

Worship: Our 1st Priority

Series: "The Disciplines Of A Godly Life" (Part 3)

(John 4:23-24)

...Today many people think that they have worshipped God simply because they occupied a pew on Sunday morning, or sung a hymn, or lit a candle... but Jesus tells us that this is not worship. These can be vehicles for worship, but...
...Worship is the most glorious activity that can take place in a human life. The Westminster Confession asks the question: "What is the chief end of man?" It then answers it: "It is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." In other words, you were made to have the sweetest relationship with God by enjoying Him forever. That's worship!
...Our text this morning is the key passage in the whole Bible pertaining to the nature and necessity of worship. It is here that Jesus discusses worship and tells what it is and how it is to be done.

THREE QUESTIONS HELPING YOU TO BECOME THE GENUINE WORSHIPER THAT GOD IS SEEKING.

...Don't miss out on the greatest satisfaction in life! This is why God made you.

I. What is Worship?

A. First, note what it is not:

1. It is not attending a worship service, even in a beautiful building.
2. It is not going through the ritual of a worship service... sing, stand, pray, give, listen...
3. It is not merely emotionalism... feeling good, having joy, tears with music...

B. What is it?

1. If you lived in the 1500-1600s you would not even know the word "worship." It was called "Worth-ship", and you would mean by this that you were ascribing to God His true worth. You would glory in Him and sing to Him praises that told of His greatness.
2. In John 4, the word used for "worship" means "to bow the knee." (Humble adoration)
3. A formal definition of worship:
...It is a redeemed heart occupied with God, expressing itself in praise and adoration.
...It is a quiet, reverential occupying of the worshiper with God Himself.

...The worship service should be designed to turn the attention of the worshiper away from man to God!

II. What Does It Mean To Worship in Spirit and Truth? (4:23)

A. For our worship to be genuine, it must be "in spirit."

1. This does not refer to the Holy Spirit. There is no article before "spirit."
2. Jesus told this woman, that a new day was coming when the worship of God would not take place in the Temple. (Temple worship was the pattern and shadow of Christ.)
3. Since God Himself is spirit (v.24) redeemed men and women worship Him in the highest part of their humanity, their spirit. This is the part of us that was "made alive at our new birth."
...True worship occurs only when our spirit, which is akin to God's nature, actually meets God and finds itself praising Him for His love, wisdom, beauty, truth, mercy, grace...
4. There is one more aspect to worshipping in spirit... it also calls us to engage in this with all of our being. It is a wholehearted activity, "with spirit."
5. If you omit "spirit" in your worship the result is a dead formalism.

B. For our worship to be genuine, it must be according to "truth."

1. We must approach God truthfully, honestly, wholeheartedly, and openly.
...Jesus said, "Their lips honor me, but their hearts are far from me." (Matt. 15:8-9)
2. Our worship must be according to the Bible. (John 17:17) God's Word is truth, and in it He tells us who He is, who we are, and how we are to approach Him.

3. Our worship must be Christo-centric...through Christ alone, who is the "Truth." (14:6)
4. If you omit "Truth" in worship, the worship will become an abomination to God.

III. How Can I Become One Of Those Whom the Father Seeks To Worship Him? (v.24)

- A. You must first be born again. There are 3 great "musts" in John's Gospel. This is the first!
- B. Daily spend time with the Lord as you read your Bible and pray. Don't rush! Enjoy Him!
- C. Gather weekly with your church family for corporate worship. This should be the high point of your week. Be faithful in your weekly attendance. Come prepared to meet the King!

SO WHAT? HOW SHOULD THIS IMPACT MY LIFE?

1. Don't confuse a worship service at church with real worship. It can and should happen there, but not necessarily, for the issue is your heart.
2. God made you to worship Him every day of your life. Have you learned to enjoy Him throughout your days? Do you begin with Him, and then walk with Him during the day? This is the blessed life, like Enoch, walking with God and enjoying Him all the way home.
3. Worship can only come from a redeemed heart that is occupied and very satisfied with God. If so, you will find that you cannot help but sing and praise Him throughout the day. Gratitude will flow from your lips...
4. You can't worship the Lord God until you have first been born again. Jesus said "you must be born again." This begins the journey with Him. Today, place your faith in the Lord Jesus, who died to pay for sin, and He will save you. Then worship will be your life, your whole life!