

ARE YOU A TRUE WORSHIPPER?

St. John 4:23-24

This lesson deals specifically with the importance of true worship. The mere fact that the word true is used, implies that there is also a false worship. In understanding true worship, one can draw nearer to God and thus become one of the persons that God seeks to worship him.

Every human being was created with the innate drive and desire to worship. Even in the most primitive environments where people don't worship (Jehovah) God, they worship the sun, the moon, and even statues because of that innate need to worship something. There are also those that worship people, houses, jobs, spouses, children and even causes. Anyone or anything that we put in front of God is an idol and therefore becomes idolatry.

All throughout the scriptures we find over and repeatedly that various battles were won simply by the people coming together and praising God. Praise not only glorifies God, but it sets ambush against the enemy which means that it actually serves as a weapon of spiritual warfare.

The words thanks, thankful or thanksgiving is used 168 times in the Bible. Praise is used 286 times and worship is used approximately 195 times. It is no coincidence also that the book of Psalms, which is the longest book in the Bible, is literally a book of songs unto the Lord. We can therefore establish the fact that praise and worship are critical elements not only to our personal relationship with Christ, but also to the growth and climate of our local churches.

Worship, particularly in the context of our subject is defined as reverent devotion and allegiance pledged to God and the means by which this worship is expressed. It actually is derived from an old English word (worthship) which deals with the one receiving the devotion or special honor.

The believer's first and greatest calling is to be a worshipper of God and until our lifestyles reflect that, we are not honoring God as he deserves to be honored.

Sometimes in explaining what something IS, it helps to explain what it is NOT.

In our worship services for example: We look at a worship song as being a song that has a slow tempo and a praise song as a song that has a fast tempo. The tempo of a song is not what determines whether a song is a worship or praise song. It has everything to do with the lyrics and not the tempo.

Praise is thanking God for what he has done. Worshipping God is thanking him for who he is.

For example: We can sing the popular song: Thank you Lord. The tempo is quite slow. However, it is actually a song of praise because it thanks God for what he has done.

The song: Our God is an awesome God is a very upbeat song; however it would be considered a song of worship because it specifically deals with who God is.

The reason that is significant is because many people cannot get stirred until after several upbeat songs are sung followed then by a song that is slow. Let us remember that praise is the vehicle that leads to worship. Therefore we should praise him and worship him because he is worthy of praise and worship.

Let us examine more closely the reasons that we are to worship God.

(1). WE WERE CREATED TO WORSHIP GOD

Colossians 1:16: “ For by him were all things created , that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

Revelation 4: 10-11: “The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

(2) GOD IS WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE AND WORSHIP

God is worthy of all the praise because he did for us what no other god could do. What can he do? He can do anything. He is incomparable, infallible and immutable. Everything that we have, he gave us, wherever we are, he brought us and what we are, he made us. He is worthy of all the praise.

(3). GOD EXPECTS THE PRAISE

Every time God looks down and sees us sitting in his house looking like a spectator, he is displeased because he has been so good to us. His grace and his mercy have been extended unto all mankind. He is the God of a second chance. He is a God who has not rewarded us according to our iniquities, but according to the multitude of his loving kindness and tender mercies. The word of God confirms clearly that he expects the praise.

In St. Luke 17, Jesus healed 10 lepers. Only one came back to say thank you. To that, Jesus asked: ***“Were not there 10 cleansed, but where are the nine?”***

In closing, God must be the object of our worship. Where there is no music, no praise team, or even the absence of a choir, the only ingredient that is needed for worship is the individual and God. Therefore we must each take personal responsibility for our worship and remember that we all were created to worship him.

THE FOLLOWING ARE VARIOUS TYPES OF PRAISE (FYI)

YADAH: To extend the hand or to worship with extended hands. Yadah implies dependence on God in actions. In other words: We choose to praise. We have complete surrender. (II Chronicles 20: 19-21, Psalm 63:4).

TOWDAH: This word comes from the same principle root word as Yadah, meaning to throw out yours hands to God. It means an extension of the hands in adoration. This praise can be done for things not yet received. (Psalm 50:23, 134:2, 141:2)

HALAL: Halal means to boast, to brag about, to magnify, and to be clamorously foolish. An example would be when you first fell in love or when you had your first baby. You eagerly told everybody about this wonderful person. God gave us emotions. Let us use those emotions for him. Let us be exuberant about witnessing about Christ. David said, ***“I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth.*** (Psalm 150).

SHABACH: Shabach means to address in a loud tone, to command, triumph, to glory, and to shout. (Psalm 63: 1-4, 117:1, Psalm 47:1, 35:27).

BARAK: This means to kneel down, to bless God as an act of adoration. (Psalm 72:12-15)

ZAMAR: This means to touch the strings and refers to worshipping with musical instruments. Psalm 150 gives us a perfect picture of Zamar praising. Zamar is translated to the Greek word Psallo, which is closely related to our word Psalms. (Psalms 57: 7-9, 92:1, Psalms 150, I Chronicles 15:16).

GUHL: To spin around under the influence of a violent, abundant emotion and joy, exceeding gladness. (Zephaniah 3:17, Psalm 32:11)

TEHILLA: Tehilla means to sing. It is singing our halal. This is the kind of praise where God dwells. We find this praise in I Chronicles 16:35; Isaiah 42:10 and II Chronicles 20:22.