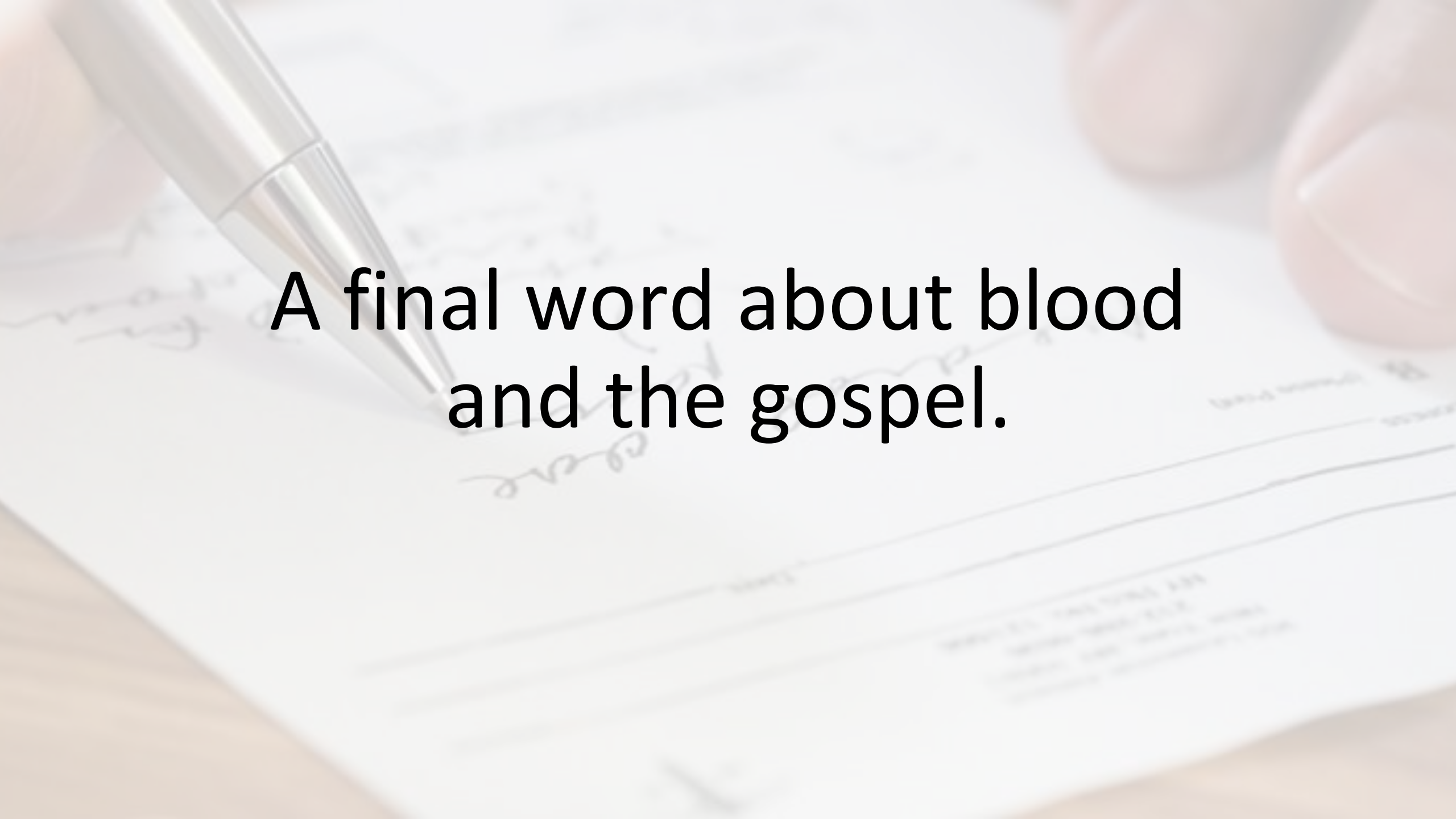
Do not be bound together with unbelievers;
for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness,
or what fellowship has light with darkness?

Or what harmony has Christ with Belial,
or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?
Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols?

What about the who now?

Revelation 5:9

And they sang a new song, saying,
“Worthy are You to take the book, and to break its seals;
for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood
people from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.



A final word about blood
and the gospel.

Deuteronomy 12:23-24

Only be sure that you do not eat the blood,
for the blood is the life...

Deuteronomy 12:23-24

Only be sure that you do not eat the blood,

for the blood is the life...

Deuteronomy 12:23-24

Only be sure that you do not eat the blood,
for the blood is the life...

Jesus' blood is your life!

Concluding Considerations:

What influence has our culture had on your thinking, your worship?

Are your personal preferences hindering your experience of joy in worship?

Do you see others in light of the cross of Christ or in light of cultural convictions.