

THE WORK OF WORSHIP

(John 4:21-24)

I. The purpose of worship.

- A. There are many that are confused on the purpose of worship.
 - 1. Many come to a worship service seeking pleasure for themselves or something for themselves.
 - 2. They may want to be entertained or emotionally stirred up, but whatever it is, it is for them.
- B. People who understand this to be the purpose of worship have it completely wrong.
- C. One writer, in his blog, wrote, "Worship is first and foremost for God and about God".
 - 1. God seeks true worshipers according to our text that was read.
 - 2. Those worshipers are worshipers of Him, not themselves.
- D. There are most definitely benefits for the worshiper, but those are secondary purposes of worship.
 - 1. Our Lord is worthy of worship (Revelation 4:11).
 - 2. We are to draw closer to God (James 4:8).
- E. The purpose of worship is to glorify God.
 - 1. Matthew 5:16.
 - 2. One way God is glorified is when He is worshiped in spirit and in truth.
 - 3. We are to be those that praise God (1 Peter 2:9).
 - 4. We are to give Him the praise from our lips (Hebrews 13:15).
- F. There are definitely benefits for us in worship to God.
 - 1. 2 Timothy 4:2.
 - 2. Ephesians 5:19.
- G. Whatever benefits there are for us though, are byproducts of the worship we are offering to God because of His worth.

II. The pattern of worship.

- A. Jesus told the woman at the well that God was seeking true worshipers who would worship in truth.
 - 1. This tells us that there is a true way to worship God.
 - 2. God's word is truth (John 17:17) so it must tell us what true worship is.
- B. There is such a thing as vain worship (Matthew 15:9).
 - 1. This is worship that is empty or useless.
 - 2. It is such because it is not done according to truth.
 - 3. People who teach how to worship God according to what man devises are worshiping in vain.
- C. There is such a thing as will worship (Colossians 2:23).
 - 1. In the Greek, will worship is one word.
 - 2. It is defined as "worship which one prescribes and devises for himself, contrary to the contents and nature of faith which ought to be directed to Christ".
 - 3. It is worshiping God how I want to worship, not how He wants to be worshiped.
- D. The pattern for true worship is found in the New Testament.
- E. We can read and learn how those first Christians worshiped God and know

that it is right.

- 1.They sang together.
 - a.Paul wrote to the Corinthians about their worship and mentioned singing (1 Corinthians 14:15).
 - b.Paul wrote to both the Ephesians and Colossians about singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
 - c.We have lately discussed how mechanical instruments of music have no place in the worship of God because He has instructed us to sing with no mention of playing.
- 2.They prayed together.
 - a.Acts 2:42.
 - b.We can pray anytime, but it is definitely right and appropriate to pray during a worship service.
- 3.They preached during their worship services.
 - a.Acts 20:7.
 - b.Again, Acts 2:42 mentions the apostles doctrine.
 - (1)This doctrine came from Jesus (John 17:8).
 - (2)They had to study this together in order to continue in it.
 - c.Great care must be given as to what is preached.
 - (1)Of course, not any message will do.
 - (2)It must be that which is line with the apostles doctrine.
- 4.They gave of their means during the worship service.
 - a.1 Corinthians 16:1-2.
 - b.This is a privilege we get to partake together in providing the means to spread the gospel.
- 5.They partook of the Lord's supper during the worship service.
 - a.Acts 20:7.
 - b.1 Corinthians 11:26.
 - c.What they partook of was unleavened bread and grape juice, the fruit of the vine.
 - (1)The Lord instituted the Lord's supper during the Passover.
 - (2)These were the elements that were present then and that is what we are authorized to use.

F.These five acts of worship, or avenues of approaching God in worship, are the only five about which we read in the truth of the New Testament.

G.These five acts are the only ways in which the 1st Century church worshiped God and they are the only ways authorized in the New Testament to worship God in truth.

III.The performance of worship.

A.Not only did Jesus tell the woman at the well that God wanted true worshipers who worshiped in truth, but also in spirit.

- 1.This has to do with the attitude of the worshiper.
- 2.To worship in spirit means to have the heart of the worshiper in the right place.

B.In order to worship God properly, not only must the true acts of worship be done, but the heart must be fully engaged to worship in spirit.

C.When we sing, we are to sing to one another but also to make the melody

come from our hearts (Ephesians 5:19).

D. When we give, there is a proper way to do so.

1. We must first give ourselves to God (2 Corinthians 8:5), and we know the heart or mind is part of ourselves.

2. Then we need to give with a willing mind or heart (2 Corinthians 8:12).

E. When we partake of the Lord's Supper, our hearts must be involved.

1. Every time we partake of it, we are to do so in remembrance of Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:24).

2. We are showing the Lord's death to others (1 Corinthians 11:26).

3. We are to use our minds to examine ourselves so as not to take it unworthily (1 Corinthians 11:28-29).

F. When we pray, we are using our minds to approach the throne of God, letting Him know our requests and petitions (Philippians 4:6).

G. When the teaching of God's word is occurring, our minds must be engaged in order to take the truths of His word in and make application of them.

1. Hebrews 10:16.

2. There is no way God can write His word on our minds if our minds are not engaged in the study of His word.

H. The opportunity and privilege of worshiping God is too great to just go through the motions while doing it.

I. To the best of our abilities, our minds must be fully engaged in what we are doing when it comes to worship.

J. I must say, I know there are distractions.

1. If you have young children, I know there are, and most importantly, God knows you have distractions.

2. We need to minimize those distractions as much as possible, and do our best not to be a distraction to those around us.

3. But God wants that child in this worship service.

4. There is much learning, even at a very young age, that takes place during the worship service.

5. Lessons that will leave an indelible mark on their young minds will be taught by them being here.

6. Whatever our distractions are, let's do the best we can to minimize them in order to give the best we have to our Great God.

IV. The permanence of worship.

A. God's word does not change.

B. It has been delivered one time for all time (Jude 3).

1. It's not changing.

2. It cannot be changed (Galatians 1:8-9).

C. The commands of worship are found in this unchanging book, thus the worship offered to God is permanent, never to be changed.

D. Any changes we may make are a show of will worship.

1. It is simply doing what we want to do.

2. There is no place for that in worship to God since He, not us, is the object of worship.

E. When men make changes to the simple New Testament plan and pattern of worship, they make themselves the object of worship and not God.

F. We have no right to do that.

G. This is not new.

1. The second sin we have recorded in the Bible is a sin that occurred when worship was changed.

2. Abel offered his offering by faith (Hebrews 11:4).

a. We know faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17).

b. From this we deduce that God had made known how He wanted to be worshiped.

3. Cain offered what he wanted in his worship to God and God did not accept it.

H. Ever since Cain, man has been tampering with the worship God wants.

I. We, under the New Testament, have a simple plan of worship.

1. Anyone, at any place, on the Lord's day can do it as long as the proper elements are there.

2. It is simple and beautiful and what God wants.

V. The potential of worship.

A. Great things can happen when God is worshiped.

B. God will be glorified in His church.

1. This is where God gains glory (Ephesians 3:20-21).

2. Whenever His people, the church, do His will, He is glorified and this takes place when proper worship is offered God.

C. God will be exalted above man.

1. God created us and He is above us.

2. He is worthy of all praise and glory that we can give Him.

3. We show that He is above us just as John wrote (John 3:31).

D. You and I will be strengthened.

1. We are edified, or built up, by one another (Ephesians 4:12).

2. 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

E. Our hearts can be touched by the gospel.

1. Reproving and rebuking take place in worship (2 Timothy 4:2).

2. We admonish and teach through singing (Colossians 3:16).

F. You and I will be drawn closer to God and one another when we worship God properly.

G. No other event can do these things that not only bring us closer to God but closer to one another as well.