

John 4:20-26
December 21, 1986
Rome Georgia
September 15, 2013

"WHAT WILL WE GIVE FOR CHRISTMAS"

SUBJECT: Worship

THEME-PROPOSITION: Are you a TRUE WORSHIPER of God? Are you Ministering for God or Worshiping Him. Are you here today to RECEIVE a blessing, have your emotions lifted, be ministered to, OR are you here today to WORSHIP GOD?

One of the most frequently asked questions this time of year is "What Does _____ want from me this this Christmas. " You can fill in the blank with almost any name:

Sisters, brothers, mothers and dads;
Kinfolks, in-laws, outlaws and grands;
Friends, neighbors, employers, and preachers;
Lawyers, doctors, dentists and leaches.

Everybody is on our list and we aim to please each of them with the perfect gift. It is not easy in our materialistic society to come up with unique gift ideas for each one on our list. Everyone seems already to have everything and all too often this leads us to give almost anything just so we can fulfill our social obligation to give. When it comes down to it, we are not really giving because we want to give, but because it is the THING TO DO.

But although there are only three shopping days left until Christmas, let me add one more name to your shopping list. This one will not be hard to please.

He needs nothing, for in fact, He above all others is One who truly "Has everything." All you have to do is to ask yourself our original question of "what does _____ want from me this Christmas?" and instead of a person from the list we just mentioned, ask yourself the question in this way:

"WHAT DOES GOD WANT FROM ME THIS CHRISTMAS."

What one thing - more than any other - does He desire for me to give Him? It is the one thing that GOD never has enough of. It is the one gift that all those travelers of old brought to the Christ Child 2,000 years ago.

Luke 2:8-20 ***20*** "**glorifying and praising God**"
OR PERHAPS EVEN MORE CLEARLY IN THE ACCOUNT OF THE WISE MEN WHO FOLLOWED THE STAR TO THE SAVIOR.

Matthew 2:1-11 ***11*** "fell down and **WORSHIPED** Him"

WORSHIP is what God desires from each of us this Christmas season. Well, that wasn't so bad. Now you know. But the problem is that simply knowing what God wants for Christmas is not enough. Suppose that instead of 1986, this was 1956 and I said to you that what God wanted was a Cuisenarnt, or an Isotoner or a VCR. These things were unheard of just a few years ago.

Unfortunately, MANY PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH TODAY HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TRUE WORSHIP IS ALL ABOUT. Yet, this is what God desires from us this Christmas.

A.W. Tozier, a generation ago said, "Worship is the missing jewel in the evangelical church."

Let's search out this jewel this morning and see how we can put it back in our lives. As with any great new gift idea, we must make some basic discernments.

When we first hear an idea for a new gift we are unfamiliar with we have to define; WHAT IT IS WHERE TO GET IT HOW TO USE IT

The same will be true of our gift idea for God this year. FIRST of all:

I. WHAT IS WORSHIP

WORSHIP DEFINED "Honor paid to a superior being.' TO GIVE honor, homage reverence, respect, adoration, praise or glory to a superior being."

PROSKUNEO = To kiss toward, to kiss the hand, to bow down, to prostrate oneself."

IN the Bible, many things are worshiped. In the Christian context this prostration of ourselves is to be only before the Lord our God.

It simply means to recognize the worth, value, majesty, honor, and glory of God. To worship God is the supreme activity of the universe.

Worship is a consuming desire to give to God, and it involves the giving of ourselves, our heart attitudes, and our possessions." It is honor, adoration, and praise given to God.

" if you go to church for what you can GET out of the music, or what you can GET out of the sermon or just to GET blessed, you've missed the point. The music and sermon are not ends in themselves but should only be a stimuli to cause us to worship God."

When we go to church to worship God we do so by giving not by hoping to get.

WE GO TO OFFER SOMETHING TO HIM, NOT TO RECEIVE FROM HIM.

WORSHIP DIFFERENTIATED. Don't confuse MINISTRY with WORSHIP

"Ministry is that which comes down to us from the father, through the Son,
in the power of the Spirit, to one another in the form of spiritual gifts.

WORSHIP on the other hand, is that which goes up from us, by the Spirit's power, through the Son, to the Father. Thus, ministry is that which descends from God to us while worship is that which ascends from us to God. Both must be in perfect balance."

MacArthur "True worship". p. 10.

WORSHIP IS NOT SOMETHING WE DO FOR OTHERS. IT IS THAT WHICH IS DONE TO GOD.

The **MAGI** weren't involved in a ministry, they were consumed with the need to **WORSHIP**.

They **did not come to receive from Him but rather to give praise, honor, adoration to God who had come as a man.**

Worship is the **chief end of Man**. All that God has done in the redemptive plan has been to the end that we might worship Him. (**if he just wanted to keep us out of hell, He could have just not created us.**)

Westminster Confession of Faith

Q. 1. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God,[\[1\]](#) and to enjoy him forever.[\[2\]](#)

Q. 2. What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?

A. The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,[\[3\]](#) is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.[\[4\]](#)

Q. 3. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God,[\[5\]](#) and what duty God requires of man.[\[6\]](#)

Q. 4. What is God?

A. **God is a Spirit,**[\[7\]](#) infinite,[\[8\]](#) eternal,[\[9\]](#) and unchangeable,[\[10\]](#) in his being,[\[11\]](#) wisdom,[\[12\]](#) power,[\[13\]](#) holiness,[\[14\]](#) justice,[\[15\]](#) goodness,[\[16\]](#) and truth.[\[17\]](#)

"When Jesus began His ministry, He went to Jerusalem, walked into the place of worship, took a whip and cleaned the place out. **(John 2:13-17)**

After He dealt with the CORRUPT WORSHIPERS in Jn. 2 He called for TRUE WORSHIPERS in JN. 4:20-26.

*****INTRODUCE AND READ JOHN 4:20-26*****

I. WORSHIP DIRECTED

21B 23B 24B **WORSHIP THE FATHER.** Our worship then is to be directed to God.

In this passage, God is referred to as **Spirit** and as **Father**.

Spirit speaks of His essential nature,

Father speaks of His essential relationship.

What this means is that we **must worship "God the Father as a Spirit"** for indeed, as to **His essential nature He is Spirit.** (also; Light and Love)

WE DO NOT WORSHIP AN IMAGE MADE BY THE HAND OF MAN BUT THE CREATOR WHO MADE MAN IN HIS IMAGE. HE IS SPIRIT AND AS SUCH HE CANNOT BE REDUCED TO AN IMAGE.

Israel had a problem with this from their establishment as a nation at Sinai all through the recorded history of the old testament.

Cf. Is. 40:18-26

"to whom then will ye liken God? **Or what likeness will you compare** unto him?...."

Nor can He be confined to a place

JEREMIAH 23:23-24. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide him self in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do I Not fill Heaven and earth? saith the Lord?"

GOD CANNOT BE CONFINED TO A SPECIFIC PLACE.

WE DON'T HAVE TO GO SOMEWHERE TO WORSHIP GOD

nor do we have to WORSHIP AT A SPECIFIC TIME .

GOD IS SPIRIT AND AS SUCH HE FILLS BOTH TIME
AND SPACE.

II. WHERE DO WE WORSHIP

The Samaritan woman was confused about the place of worship. The Samaritans worshiped on Gerizim, the Jews in Jerusalem. Jesus responds by telling her that it is neither on the mountain or in Jerusalem that God is to be worshiped but **rather He is to be WORSHIPED IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.**

*****V. 21 ***** **There is a change in the "economy of worship"**

"The hour cometh, **and now is.**" It is no longer a matter of which is the proper place to worship. The old economy upon which both the Samaritan and the Jew based their worship practices was on the brink of extinction. Jesus didn't waste time debating which of the two locations was the correct place to worship God. For a 1000 years it had been Jerusalem, but Jesus doesn't say that this is true any longer. Instead He says that there is a new age which has dawned and that in that new age the way of worship does not lie in a geographical location but rather in the way in which we approach God.

The problem is not WHERE to worship but rather WHO to worship and not WHEN to worship BUT HOW to worship. (in spirit and in truth.) Because God is Spirit, He must be worshiped in a spiritual way.

III. HOW TO USE IT

*****V. 22*****

SAMARITAN WORSHIP WAS "SPIRIT WITHOUT TRUTH"

4:22a "ye worship ye know not what." Jesus acknowledges that the Samaritans were worshiping but He also recognizes that they did not know WHAT they worshiped. The Samaritans only used the 1st five books of the Old Testament. He had only a partial revelation of God and His plan of salvation. They were enthusiastic and the 400 or so who are left today still practice the ancient sacrifices. But they really had no idea of what the sacrifices were all about. They are enthusiastic religionists but they simply don't have all the facts.

JEWISH WORSHIP WAS "TRUTH WITHOUT SPIRIT."

4:22b "we Jews know what we worship" There were of course many sincere Jewish zealots who were versed in the 39 books of the Old Testament and who were earnestly seeking to live a life pleasing to God. But for the most part, the religion of the **Jew at the time of Christ had lost it's personal touch with God.** They knew **WHO** they worshiped but their spirit just was not in it. This was often true in the history of the Jew. math.

15 :7-9 { **Mark 7:6**} "well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites as it is written, this people honoreth me with their lips but their heart is far from me." mat. 23:23-28 "woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, justice mercy and faith.....

Practically the whole book of **Malichai** is devoted to the corrupt heartless exercise of Jewish ritual apart from serving God with our spirit. Malichai indicted them for offering polluted bread and blind animals and the lame and sick animals and asks the question of who among them there was that would even shut the door of God's house unless there was pay involved. Say what you will of the sincere aspect of Judaism, he corruption was widespread and well rooted.

Mt. Gerizim might represent ENTHUSIASTIC HERESY and Jerusalem BARREN,

LIFELESS ORTHODOXY. There must be a balance of **TRUTH and SPIRIT**.

God will be worshiped only by someone who is after His own heart. Cf.

Saul in **1 Sam. 13:10** and his wrongful offering of a sacrifice.

1Sa 13:14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee.

ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

Psalm 24:3-6 gives a very significant definition of a **true, acceptable worshiper**:
"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His Holy place [i.e. `who will He accept?'] He who hath clean hands, and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them who seek thy face."

Those with **clean hands and a pure heart**. [i.e. their motives and desires are right.] and who truly seek Him.

******John 4:23****** " True worshipers= a believer, a saint. We could be called true worshipers as easily as we could be called Christians. It is the father who **SEEKS** true worshipers to worship Him.

(WHO SENT THE ANGELS TO THE SHEPHERDS AND THE STAR TO GUIDE THE MAGI?)

CF. LUKE 19:10 " for the Son of Man is come to **SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST.**" Why did God send Christ to seek sinners and save them?
"For the father seeketh such to worship Him."

"Acceptable worship is really a key to understanding the whole matter of salvation. Why? Because the goal of salvation is to produce acceptable, true worshipers. If you are truly saved you are a true accepted worshiper.

The primary reason that we are saved is - not to make us happy - but to worship the Lord our God."

Math. 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shall call His name Jesus, For He shall save His people from their sins."

Math. 2:11 " when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down (prostrated) and **WORSHIPED HIM.**"

When people really see the truth of Christ, they have an immediate response of Worship.

Some will say...."If, I could have been there on that first Christmas day I too would have worshiped Him Prostrate on the ground!"

But we weren't there. He was only born once and it will never be repeated again. Does that mean that we do not worship?

Of course not. Lets see some other times that people worshiped Christ.

But how do we give worship to God this Christmas season?

WHEN WE SEE JESUS FOR THE FIRST TIME AS HE REALLY IS, WE WILL WORSHIP HIM. CF. **Math. 2:11a**

Mat 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

WHEN WE TRULY HEAR THE WORDS OF CHRIST, WE WILL WORSHIP HIM. CF. **Math.9:18a** "While he spoke these things unto them, behold, a there came a certain ruler, and **worshipped** Him.

WHEN WE SEE THE WORKS OF CHRIST, WE WILL WORSHIP HIM. After the disciples had witnessed Jesus walking on the water and calming a stormy sea **Math 14:33** tells us, " then they that were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, of a truth thou art the son of God."

WHEN WE ARE OBEDIENT TO THE COMMANDS OF CHRIST, THEN WE WILL WORSHIP HIM.

Math. 28:16-17a. " then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, INTO A MOUNTAIN WHERE JESUS HAD APPOINTED THEM. And when they saw Him, they **WORSHIPED** Him."

C.H. Spurgeon "Why is it that some people are often in a place of worship and yet they are not holy? It is because they neglect their prayer closets. They love the wheat, but they do not grind it; they would have the corn, but they will not go forth into the fields to gather it; the fruit hangs upon the tree, but they will not pluck it; the water flows free at their feet, but they will not stoop to drink it." **WORSHIP ISN'T PASSIVE - IT TAKES EFFORT.**

Anyone can receive, few know how to give. But GIVING God His Due WORSHIP is just what we must do.

Rev. 5:12 " And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, **WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN** to receive power, and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honor and glory, and blessing."