

## Tea Tree Gully Community Church

# Worship (part 3) Wrong Worship vs Right Worship.

1 Chron 16 v 25 & 26

**For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; He is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.**

### Recap

#### **Worship Pt 1. What is worship?**

- Examples of worship in the Bible
- Worship is the activity of the human soul
- Everyone was created to worship
- Worship is not what we say (we do) but what we do (which includes what we say)
- Have you checked where / what your trail of bread crumbs led to ?  
(i.e. you time, energy, focus, resources ,affections, investments etc)

#### **Worship pt 2. Why worship matters (4 reasons)**

- God is worthy of worship (and of our worship)
- You are a worshipper
- There is war over your worship
- We become like what we worship

There is consequences for our choices in worship.

#### **Results of wrong worship and right worship.**

Wrong Worship:

- Damages us
- Robs God of honour that he is due
- Brings dishonour to God by those who claim to worship / follow him
- Brings bondage (kills, steals & destroys both now and in eternity of wood, hay, stubble)

Right Worship:

- Blesses God and honours him
- Opens a doorway for blessing (& freedom) to us

- Enables us to reach our full potential as God intended
- It's a powerful form of warfare

We finished the last message (Worship pt 2) with:

**Choose this day whom you will serve.....as for me and my house we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:14 - 15**

However while service should flow out of, and be part of our worship to God, worship of God is far more than service.

Worship is the engine room from which we serve.

### Quote of A W Tozer

“We're here to be worshippers first and workers only second. The work done by a worshipper will have eternity in it.”

All meaningful ministry flows out of fellowship with God.

The recent focus on worship is for us to set the right foundation for the future and re-order our lives for stretching tent pegs and expanding in the purposes of God for us as his people.

**Refer to:** Vision for a new season message / booklet.

Amongst all of the points that need to be considered and embraced, the very first one relates to worship.

So far we have looked at:

What is worship?

Why worship matters.

### Questions

But what type of worship is God looking for?

What is acceptable and pleasing to him?

To understand this we need to know what is Right Worship and what is Wrong Worship according to God's standards.

So we're going to look at Wrong Worship, Right Worship and the pre-requisites for Right Worship.

## Wrong worship

There are at least three ways in which we can be involved in wrong worship. Each one may include ignorance, willfulness (pride) and idolatry (which has been covered in some detail over the last 3 weeks by Gerard) or a combination of these.

### **1. Wrong focus / object of worship (Idolatry)**

This is when something other than God himself becomes our object of worship.

I'm hoping I don't need to expand on this from previous weeks by Gerard, except to say that modern day idols of pleasure seeking, self-centeredness (un-yielded to God), idols of the heart etc are the same as physical idols of the OT and pagan religions we see today, as far as idolatry is concerned.

**1Sam 15:23 Refusing to obey him (stubbornness) is as sinful as using evil magic (witchcraft). Being proud (arrogant) is as evil as worshiping statues of gods (idolatry). You have refused to do what the LORD told you to do." (a combination of translations)**

Some other scriptures on idols

**Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless. 1Sam 12:21**

God said to the Israelites:

**You must always be careful to keep the decrees and ordinances, the laws and commands he wrote for you. Do not worship other gods.**

**Do not forget the covenant I have made with you, and do not worship other gods.**

**Rather, worship the LORD your God; it is he who will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies."**

**They would not listen, however, but persisted in their former practices.**

**Even while these people were worshiping the LORD, they were serving their idols. 2 Ki 17:37-41**

**For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.**

**....worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.**

**1 Ch 16:25-26,29b**

**Do not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Exo 34:14**

He is jealous for us and wants the best for us and wants our undivided heart of affection and devotion.

In Romans chapter 1 we see that that man will also worship creation rather than the Creator, and how destructive this is.

**Rom 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,**

**Rom 1:21 ...they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.**

**Rom 1:22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools**

**Rom 1:25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator - who is forever praised.**

Totally applicable and evident today. (expand on this)

## **2. Mixture of worship**

Jesus said:

**"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Mammon (money or wealth) Mat 6:24 Or God and some other god.**

**Read: 2 Kings 17 24 – 29 & 32 – 35**

We then fast forward to the NT.

Jesus said to her, **"Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the**

**Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. Joh 4:21 - 22**

The Samaritans adopted the god of the land (region) and offered polluted worship to God. In the same way, we can today offer second rate, divided worship to God. They even went so far as to build a temple to him on Mount Gerazim in the fourth century BC.

In NT times the Samaritans were despised by the Jews for these religious reasons and also because they were favorable to Rome.

#### **ASIDE:**

This highlights the significance of the stories involving Jesus and Samaritans

- The Samaritan woman at the well – Jesus conversing and drinking from the water pot she had though the Jewish rabbis considered the dishes of the Samaritans as unclean.
- Jesus traveled in Samaria, though a pious Jew would add days to his journey rather than pass through Samaritan territory.
- Jesus told the story / parable of the good Samaritan as one whose actions expressed love rather than legalism – a failure of the Priests and Pharisees.

The love of Christ is for all people but he commands people everywhere to repent and meet God on his terms.

In the same vein the Israelites, God's chosen people had also been guilty of mixture in worship. (as just read in 2 Kings above).

### **3. Approaching God to worship in an unacceptable way**

Attempting to worship God in ways not acceptable to him is also wrong worship.

**You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way, for every abominable thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods, for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods. Deu 12:31**

Coming to God on our own terms is not acceptable to him. He is Holy. We are sinful. He makes the rules. He is the custodian of righteousness and is author of all wisdom. Man's sinful inclinations drive him to want to do things differently to suite his own desires and agendas.

**In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD.**

**But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.**

**Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?"**

**If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." Gen 4:3 - 7**

Cain tried to come to God on his own terms, bringing to God what was not acceptable. God said if you do what is right you will be accepted.

We don't know the exact motivation for why Cain did what he did, whether it was ignorance or a reflection of his heart (probably the latter) but God had made a way to approach him that was to be acknowledged and obeyed – also a test of man's heart before him.

Regarding mastering sin, provision for this in a more complete sense has been done through Jesus under the new covenant by the finished work of the cross.

So we cannot come before God with an un-regenerate heart (or even a detached regenerate heart) and expect that to qualify for right or acceptable worship.

**Questions:** So what makes for right worship? What pleases God?

### **The Pre-requisite for Right Worship**

**Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.**

**God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." Joh 4:23 - 24**

This is a well known scripture in Christian circles but how well understood is it. Do we know what it is saying?

The first part is this, that:

God is spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit....

## **Worshipping in Spirit**

We have been made in God's image, meaning that we are primarily spirit based beings with a soul and a physical body. In our sinful nature inherited from Adam, our spirit is dead to God. Until this changes we cannot connect with God as he intended.

Cain's spirit or at least his heart disposition was not in alignment with God as reflected by the unacceptable offering he brought to God.

Jesus declared, **"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."** Joh 3:3

You cannot worship what you cannot see (not physical sight) or do not know.

"An unknown God cannot be trusted, served or worshipped"  
(Arthur W Pink, Attributes of God).

Jesus answered, **"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'** Joh 3:5

Therefore to worship in spirit requires that:

- We have been born again – we have a regenerated spirit that can connect with God and is receptive to his Spirit.
- We have passed from death to life.
- We have come out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light.
- A spiritual transaction has taken place via repentance from sin, forgiveness from sin, by accepting in faith the finished work of the cross of Jesus Christ. Without this we are still dead to God in our sins and it is impossible to worship him and it is impossible to please him.

**Aside:** Heb 11:6 **Without faith it is impossible to please God** (also a free gift of God Eph 2:8)

And note

**Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings.**

If this spiritual change has genuinely occurred in our lives there will be fruit that indicates that it is so - fruit of word and deed that displays firstly a life of worship and out of that a life of service all enabled by the Holy Spirit in our lives. Only the Holy Spirit can enable a fallen man to worship God acceptably.

We also must worship God in truth.

### **Worshipping in truth**

I can't worship God acceptably unless I have accepted what God has said about five key things.

1. I must accept what God has said about himself.
  - Holy, One true God
  - God is good, He has a plan/purpose of reconciliation for man to himself.
2. I must believe what God says about his Son.
  - Jesus is God's one and only Son
  - He is the only way to the Father and eternal life
3. I must believe what God says about me.
  - We are sinful, we need a saviour
4. I must believe whatever God says about sin.
  - Sin keeps us separated from God, it is a barrier to having fellowship with him.
5. I must believe his grace is as great as he says it is.
  - By grace (God's grace), through faith (faith given by God to us) we are saved (Eph 2:8)
  - You can't earn your salvation.

Even in the most basic understanding of the gospel message a new Christian can satisfy these 5 things / requirements.

However we can spend a lifetime getting to know more deeply, and appreciate more fully, and experience more widely, God, his Son and grace – and who we have become as children of God.

**How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God! And that is what we are!**  
**1 John 3:1a**

So,

**Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth." Hos 6:3**

As King David said in

**Ps 35:9-10a My soul will rejoice in the Lord and delight in his salvation. My whole being will exclaim "Who is like you, O Lord?"**

(My whole being – Spirit soul and body worship).