

God's Manifest Presence True Worship

Introduction:

1. Christianity is not only behavior modification – our lives need to be integrated
2. Worship is a lifestyle of acknowledging that He is indeed Lord of my life –
3. Flying somewhere and seeing two people praying and worshiping
4. Central questions - Worship – what is worship? What should it be? What should happen as a result of worship?
5. Those two men manifest convictions about worship that exceeds most Christians
6. "True" worship -- we are often taught -- is more about the mind thinking right about God (using theologically correct language and liturgy), rather than the heart's hunger for Him.
7. The words of our Savior resound the undeniable call to worship that transcends the intellect:
"God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).
8. **"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart-these, O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51:17).**
11. In reality for most, worship remains that mysterious weekly activity so many Christians

Four Worship Narratives:

1. The first is a story of family turmoil, deception, a forfeited, then stolen inheritance.
2. ***Genesis 28:13-15 "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. 14 Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."***
3. ***"God was in this place and I did not know it"***
4. The deceiver, supplanter, and runner became a worshiper - transformed by an encounter with the living God.
5. The person in our 2nd story, in *Exodus 3*, is nearing 80 years of age now.
6. God says, ***"This is a holy place. I am the God of your past, present, and future."***
7. This murderer, this runner becomes a deliverer - transformed by an encounter with God
8. Our next story involves a desperate prophet - *Isaiah 6*
9. There he sees the Lord, high and lifted up, unshaken by *Isaiah's* concerns.
10. It is there he sees himself, and finds an unexpected destiny. – ***"Here am I Send me"***
11. Our final story, found in *John 4*, features a woman with a past
12. A Samaritan - hated, avoided by Jews. She is a 5-time
13. She meets Jesus and her immediate response is to ***"go and tell someone"***
14. Jacob, Moses, *Isaiah*, and the Samaritan woman each encountered a living God and, as a result, their destinies were altered forever.

Worship Defined:

1. What exactly is worship?
2. ***"Worship is responding to all that God is with all that we are."***
3. In other words it is not a static, non-participatory event
4. It is recognizing that God is pre-eminent

- Simply put, worship is a response to what we discover about the God of the Bible - an eye-opening, life-transforming revelation of God.

All God Does:

- Worship is an appropriate response to all that we discover about God.
- What are the appropriate responses when God works in our midst?
- John 4:23 "But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him."***
- We are the sought out ones
- I believe that at the divine intersection where the Sought (us) discover the unmatched worth of the Seeker (God), "combustion" or worship occurs.
- "The Lord is good, and his mercy is everlasting" "Bless the Lord, O My Soul," or "I was glad when they said unto me, 'let us go into the House of the Lord,' or "make his praise glorious!"***

Psalms as a Model:

- If worship is "***responding to all that God is with all that we are*** –then:
- All that God is points to - Ps 100 – "He is God, he made us, we belong to Him, he is good all the time, his love endures forever and his faithfulness outlives us"***
- The why of worship - ***Ps 103 - "forgives all our sins, heals all our diseases, redeems us, crowns us, satisfies us, and delivers us." "He alone shows compassion; he alone is slow to anger and abounding in love; and he alone chooses not to give us what our sins deserve."***
- Ingratitude is costly. – ***Ps 95 "do not harden your hearts***

Our Response:

- There are a number of biblical response when we discover who God is
- Paul believed that joy, prayer, and gratitude were essential components of God's will for believers in his churches

Transformation:

- Transformation is the tangible result of Spirit empowered worship
- "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces beholding as in a mirror the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness from glory to glory, by the Spirit of God"***
- You see worship that does not go beyond entertainment and stimulation will, over time, display a tendency to corrupt itself.
- Contemporary worship must move beyond stimulation to transformation and an understand that because of our relationship with God the Holy Spirit indwells us

It is the Point:

- Biblical worship is then not primarily for our personal enjoyment or entertainment.
- Worship is an antenna of gratitude.

Conclusion:

- As we see who He really is, the Christian heart bows in adoration and expectation, and is moved by the Spirit toward personal transformation and incarnation.
- Worship prepares us to hear God's voice
- Everything is on a collision course with this final reality –
- "Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord"***
- Biblical worship touches heaven and, as a result, changes earth through those believers who treasure the incredible opportunity of "***responding to all that God is with all that they are.***"