

TRUE WORSHIP

John 4:21-24

Introduction: People are very diverse in thoughts, opinions, likes, dislikes, and definitions of things. There are various ideas about "worship" and some are very opposite of others. Jesus explained to a woman the true meaning of worship and in today's religious circles, it would be good to take another look at what Jesus considers "true" worship. There is a big difference between a "praise" service and a "worship" service however both are usually called "worship." "Worship" indicates an attitude of reverence, submission, repentance, recognition of one's unworthiness before almighty God, recognition of His greatness and appreciation for His love, grace and forgiveness. "Praise" is more of an outward expression of inward joy and thanksgiving by physical and vocal means.

I. FALSE WORSHIP IS EMPTY AND VAIN

1. Often Jesus had received complaints from the religious leaders that He and His disciples had not been practicing the traditional necessities before they could enter the temple for worship.
 - To approach God, one must prepare him/herself the ways God has ordained.
2. Not just anybody, at anytime, can approach God or serve Him.
 - A Christian out of God's will won't be heard by God until he/she repents and gets back into God's "grace."
 - A non-believer will not be heard by God except his/her prayer of repentance and belief in Jesus Christ.

II. TRUE, ACCEPTED, WORSHIP IS EXCLUSIVE

1. Jesus used the word "must" indicating that there is no choice, no alternative, it is fixed and cannot be changed.
 - Only those born again of the Holy Spirit, who are resting upon the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ, that are entitled and allowed to worship God, the Father.
 - No matter how great a person may be among others, if he/she is not born again, a child of God, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, that person is not capable of worshipping God any more than a mute person singing or a blind person seeing.
2. In order to worship God, one must know God and God cannot be know apart from His Son, Jesus.
 - ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me..."***
(John 14:6)
 - Any person away from Jesus Christ, he/she is a child of wrath, even an enemy to God.
 - Just how can a person "worship" God when unsaved? Or dead in trespasses and sin?

III. WHAT TRUE WORSHIP IS

1. To worship in the Spirit is in contrast to rites and ceremonies of the flesh.
 - To worship in truth opposes the false doctrines of God's Word that Satan spreads.
 - To worship in spirit and truth is to worship by giving God the recognition from an enlightened mind and regenerated heart and life.
2. To worship in spirit and truth is opposite of carnal worship which is nothing but external and showy/spectacular.
 - One cannot worship God with one's eyes, nose, hands or anything else that is of the flesh.
 - God **MUST** be worshipped in SPIRIT and TRUTH and that excludes everything that is of the flesh, the natural man/woman.
3. True worship is the adoration of a redeemed, born again people, who are occupied with God, Himself, and not of what other people are doing.
4. True worship is the new nature within the believer stirred into wanting to go to God in gratitude and love.
 - It is the new heart crying out "**Thanks be unto God for what He has done for me..**"
 - It is a sinner, who has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, exclaiming, "**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**"
 - It is those who have been assured of being accepted into the Family of God adoring God for what He has done.
5. **John 12:2-3** - An example of true worship is when Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with a precious ointment.
 - Mary had not thought of anybody being there except Jesus, she looked only up at Him.
 - Adoration and homage were her only thoughts, to pour out her heart's devotion to Jesus.
 - The three wise men brought rich gifts to the baby Jesus - true worship is giving.
6. The object of true worship is God! He, alone, is the reason to fall on one's face in worship.

IV. THERE CAN BE HINDRANCES TO WORSHIP

1. A person cannot worship if there are doubts, a lack of assurance of being saved.
2. A Christian cannot worship if his/her sins have not been forgiven. One must judge him/herself according to God's Word and all defilements must first be removed before approaching God.
3. When the Christian is living a worldly life, worship cannot happen, for God must be first and if God is not first in one's life, then that person will not be heard by God.

CONCLUSION:

1. Anybody can attend Church services.
2. Not every Church service is a worship service.
3. Not everybody worships during a Church service.
4. There is but ONE way to worship God and that is "*...in spirit and in truth...*"
5. There is but ONE kind of person who can worship God and it is **the person who has been born again and is in God's will.**
6. Judge yourself! Are you qualified to worship God? Have you been worshipping God?
- Do you need to make some changes?