

TRUE WORSHIP

John 4:19-26

What is worship? Where do we worship? How can we truly worship? Questions like these come up in the discussion today between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. True Worship is from our hearts, through the Holy Spirit, according to God's Truth, focused on and only offered through Jesus Christ.

1.TRUE WORSHIP IS NOT A PLACE – True worship is from our hearts.

- Many people, like the Samaritan woman, think that worship is all about a place of worship – verse 20. She wanted to know whether Jesus would say which place is the real or best place to worship. The Samaritans worshipped at Mt. Gerizim (formerly Mt. Ebal). The Samaritans once had a Temple on Mt. Gerizim. The Jews had the Temple in Jerusalem for worship and sacrifice. Jesus tells her now that He has come, it is no longer about a place at all. Jesus Himself replaces the Temple – John 2. Worship is from the heart and we can worship God anywhere and everywhere!
- True worship MUST be in spirit and truth- verses 23 and 24. Worship in spirit and truth means to worship as one spiritually alive – through the new birth of the Spirit (John 3). Worship means giving God His “worship”. He is worthy! Worship is rejoicing in Who God is and what He has done. He is Spirit means God is invisible and unknowable unless He chooses to reveal Himself and He has in Jesus! – John 1:18. Only those who taste of the reality of Jesus' Living Water can truly worship God. *“Worshipping in spirit is connected to the fact that God is Spirit...and worshipping in truth is connected with Jesus, the Messiah who explains everything (4:25,26). This picture of Jesus will be developed more when it is said that His words are spirit and truth (6:65) and He Himself is the truth (14:6). So worshipping in spirit and truth is related to the very character of God and the identity of Christ...”* – Rodney Whitacre.

2.TRUE WORSHIP IS IN SPIRIT - True worship is by and through the Holy Spirit.

- Only those born of the Holy Spirit have life and salvation. True salvation makes worshippers of God – Romans 12:1. Surrender to God is true worship! Obedience in everyday life is true worship. He alone is worthy of our allegiance and life! Obedience is rooted in the work of the Holy Spirit in us and through us. All who truly receive and trust Jesus are brought into a new relationship with God as Father. This new relationship includes the gift of the Holy Spirit – John 4:14; 7:37-39. The worship of God with our spirit is rooted in the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts – Philippians 3:2,3.
- Worship in spirit must be God-directed and God-centered. Worship is not first about what we get out from it. It is not just going through the motions, ceremonies, and liturgies – Isaiah 1:12-17; Amos 5:21. *“Worship is a redeemed heart occupied with God, expressing itself in adoration and thanksgiving.”* – A.W. Pink. True worship includes living our daily life as offered up for the glory of God – Colossians 3:17.

3.TRUE WORSHIP IS IN TRUTH - True worship is according to Truth.

- True worship is always from the heart, through the work of the Holy Spirit, according to God's revealed Truth in His Word, the Bible – John 17:17; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:16. Worship not according to God's truth is idolatrous. The Samaritans were worshipping wrongly in ignorance

of the true knowledge of God – verse 22. Ever since Cain, humans have been worshipping wrongly – Jude 11. We don't come before God any way we please. We come His way. Many people still have mixed up views of God. God is not our Vending Machine in the sky. God doesn't exist for our benefit or "happiness", we exist for His glory – Acts 17:24-25. We can err in our view of God's love by presuming on Him and ignoring His Holiness, Justice, etc. Only the Bible teaches we are totally lost sinners who can do nothing on our own to merit or earn favor from God. Only the Bible tells us Jesus is Truth – John 14:6.

- *"The one worship service in the history of the world that was completely designed to minister to the felt needs of the people was the worship of the golden calf at the base of Mount Sinai (see Ex. 32). It was not an exercise in worship but idolatry. We have to keep a close watch on what we do in worship, asking ourselves: 'Is this according to the truth of God? Is this God's teaching in His Word?...He is truth and His Word is truth.'" – R.C. Sproul.*

4. TRUE WORSHIP IS IN CHRIST ALONE – True worship is only offered through Jesus Christ.

- Salvation IS from the Jews – verse 22b. Jesus the Messiah came from the Jews. But Jesus came to be the Savior of the World – verse 42. When the Samaritan woman speaks of Messiah to come, Jesus clearly tells her 'I am.'" Jesus is the True Revealer of God – John 1:18; 3:35. He is the fulfillment of all the Old Testament as God's Ultimate King, God's Ultimate Prophet, God's Ultimate Priest. How do we worship God? Only in and through Jesus! – Ephesians 2:18.
- *"Jesus, where'er Your people meet, there they behold Your mercy seat; Where'er they seek You, You are found, and ev'ry place is hallowed ground."* – William Cowper.
- The "hour" that has come ultimately refers to the death and resurrection of Jesus – verse 21,23. Everything is based on the Person and Work of Jesus. This includes all real worship. We live our lives daily in His presence and for His glory. *"My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great SAVIOR."* – John Newton, 1700's.
- Our worship of God in and through Jesus is a foretaste of the eternal worship service to come in Heaven – Revelation 5:11-13. Jesus actually worships with us right now – Hebrews 2:12. *"Just as in chapter 3, the life of the age to come may be possessed and enjoyed here and now, so in chapter 4 the worship of the age to come may be rendered here and now, by those true worshippers, so desired by the Father, who worship Him in 'in spirit and truth'."* – F.F. Bruce.

Concluding Applications:

- Are you daily worshipping God in spirit and truth?
- Is your worship seen most in daily surrender and obedience to Christ?
- Are you growing in Truth through the Word of God?
- How does your attitude toward worship anticipate the eternal worship to come?