

WORSHIP: THE PRIORITY IN LIFE

(John 4:23-24)

...It is very common today for people to attend a worship service "to get something out of it." Ours is a day of never ending entertainment and often this mindset spills over into our worship of God. Worship is never to be man-centered. What we should be asking, "what did God think of it and of those who worshipped?"

...Did you know that as a Christian your worship is the highest activity that you can engage in? We must resist the crowd that seems to "work at their play, and play at their worship." It is the ultimate priority in life.

...Jesus helps us to understand the nature and necessity of worship, telling us that God is actually seeking men and women who will rightly worship Him. Wow! Nowhere else do we find God seeking anything else from us.

THREE QUESTIONS HELPING US TO PROPERLY ENGAGE IN THE ULTIMATE PRIORITY OF LIFE...THE WORSHIP OF OUR GOD.

I. What Is Worship?

- A. First, it is not merely showing up at some building Sunday morning for a worship service.
- B. It is not a "spectator sport." It involves your participation.
- C. If we lived 500 years ago we would call it "worth-ship." Using this word would mean that we are assigning to God His true worth. This is the same as praising Him or glorifying His name.
 - 1. Worship is the celebration of God, Who alone is worthy of our adoration.
 - 2. It is praising God for His love, wisdom, beauty, truth, holiness, compassion, mercy, grace, power, etc.
- D. Since this is the highest activity you can possibly engage in, you must prepare for it.
 - ...on Saturday prepare your heart through prayer, and your body by giving it proper rest.
 - ...This will keep you from "faking" worship due to unconfessed sin or sleepiness.

II. How Do We Worship? Since It Is Participatory, How Do We Participate In It?

...Jesus told that we are to worship God in "spirit and in truth."

- A. Worship the Lord in spirit.
 - 1. This does not refer to the Holy Spirit. There is no article, "the."
 - 2. This means our human spirit. We are composed of body, soul, and spirit.
 - ...many take their body to a place called worship...but worship may not happen.
 - ...it is not centered in our emotions (soul). Tears do not mean worship occurred.
 - ...Worship occurs in your "renewed spirit" as you communion with God through singing, praying, praising, giving, and actively listening to the sermon.
 - ...Our attention is focused upon God.
 - 3. So worship flows from the inside out. It is of necessity first internal.
- B. Worship the Lord in truth. What does this mean?
 - 1. It means we must be honest. No faking or pretending. (Matthew 15:8-9)
 - 2. It is a worship that is informed by the Word of God. God's Word is truth, and He has told us how we are to approach Him in worship.
 - ...John Calvin put the Bible in the center of the church, for only it revealed the way of salvation. The altar was gone. The pulpit was centered and a Bible on it...
 - 3. True worship of God is only through Jesus Christ who is "the truth." (John 14:6)
 - ...Only through His shed blood on the cross. He is the only way...

III. When Do We Worship? Is This Confined To A Building On Sunday Morning?

- A. Corporate. We worship when we gather together as a church family. (Hebrews 10:25)
 - 1. Martin Luther: "at home in my own house there is no warmth or vigor in me, but in the church when the multitude is gathered together, a fire is kindled in my heart..."
 - 2. The Psalms tells us what worship looks like: singing (loudly), shouting, praising, clapping, praying, playing instruments, giving thanks, giving, & listening to His Word.
- B. Individually all week long. We are to be living sacrifices giving God our praise and adoration throughout the week. For believers, all of life is to be an act of worship. The Lord God is to be celebrated, loved and adored all the moments of our lives.
 - ...Perhaps the reason why worship fails in the pew, is that it failed to occur in our daily routine.

LESSONS FOR OUR LIVES: