

## *The Worship of God*

There is a story from the ministry of Jesus recorded in the gospel of John. There have been many messages and Sunday School lessons taken from it but I want to look at it a little differently for the purpose of this message.

Jesus was in Judea and was making disciples and baptizing them. John the Baptist, who had not yet been arrested and put in prison was also making disciples and baptizing them not far away. The Pharisees heard that Jesus was making more disciples than John and Jesus heard about that. (Amazing that even that long ago religious people were 'keeping score'.)

The Lord decided to withdraw from Judea and go to Galilee but He determined not to go the way that Jews normally went, cross to the east side of Jordan in Judea, travel past Samaria and then cross back to the west side of the river once they reached Galilee.

If you have heard lessons from this you know that the people who lived in Samaria were mongrelized Jews who had a mongrelized religion based to some degree on the Jewish system of worship. They had their own temple in the city of Samaria and a priest system to govern it. This is a part of the discussion that developed between Jesus and a woman He met there.

The record of John was that Jesus stopped at a well and the disciples went on into town to procure food. A woman came to the well and a religious conversation ensued during which Jesus said this.

John 4:21-24

- 21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.
- 22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
- 23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.
- 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. KJV

I want to speak to you today concerning the Worship of God.

The True Worship of God is rooted in an awareness of the Great Disparity that exists between God and man, especially unregenerate man.

That awareness, when one comes to possess it, is based on information, partly received through the mind in more or less natural ways and partly received through spiritual ways, Divine Revelation if you will. What do I mean?

In the course of life we learn many things naturally.

- Observation
- investigations - reading - research
- direct teaching
- logical processing, meditation on information that has come to us

And through those processes a person can become profoundly religious, moderately religious, barely religious or not religious at all.

- Those who become religious may learn or invent for themselves many elaborate rituals and be diligent and faithful to them.
- They may, and many will, develop an intense commitment to a whole complex system of moral code, “do this, don’t do that.”
- And the result may be a life and behavior that is very moral and admired by others, at least outwardly.

But there are two things that such a system, regardless of what it might produce in one’s life, can never create: a holy soul/spirit and True Worship of the Living God.

Oh, a person might be rationally persuaded that the Word of God is true and that he should obey the command of God to repent and believe. He might even be told of a method whereby he can conform to that commandment out of his own devices and be convinced to follow that method sincerely. He may have a ‘Eureka’ moment when it all ‘clicks’ and makes sense to him. There may be the experience of a profound change in his thinking and in his life. All of that can happen without the person even ever coming close to True Worship.

Real Worship can only arise out of a soul to which God has revealed Himself through His Word and the efforts of some servant of God to bring that Word to him.

Rom 10:13-17

- 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
- 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?
- 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!
- 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?
- 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. KJV

This is God’s chosen means to bring humans into confrontation with Truth. And, again, the Truth is partially learned by observation and natural learning but also partially through Revelation from God.

Matt 11:27

- 27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. KJV

Truth is fundamental to True Worship and knowledge of Truth is acquired through a method which includes Revelation. According to Jesus Himself no one can worship God until and unless

the Son of God reveals the Father to him/her.

If the Son reveals the Father to someone that revelation is True and Complete enough that He can be worshiped “in Truth” as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman.

The Disparity between man and God is one of the important elements of that Revelation. By Disparity I mean the Infinite Difference between the two.

One piece of that is that God exists on a plane to which you and I have no natural access.

Science Fiction imagines other such categories of reality. They call them ‘dimensions’ and dream that beings can live in the same area of space without having contact with each other, seeing each other, or communicating with each other except in special cases.

The scriptures long ago revealed that this is actually true. There is an entire Universe of Reality that sits just beyond the perception of most people and it is more “real” than what most of us call “reality.”

There is a story about the prophet Elisha who informed the king of Israel concerning the plans of the king of Syria in his attacks against Israel so that the king’s forces were always prepared for the invasions. The king of Syria became convinced that there was a spy in his innermost circle but was told of the abilities of the prophet. So, he sent an army to capture this prophet and end his ability to frustrate Syria’s army.

2 Kings 6:11-17

- 11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?
- 12 And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.
- 13 And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan.
- 14 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.
- 15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?
- 16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.
- 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. KJV

Now, the horses and chariots of fire had been there the whole time but no one could see them except for the prophet and then the servant when God opened his eyes. There was a reality that he could not perceive until God helped him.

Suddenly he was alert and awake to a different set of circumstance than he had seen before. To

him the reality was that a dangerous enemy was very close and danger was eminent. Then, he could see that a larger and more powerful force was guarding the prophet and him. His thinking, his attitudes and even his faith (his trust in God) was suddenly and profoundly enhanced.

We are led to believe that this 'door of perception' is only opened from God's side and almost exclusively only to those who worship Him truly. Even they only rarely have seen that other world but they very frequently perceive it in their spirit.

This awareness in faith of that other world is a part of True Worship. The worshiper realizes that there is Someone very Great and very Wonderful who has done marvelous things for him and he responds in profound gratitude, called worship.

Consider this. All that we think of as real is going to end very violently one day.

2 Peter 3:10-13

- 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
- 11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,
- 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?
- 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. KJV

Rev 20:11

- 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. KJV

But the fact that this universe is going to dissolve does not mean that there is no further existence, for we are shown another universe and another world which will be the eternal home of all of the true worshipers of God.

That other universe has at least one division in it forming at least two other realities beside our own and even though they are both primarily spiritual they are very different. One is unspeakably evil with a goal to, if possible, bring every human being under its control and doom the whole race to a life of deception and misery now as well as carry them into an eternity of unspeakable darkness and unending, unimaginable suffering.

That Other Reality that exists just beyond our senses is one of the most profound wonder. It is beyond our greatest abilities to imagine: splendor, perfection, purity, holiness, power and Undescribable Glory. The main inhabitant of that place if, of course, God the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

He has, of course, a large body of beings called 'angels' who serve Him and worship Him. Some are distinguished as 'cherubim,' (undefined) 'seraphim,' (fiery beings) and 'arch-angels' as well as what is apparently the majority who are simply called 'angels,' messengers. As a

group the form a body of beings God has used in His revelation of Himself and His Will to man.

Every being in all three of these different realms of existence, with the exception of God Himself, has this in common, they were created by God, they are His creatures. And, they all have a common purpose; that He, God, be glorified through them eternally. Do not be seduced to think that the devil and his fallen angels or fallen and unrepentant mankind are issues of failure on the part of God. He will be Glorified in them.

But the most profound way that God will be glorified is that He has determined to bring a vast multitude of humans into a special relationship with Himself, a relationship that includes and focuses on direct spiritual connection between Him and them, which ultimately leads to their eternal preservation in a place unimaginably beautiful and in which they enjoy unending and uninterrupted communion and fellowship (for lack of better, more fully descriptive terms) with Him.

**But the Great Question of All Time and Space is just this, “how does one come to have a relationship with this Being called ‘God’ Who lives in a realm to which we have no access?”**

**And, the short answer is that he becomes of Worshiper of this Deity, this Trinity of Person existing as a Single Entity which we call ‘God.’**

But that still does not give us understanding, does it?

There are a number of elements to that thing of ‘Worship’ becoming a reality in your life and there are at least a thousand mistakes which can take you in a wrong direction. In my opinion the modern ‘Christian’ world has sold out to falsehood, profound spiritual lies, concerning how God is to be worshiped.

The Truth is, and many resent me saying so, that there is literally nothing you can do that will cause God to open the door to that other world for you. That door can only be opened from His side and He is the Sovereign Lord of everything that exists, including especially the door of entrance into Communion with Him.

**There is, however, a list of things which MUST become real and true about you or you will never be a Worship of God and never know Communion with the Living God.**

The most fundamental things which must become true of you is a confident belief that everything He has said about anything is true, particularly what He has said about Himself and what He has said about you.

Some look at the fact that God must act first and think, “well, then, there is no need to try, no reason to expend effort.” But that is not true because God has revealed this.

Heb 11:6

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. KJV

He rewards the diligent seeker. There is reason to hope, there is reason to invest effort in the process of seeking Him. Notice the words “diligently seek.” This is a very good translation of the original word.

Even though all of the religious world around you says that this is easy and can be done quite casually they are wrong. It is “diligent seeking” that God rewards.

This kind of pursuit of a relationship with God is a consistent and basic characteristic of all those who worship Him. They seek Him before they know Him and all their lifetimes after they come to know Him.

If you know someone who is not seeking God, understand this, they are not a believer, they do not know Him and they do not worship Him “in spirit and in truth.”

Know this also. If you are not seeking God you are not a believer. If you are religious you are only a pretender and on some level you know this is true.

**If you would be a worshiper of God, the Word of God, the Bible, must become an important book to you.**

It is the source of all of the information we have about Him, so if you are desiring to know Him you are going to need to become familiar with this wonderful help that God has given us. Everyone knows that the one who worships God must believe in Him but look at this.

Rom 10:17

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. KJV

It is an inescapable reality. The one who truly seeks God seeks Him in the scriptures. Faith does not come through someone persuading you but through you knowing and embracing God’s revelation of Himself in His Word.

This is a fundamental part of the process by which Faith comes to you. And for those who diligently seek Him, God has a way of granting them Faith.

Eph 2:8

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: KJV

It is the Faith that is the gift of God.

If you are not willing to diligently seek Him you must understand, there is no shortcut to Heaven. God has no “plan B.” There is no Affirmative Action program for the spiritual lazy and disinterested unbeliever. That other alternate reality is your sure destiny unless you arouse yourself from spiritual sleep by the help of God.

You must become a believer in God.

But this means far more than simply believing that God exists and that Jesus Christ is His Son.

James 2:19

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. KJV

The demons of Hell, (can you imagine?) believe. Every soul in Hell believes. There is something more to this believing that saves than most imagine. The evidence I see suggests that most who say they believe actually do not, not in the way that Jesus was talking about in John 3:16.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. KJV

The Faith of scripture is a much more profound thing than many think. 'Faith' and 'Believe' are simply two forms of the same word in scripture.

**You must believe in the God described in scripture.**

You cannot and must not attempt to embrace only the attributes of Him that you like (love, mercy, kindness, etc.) and then reject the ones that you do not (Wrath, Judgment, Fury, Anger etc.)

That makes you an idolater and God has sworn judgment on Idolatry, the worship of a false and self invented god.

You must accept the Trinity. Christianity has from its earliest days held that those who deny the Deity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are unconverted and condemned even if they call themselves 'Christian.'

You must believe that the Work of Jesus Christ in His Death, Burial and Resurrection is your one and only hope of the forgiveness of sin, holiness and eternal life.

**Acting on that belief system you must Repent of your sins - honestly confess them before God, ask His forgiveness and mercy and forsake them with integrity before God- trusting that the Work of Jesus Christ is completely sufficient to cleanse away your sins in His sight and have His Righteousness transferred to you.**

2 Cor 5:21

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. KJV

The 'us' there is the Worshipers of God.

Somewhere along the line in that process of seeking God, He completes the Work. He births the

seeker to Spiritual Life, to Communion with Him, and grants them all the blessings and privileges of Sonship to the Almighty God.

When a person realizes that this has actually happened, that he has this marvelous gift of Spiritual Life, that he has been rescued from eternal torment and separation from all that is good and godly and that this life he has been given will endure to all eternity in the Loving Presence of God, his heart will be stirred to thank Him and Praise Him for His Marvelous Grace.

That, my friend, is the Worship of God. This person has become a Worshiper “in spirit and in truth.”

But that does not mean that the one who has become a Worshiper of God not has the freedom to invent whatever form he wishes for the Worship of this Deity.

He Himself has defined Worship and has given men the forms and patterns by which they are to do so.

He established a form for prayer and said, “when you pray, pray like this.”

He has established a form for corporate worship.

God’s people are to gather in a harmonious way, obedient to God.

Acts 2:1

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

He gave them the Lord’s Table around which they are to gather to offer up their thanks to Him and remember what it is that He did to bring them to a place to be able to Worship.

1 Cor 11:23-26

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

When they gather, they are to testify of the Saving Grace of Our Lord.

1 Cor 14:24-26

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a



doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. KJV

And, they are to share whatever gifts God has given them, to sing and to remember that they are always and ever under His authority.

Eph 5:18-21

- 18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
- 19 Speaking to yourselves (one another) in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;
- 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;
- 21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. KJV

Col 3:16-17

- 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
- 17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. KJV

There are reasons for these things. God has a plan and very specific targets for the worship of His people: His Glory (most important of all), the edification (building up spiritually) of His people through the church and the publishing of the gospel.

If He is not First and Foremost the form is misshapen.

As it also is if His people are not growing spiritually through nurture and admonition of His Word.

Or if the gospel is not being proclaimed.

When all of this comes together in the right way there is an anticipated powerful Presence of His Person.

“...thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.”

Are you a Worshiper of God?

John 4:21-24

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- 22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
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