

**Subject: *Worshipping God***

**Scripture: *Psalm 95:1-6***

A little boy was sitting with his mother in church and the worship service went on for a long time when he whispered, “Mom, will the preacher stop if we pay him now?” Many people are like that boy thinking, “When will worship ever stop.” But God may be thinking, “When will real worship ever begin?” A. W. Tozer said that worship is “the missing jewel of the church.” We come to church asking “What do I want in the worship service today?” when the right question to ask is “What does God want in worship today?”

Worship is all about focusing our heart and mind on God. It’s all about God. We may admire people, but we worship God. But do we really have our focus on God? After the morning service a woman asked her husband, “Did you see who so and so was sitting with?” “No.” “Did you see that tacky dress that so and so was wearing?” “No.” “Did you notice that so and so didn’t speak to me?” “No.” Finally in frustration she said, “I don’t see why you even go to church. You never get anything out of it.” I want us to think about the importance of worship and making sure we are on the right track to give God the worship He deserves.

**THE PRIVILEGE OF WORSHIP**

We don’t have to worship. We get to worship. ***Psalms 122:1** I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. **Psalms 29:2** Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. **Psalms 34:3** O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.* We worship God because of who He is and what He does. Worship comes from worth-ship. He is worthy of our worship. Worship is the humble and grateful expression of God’s redeemed people for who He is and what He does. Look again in Psalm 95:1-6. The call to worship is based on who God is (vs. 3) and what He does especially in creation and salvation.

**THE PRIORITY OF WORSHIP**

Of all the things we do, nothing is more important than worship. It must be a priority for two reasons:

Worship is a priority for God.

God’s Word confirms the priority of worship. In Hebrews 11, we find a list of Old Testament heroes of faith. The first is Abel whose life is remembered for his worship. He approached God with the right sacrifice and God honored both him and his offering. The second person in Hebrews 11 is Enoch whose life is remembered for his walk. Enoch walked with God and one day He walked from earth into heaven. God took him. The third person is Noah whose life is remembered for his work. He worked for 120 years building the ark. The order in Hebrews 11 goes beyond the chronological. It is an order of priorities. First there is worship, then walk, and then work.

The priority of worship is seen in the places designated by God for worship, the tabernacle and the temple. The tabernacle was positioned in the middle of the camp. God’s tent was the centerpiece and the focal point. The same was true of the temple. It was built in the capital city on a prominent hill for all to see. It was the focal point of the nation because it was the place of worship.

The priority of worship is revealed in the age requirements for different jobs. In the law given by Moses, according to Numbers 1:3, a Jewish young man could serve as a soldier at the age of 20. Numbers 8:24 says that a Levite could begin to work in the tabernacle when he was 25.

But Numbers 4:3 says that a priest who led the people in worship had to be 30. The reason is obvious: leading in worship demanded the highest level of maturity. It was most important.

Worship is also a priority for us.

We need to focus our hearts and minds on God. **Psalms 46:10** *Be still, and know that I am God.* No matter what is taking place in our lives, good or bad, worship keeps everything in focus. Worship is a solid foundation, an anchor on the rough seas of life. **Isaiah 26:3** *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.* In true worship we obey the great commandment: **Matthew 22:37** *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.* We engage our heart, soul, and mind to love God as He deserves to be loved.

## **THE PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP**

For this aspect of worship we turn to a story in John 4:19-24. The Samaritan woman brought up the subject of worship to avoid another subject, her sin and spiritual condition. She wanted to discuss the place of worship, but she didn't understand the person we worship or the preparation for worship. Worship is a good thing, but it is not a substitute for a right relationship with God. Christ taught her two important things that day:

God desires true worship. He doesn't need it, but He wants it. He seeks true worshipers.

God describes true worship. We must worship in spirit and in truth. Christ is not talking about something that is optional, but what is essential and absolutely necessary in worship. If we are to worship in spirit and in truth, we must be prepared. Anything valuable and worthwhile calls for preparation. To worship in spirit means to worship from the heart. Our heart has to be in it. We don't automatically worship just because we are in a church service. We must worship in truth, according to the truth of God's Word. We must worship God as He reveals Himself in the Word. **John 17:17** *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

Since God is eternal, unchanging, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-present, holy, righteous, true and faithful, sovereign and supreme, merciful and gracious, patient, jealous, and One who is to be feared, we know how to worship Him. When true worship takes place and we say the last Amen, we don't leave thinking that was a great service or that was a great sermon. We leave thinking He is a great God.

The author of *Behold Your God*, John Snyder tells of his time when he attended Heath Evangelical Church in Cardiff, Wales, and while there he said that he "gained a real sense of what a church might be when God is the great and only attraction." God should be the great and only attraction in every church.

Here are some things to help us be prepared to worship:

- Be on time and in place
- Be in prayer for yourself, others, and worship leaders
- Bring your Bible and use it

- Be in a reverent frame of mind  
***Psalms 89:7** God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. Let your focus be on God and nothing else.*
- Be ready to pray, sing, give, listen, and learn
- Be ready to believe, confess, repent, and submit  
***Ecclesiastes 5:1-2**<sup>1</sup> Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.  
<sup>2</sup> Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.*

William Temple gave what many consider the best description of worship when he wrote: “Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of mind with His truth; the purifying of imagination by His beauty; the opening of heart to His love; the surrender of will to His purpose, and all of this gathered up in adoration.”

The way we worship is an indicator of the condition of our heart. If we don’t enjoy worship now, what makes us think we will enjoy worship in Heaven for ever? If we enjoy worship now it indicates that our heart has truly been changed.