

J.J.

TRUE WORSHIPPERS (Part II)

John 4:20-24

INTRODUCTION :

THIS IS A TRUE STORY. In the Washington DC Metro Station on a cold January morning in 2007, a man with a violin played six Bach pieces for about forty-five minutes. During that time approximately two thousand people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. After three minutes, a middle-aged man noticed there was a musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds before hurrying to meet his schedule.

4 MINUTES:

The violinist received his first dollar. A woman threw money in the hat, and without stopping, continued to walk.

6 MINUTES:

A young man leaned against the wall to listen to him, then looked at his watch and started to walk again.

10 MINUTES:

A three year-old boy stopped, but his mother tugged him along hurriedly. The kid stopped to look at the violinist again, but the mother pushed hard as the child continued to walk, turning his head all the time. This action was repeated by several other children. Every parent, without exception, forced their children to move on quickly.

45 MINUTES:

The musician played continuously. Only six people stopped and listened for a short while. About twenty gave money but continued to walk at their normal pace. The man collected a total of thirty-two dollars.

1 HOUR:

He finished playing, and silence took over. No one noticed. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition. No one knew this, but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days before the metro station performance, Joshua Bell sold out a theater in Boston where each seat averaged one-hundred dollars.

Application : There is a reason why Sunday is called The Lord's Day. It's the time for us to stop and appreciate and see the awesomeness of God. Our lives are so much in a hurry, full of things to do, full of ambition and if we don't stop even on a Sunday to think about God, we will miss the greatest pleasure God has given to us... Himself.

And that is worship, when our all our mind, our heart, our thoughts and action are focused on the glory of God.

Last week, we talked about the different types of worship.

Remember, when you were saved, when you believed in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, His aim is not to make you better behaved people. He saved you in order for you to worship Him.

***Our study will focus on who are the true worshippers**

John 4: ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹ "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

PRAY

***Notice this :**

²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

Story : In 1961, A.W. Tozer, while speaking to a group of pastors of the Associated Gospel Churches of Canada said,

***Quote :** Worshipis the missing jewel in modern evangelicalism – A.W. Tozer

The question is when you go to church is "DO YOU WORSHIP?" That is the primary reason we go to church because God is looking for true worshippers.

Etymology : seeks "zeteo" to seek in order to find; to require – demand something from someone

Notice? He seeks. He requires

- **The Father seeks true worship.**

Illustration : Today is a Sunday. It's the Lord's day and a lot of people all over the world are going to church and the Lord is looking at us right now and are looking at people right now, if that person is a true worshipper or not.

I attended this church before and we used to sit at the back because Mica was still a baby and we don't want to disturb people. But the problem is when I sit at the back, you get distracted by people who are coming in late. We were so engulfed in worship when this woman who has been attending that church longer than we did, the whole family came in with the dad, the mom and the children holding cups of Tim Hortons and then I noticed the wife has a Bluetooth earphone in her ear. I thought it was just a one-time thing because maybe she was waiting for a call that's important (anyways, is anything or more important than God during time of worship?) But the following Sundays, I see this same woman going to church with that same Bluetooth earphone in her ear. I can't help but ask myself, why did she even go to church?

- The Father requires true worship.

So does it mean God rejects some of our worship?

Amos 5: 21 "I hate, I despise your feast days,

And I do not savor your sacred assemblies.

²² Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings,

I will not accept them,

Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.

²³ Take away from Me the noise of your songs,

For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments.

Isaiah 1: 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.

That's why in the book of Hebrews, it says :

Hebrews 12:28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; (NASB)

This is the reason by God's grace, we are studying from His Word, "who are the true worshippers" So that when God's eyes look at DCF, He can say, now that's a church where my people truly worship.

You know what happens when God finds true worshippers?

2 Chronicles 16:9 The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. (NLT) strengthen "chazaq" to support; to hold up

Last week : In the original language, there are four Greek words that are translated in our English word "**worship**"

- **Sebomai** – a feeling of awe and devotion; one who is "devoted"
- **Latreuo** – to serve or to render religious service

It is important to note that as Christians, anything that we do for God is also tantamount to worshipping Him.

- **Eusebeo** – to act piously or to show respect (used only twice in the New Testament; Acts 17:23 and 1 Timothy 5:4)

Now here is the Greek word used for “worship” that was used by our Lord in our study today.

- **Proskuneo** – to kiss the hand of the master; kneeling or lying prostrate.

The equivalent Hebrew word is “shachah” to bow down, prostrate oneself. It is really showing a profound reverence before God.

In short, we realize that God is so great and awesome and realize how much He loves us by giving His Son to die for us, we forget ourselves, we don’t care about ourselves anymore. It’s entirely focused on who He is and what He has done for us.

We gave an illustration about Mary of Bethany last week and how she worshipped Jesus in John 12 and from there we learned that...

Proskuneo worship is :

- Based on a heart that is full of thanksgiving and reverence of who our Lord is
- Giving our very best to God like our time, our treasures, our talents,
- Losing ourself in the Lord and not even thinking about what other people would say
- Cannot boast anything about ourselves but we give all the glory back to God.

Quote :

“What, then, is the essence of worship? **It is the celebration of God!** When we worship God, we celebrate Him: We extol Him, we sound His praises, we boast in Him.

Worship is not the casual chatter that occasionally drowns out the organ prelude; we celebrate God when we allow the prelude to attune our hearts to the glory of God by the means of music.

Worship is not the mumbling of prayers or the mouthing of hymns with little thought and less heart; we celebrate God when we join together earnestly in prayer and intensely in song.

Worship is not grudging gifts or compulsory service; we celebrate God when we give to Him hilariously and serve Him with integrity.

Worship is not haphazard music done poorly, not even great music done merely as a performance; we celebrate God when we enjoy and participate in music to His glory.

Worship is not a sermon that is poorly prepared and carelessly delivered; we celebrate God when we honor His Word with our words, by His Spirit.

As a thoughtful gift is a celebration of a birthday, as a special evening out is a celebration of an anniversary, as a warm eulogy is a celebration of a life, as a sexual embrace is a celebration of marriage—**so a worship service is a celebration of God.”**

Since now we know what Biblical worship is, the question is

***WHO ARE THE TRUE WORSHIPPERS?**

- I. Their knowledge of God is inerrant
- II. Their relationship with God is intimate
- III. Their worship of God comes from the inside

I. THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS INERRANT

John 4: ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹ "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Brief Background :

- Samaritans were left-over Jews in the Northern Kingdom who intermarried with foreigners in 786 B.C. That's why the Jews have nothing to do with them.
- They rejected everything in the Old Testament and they have their own version of the first five books of the Bible
- They established their own temple in Mount Gerizim.

QUOTE : In short, this woman thinks that worship is about "where" BUT true worship is a question of "WHO am I worshipping?"

The question : Do you know the God who you are worshipping? Is He true or not?

***That's why Jesus said,**

You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

***Remember the Samaritan woman knows that Jesus is a Jew:**

John 4: ⁹ Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Our Lord is saying : You are not truly worshipping BECAUSE you don't know who you are worshipping.

Remember : The Samaritans rejected the Old Testament and they have their own version of the Pentateuch.

So Jesus is saying : The one and only true God is the One who is revealed in Scriptures (remember, during Jesus' time, the Old Testament is their Scripture)

In short : Jesus is saying, **THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW WHO THE TRUE GOD IS THROUGH THE BIBLE, THE SCRIPTURES.** So if you are not worshipping a God who is not in line with the Word of God, then you are not a true worshipper.

That's why some people say, it doesn't matter, they are all the same God anyway, whether it's Buddha or Allah, they are one and the same.

Illustration : I have this client one time in the Philippines, when I went to his office...it's got a Buddha, a Sto.Nino in basketball shirt, Kali and says, I believe in all of them because they are all the same god anyway. You will see that there is even food being offered in that altar.

***They were like the Athenians in Paul's time.**

Acts 17: ²² Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; ²³ for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: ²⁴ "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

Historical Context : The Athenians who were the philosophers (thinkers) at that time have an altar for each god BUT they were so afraid that they might be missing out honoring a god that they had that inscription "To The Unknown God".

Illustration : Just like you are planning a party and you are inviting people and in your planning, you are thinking, "Have we missed out somebody?"

Implication : Paul used this opportunity to tell the Greeks, that this one you are afraid that you are missing out is the ONE TRUE GOD. They are worshipping many gods but they don't know who the TRUE God is and that's why He proclaimed to them who God is, who Jesus is.

***The question is, "HOW WOULD WE KNOW WHO THE TRUE GOD IS."**

WE WOULDN'T KNOW unless God reveals Himself to us and says, I AM GOD

AND HE DID.... How?

Hebrews 1: God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;³ who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person

Verse : *spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,*

This one shows that God revealed Himself through the writings in the Old Testament.

Verse : *has in these last days spoken to us by His Son*

This one shows that God revealed Himself through Jesus Christ, and where would we know what Jesus taught...IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

***That's why Jesus said,**

John 14:9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

IMPORTANT : So in order for us to know if we are truly worshipping God or not, we must base it on what's written in the Bible. **If your worship contradicts the Bible, then you are not truly worshipping God.**

***NOW, you have to follow closely here.**

If GOD revealed Himself to what is written in the Bible, He also definitely revealed to us how we must relate to Him.

For example :

Exodus 20: 1 And God spoke all these words, saying:

² "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ "You shall have no other gods before Me.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God,

You shall have no other gods before Me.

Again, if you are worshipping a god that is contrary to how God showed Himself through the Bible, then you are not a true worshipper.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God,

For example :

You have a "picture" of Jesus Christ or a "statue" of Jesus Christ, how would you know that is how really Jesus Christ looks like? NO ONE KNOWS HOW JESUS REALLY LOOKS LIKE.

***Now someone would insist :** Well, it's just a representation of who Jesus is.

Illustration : Show photo of monkey. What if one time I come home, let's say from a long trip and then I find my wife kissing a photo of a monkey and saying to that photo, "I love you. I miss you." I ask her why are you kissing the photo of a monkey and she says, "This is a representation of you."

GOD cannot be represented by any image or statue and say it represents God BECAUSE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS INFINITELY MORE GLORIOUS THAN THAT...

Biblical proof? Have you seen how our Lord Jesus Christ showed Himself to John in the Book of Revelation. Read it in Revelation 1. He's glory will make you fall to the ground.

But seriously speaking, to have a photo or carving of Jesus and insist that's Jesus is a sign of two things : "stubbornness and foolishness". It's because no one knows how our Lord really looks like and it's insulting to Him. Besides, the usual photo in our mind of who Jesus is, does not even look like a Jew...(middle eastern)...He looks like a French guy.

That's why the Lord says :

*Matthew 15:9 They worship me in vain;
their teachings are merely human rules.*

***Do you want to see how a person reacts when you see with your eyes who God is.**

Isaiah 6: 1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

⁵ So I said:

*"Woe is me, for I am undone!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The Lord of hosts."*

THREE WEEKS AGO the winds were blowing so hard that it was shaking the windows of our house and there was lightning. I felt a little terrified and I thought that if creation is a finger print of the Creator, sometimes I feel awed by its beauty (like the sunset) But sometimes I will feel afraid of its power (like a sudden wind)...then what more if I am in front of God, the Creator Himself.

Now, we thank the Lord Jesus Christ, that because of Him, we can call God our Father and that's what we are going to talk about next week when it comes to worship – our....

But true worship goes beyond knowing who God is, it's about having an intimate relationship with Him.

Next week :

WHO ARE THE TRUE WORSHIPPERS?

- I. Their knowledge of God is inerrant
- II. Their relationship with God is intimate
- III. Their worship of God comes from the inside

S.G.D.

Go to your brother or sister first, then present your gift

Who can ascend the hill

Restore to me the joy

They worship me in vain

“Worship is a love affair! It is the most thrilling and heartwarming activity of the mind and heart that can be conceived: the personal encounter of the creature with its Creator, the soul with its Savior, the man with his Master. Worship is the renewing of a daily kinship and fellowship with Jesus Christ. It concerns not “religion” but life! When we worship we mend and straighten our spiritual fences; we lift our lives up the very Light of Light. Worship is a blessing, refreshing interchange between a man and his Lord.” - Sherwood Wirt

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“To worship”, said A.W. Tozer,

“is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering

love in the presence of that most ancient Mystery, that Majesty which philosophers call the First Cause, but which we call Our Father Which Art in Heaven.

Strong affections for God rooted in truth are the bone and marrow of biblical worship – John Piper “Desiring God”