

Worship

by Wayne Goff

After studying the five acts of worship recently, we should be much impressed with the true "acts" of worship. However, it still takes effort to break out of old habits of rote. How are you doing?

The True Object Of Worship

As Jesus faced Satan in the temptations recorded in Matthew 4, Satan actually suggested that Jesus "*fall down and worship me*" (v. 9). He offered a great sum for such worship -- "*all the kingdoms of the world and their glory*" (v. 8). Men have fallen down to worship the Devil, *unwittingly*, for far less. But Jesus answered "*For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve'*" (v. 10).

The True Place Of Worship

The world is filled with many places of worship -- church buildings, mosques, temples, etc., and Jesus discussed with the Samaritan woman (John 4) the **true place** of worship. "*Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship*" (v. 20). At the time they had this discussion, Jerusalem WAS the place where men should worship God because His Name was written there (Jn. 4:22; 2 Chron. 6:17ff). However, this was about to *change*.

"*Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ... But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth'*" (Jn. 4:21, 23-24). Jesus' message to the Samaritan woman and to the whole world (Matt. 28:18-20) is that **the new place** to worship God is in **the heart of each worshiper** because God is Spirit and He desires all to worship Him with a true heart according to His truth. Jesus built the church and paid for it with His blood (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28), but it is a **spiritual building** made up of worshiping souls "*in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit*" (Eph. 2:21-22). There is a *proper location* for worship, the local church, found when true worshipers "*come together as a church*" (see 1 Cor. 11:18), but the physical building is insignificant to God today.

True Worship

There is also **true worship** offered by God's true disciples and worshipers (see again Jn. 4:23). So it naturally follows that there exists **vain, empty worship**, which men should not offer to God. Again hear Jesus: "*Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men'*" (Matt. 15:7-9). Men have long thought that any sincere offering to God is acceptable, but Jesus rejects the notion! Men must worship God from the heart according to God's dictates and requirements. **The whole concept of "worship" is giving to God that which honors and glorifies Him!** So should we not think that giving God what He desires would be true worship?

With that in mind, consider the words of Ephesians 3:21: "*To Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*" Worshiping God, in God's way, from the heart, is true worship. This gives God the glory.

As Jesus taught His disciples to pray: "*...For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen*" (Matt. 6:13). If you wish to consider at length **how** to give God honor and glory, then consider these Scriptures: Luke 2:14; 19:38; Jn. 12:28; Rom. 11:36; 16:27; Eph. 1:6; 2:7; Phil. 1:11; 2:11; 4:20; Rev. 4:9-11; 5:9-14.

True worshipers offer to God "*spiritual sacrifices*" acceptable through Jesus Christ our Lord, 1 Peter 2:5. What a privilege it is to worship God in truth.

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