

True Worship -- Part 2

True Worship

Introduction; God is pleased with man's worship

- A. However this does not mean that God accepts any kind of worship man gives.
1. As we saw last week God is very displeased with most of men's religion.
 2. *Isa 1:13-15 Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies; I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. 14 Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. 15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.*
 3. Jehovah wants man to worship Him. However this does not mean he accepts anything man wants to do in service to Him.
 4. God has told man how to worship. He expects man to worship properly. If he doesn't, God will not accept his religion. Proper worship involves many things.
 5. *Psa 51:15-19 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise. 18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.*
- B. We saw three kinds of religion that God rejects last week.
1. Matthew 16:1-9 spoke of **vain** worship. This is a worship that is based on the traditions and commands of men. It emphasizes men's ways over God's ways —Isa 55:57-59.
 2. Acts 17:22-28 spoke of **ignorant** worship. In vain worship the people had God's word and knew it but still followed their own traditions. In ignorant worship the people do not know God's law.
 3. These people are honestly ignorant. However when they learn the truth they must cease to be ignorant or honest. They must change and obey the truth and remain honest or they can continue with their traditions and become dishonest.
 4. Colossians 2:18-23 spoke of **will** worship or self-imposed religion. This imposes the will of man on religion. Man decides what is the best way to become holy.
 5. In Colossae some were practicing asceticism. They were denying the flesh physical things, like foods, to become more holy. This is worthless Paul said.
 6. *Mark 7:14-15 When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand: 15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man."*
 7. The U.S. is like Athens in Acts 17 today. They worshipped many gods. Some said it was easier to find a god in Athens than a man. We are very religious today. We have hundreds of denominations and ways to worship the Lord. He is not pleased with us as He was not pleased with Athens.
- C. Still, God wants man to be religious and worship.
1. Man must worship God in His way. If we want to give someone a gift that pleases them we try to find out what they want. If we want to please God in our religion we must find out what He wants.
 2. We find out how to worship God in the Bible. God's word tells us what true religion is. We must study it if we want to please Him.
- D. Today we will consider 'True Worship'.

I. True Worship

- A. In John 4 Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob.
1. Jesus has just begun His earthly ministry. In John 2 He goes to Jerusalem and cleanses the temple. He did many signs before the people and made disciples.
 2. **John 4:1-3**; Jesus seems to be in some danger from the Pharisees because He is making so many disciples. So He returns to Galilee. Also, Matthew 4:12 and Mark 1:14 tells us John the baptizer was imprisoned at this time. John was imprisoned by Herod in Galilee. Jesus may go back there because the work is fruitful and John can no longer preach.
 3. Jesus did not do the baptizing. He taught. When men came to be baptized He had the disciples do it. Paul did this as well —1 Cor 1:14-17.
 4. Baptism is necessary but it does not matter who does it. The emphasis in scripture concerning baptism is why we are doing it. We must understand baptism and want to do it.
 5. **Verse 4**; Jesus needed to go through Samaria. We are not sure why. It was much quicker to go through Samaria than cross the Jordan River at Jericho and go up the eastern side.
 6. However Jesus did not seem to be in a hurry. As things happen, He will spend several days in Samaria. He probably needed to go that way because He knew there were people there who would listen to Him.
- B. Jesus speaks with a woman there.
1. **John 4:5-9**; It is about 6:00 in the evening —Roman time. Jesus has been walking all day and is tired. We see the humanity of Jesus.
 2. A woman of the city of Sychar comes to get water. Jesus speaks to her. This was unusual for several reasons. First, she was a Samaritan and hated by the Jews. Second she was a woman. Men usually did not speak to women in public.
 3. The animosity between the Jews and Samaritans went back over 400 years to the days of Nehemiah and the building of the walls of Jerusalem.
 4. The Maccabees had conquered the Samaritans over a hundred years before this time and forced them to accept circumcision and also destroyed their temple.
 5. **Vs 10-15**; Jesus talks to the woman about living water. He turns the conversation from physical water in the well to living water that comes from God. This seems to confuse the woman.
 6. **Vs 16-20**; From what Jesus tells her about her personal life (and His previous teaching) she concludes He is a prophet. She asks him a question that was a debate between the Jews and Samaritans.
 7. The mountain was Mt Gerizim. This mount had been very important in O.T. times. It had a lot of tradition surrounding it. The Samaritans thought this justified it as a place of worship.
- C. Jesus takes advantage of this question of where to worship to talk about true worship.
1. **Verses 21-22**; Jesus tells her that a time was coming when ‘**where**’ did not matter. However right now Jerusalem was the right place.
 2. Salvation was of the Jews. The Samaritans were ignorant of true religion. Their knowledge was incomplete. They accepted only the Pentateuch and rejected the prophets and writings.
 3. We cannot just take the parts of scripture we like or that justify what we want to do. If the Samaritans accepted the rest of the O.T. they would have had to worship at Jerusalem and recognized salvation would come from the house of David.
 4. **Vs 23-24**; The time had come when things would change. **True worshippers** would not worship in a certain place but in a certain way. They would worship in ‘**spirit and in truth**’.
 5. Jehovah God is a Spirit. He is not limited by time and space. He can be worshipped properly anywhere and anytime. Paul told the folks at Athens this truth.
 6. *Acts 17:24-25 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things."*
 7. Proper worship must be in **spirit and in truth**. Some make **spirit** the heart and mind of man and **truth** by the word of God.
 8. Others make the **spirit** the word by the Holy Spirit and **truth** the true worship from the heart by the worshipper.
 9. Still others make the **spirit** our spiritual worship as opposed to the physical worship of Moses. **Truth** is by the N.T. and not the shadow of the O.T.
 10. I do not see any great difference in these ideas. Our worship must be the spiritual worship that is according to God's word and it must come from the heart or spirit to be pleasing to Him.
- D. We will consider this true worship today.

2. Worship in Spirit

- A. God is Spirit and we must worship Him in spirit.
1. Spiritual worship involves several things. It is worship that comes from the heart. It is sincere worship. It is a desire to worship God. Worship must come from within a man and not from a place on earth — whether Jerusalem, Mt. Gerizim or Clearwater.
 2. Jesus condemned the Jews for vain worship. Part of the reason it was vain was because it was not from the heart. It was outward only.
 3. *Matt 15:8-9* **These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."**
 4. We must want to worship God. Worship must be important to us. We must enjoy worshipping God. If we do not then our worship is vain.
 5. *Psa 122:1* **I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the LORD."**
 6. *Matt 22:36-38* **"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment."**
 7. We see we must worship God with all our being. This has never changed. The command Jesus gives comes from the O.T. God has always demanded our all. That is why Jesus condemned the worship of the Jews as vain.
- B. The true worship of God today is spiritual. It is not physical as in the O.T.
1. In the O.T. they had a physical temple they had to go to worship. This was the question the Samaritan woman asked. Jesus said that was true.
 2. *1 Cor 3:16* **Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?**
 3. Today we are the spiritual temple of God. The church is a temple made up of spiritual stones —1 Pet 2:4-8, Eph 2:19-22. We are the spiritual stones that make up the temple of God today. Christians can meet and worship anywhere because they are the temple of God.
 4. We can also meet and worship anywhere because we are all priests of God. We are a *'royal priesthood'* and offer up spiritual sacrifices —Heb 13:15.
 5. *1 Pet 2:9* **But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**
 6. *Rom 12:1* **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.**
 7. Our worship is spiritual and does not depend on a physical temple. We do not need an earthly altar and sacrifices of bulls and goats. We can worship spiritually any time and in any place.
 8. Another example is our prayers. They go up before God as a sweet smelling aroma just as the incense did in the O.T. —Rev 8:3, 4.
 9. *Rev 5:8* **Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.**
- C. Spiritual worship respects God.
1. We must honor God as Lord and Creator. He has made us and sustains us. He will judge us in the last day.
 2. The Old Testament word worship is shachah (שָׁחָה) and means "depress, bow down, prostrate" as in Exodus 4:31, **"...bowed their heads and worshipped"** —ISBE.
 3. The New Testament word used most often for worship is proskuneo (**proskuneo**). It means, "to kiss (the hand or the ground) toward," hence, often in the oriental fashion bowing prostrate upon the ground — ISBE.
 4. *Acts 10:25-26* **As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. 26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man."**
 5. Our worship then must praise and honor God. To do so it must come from the heart of man. We must be glad to be together and have our minds on what we are doing.
- D. We must offer God spiritual worship that is heartfelt and sincere.

3. Worship in Truth

- A. We must worship our Creator and Judge in truth or as He commands.
1. The worship of the Samaritans was wrong because they did not know what God commanded. They rejected the writings and prophets. The worship of the Athenians was wrong because they were ignorant of who the one true God was.
 2. A desire to worship God is necessary and worship must be sincere and from the heart. However it must also be the kind of worship God has commanded.
 3. This has always been true. Under the law of Moses God demanded they obey Him in all things and not add to nor take away from His divine word.
 4. *Deut 4:1-2 "Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you. 2 You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."*
 5. Part of the reason the worship of the Jews was vain in Jesus' day was teachings the commands and traditions of men as part of their religion —Matt 15:1-9.
- B. Things have not changed. God still demands that we do things his way.
1. The church is the house of God. We must do things His way. We must worship as He has directed. Paul wanted Timothy to conduct himself properly in God's house.
 2. *1 Tim 3:14-15 These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; 15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*
 3. It has always been true that men must worship God as He directed in order to please Him. God listens to those who please Him and answers their prayers
 4. *John 9:31 "Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him."*
 5. When the church at Corinth had gotten away from the teachings of Jesus concerning the Lord's supper, Paul corrected them. He then reminded them of what they had been taught.
 6. *1 Cor 11:19-23 For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. 20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. 21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk, 22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you. 23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;*
 7. Whenever anyone gets away from the simple N.T. pattern they need to go back to the Bible and find book, chapter and verse for all they do in religion.
- C. True worship respects God.
1. If we do not follow the commands of God we dishonor Him. Children who do not obey their parents dishonor them. Obedience honors God.
 2. *Luke 6:46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?"*
 3. *Phil 2:9-11 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
 4. We will all bow down before God one day whether we want to or not. We need to bow down and serve Him now while it is our choice so we can be with Him in that day.
- D. We must offer Jehovah true worship.

Conclusion; We should please Jehovah with our religion.

- A. We do this when we worship Him in *'spirit and in truth.'*

1. Spirit worship is worship that is sincere and from the heart. It recognizes that God is Spirit and appreciates spiritual worship more than fleshly worship.
 2. True worship is religion that is based on God's word and does only what the Lord commands the church to do. It respects Him as Lord and Judge.
- B. We worship in Spirit and in Truth when we become a Christians according to the N.T. pattern.
1. This means we believe in Jesus Christ, repent of our sins and be buried with Him in baptism to be forgiven of our sins and become a Christian.
 2. *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*
 3. *Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
 4. *Acts 22:16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'*
 5. After we become a Christian we must continue to worship and serve Him as He commands in the N.T.
- C. If we can help anyone become right with God, please let us. Jesus will return — are you ready?