

The Ultimate Priority - Worship . . . Part 2

WORSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE Selected Scriptures

STIMULATE

** As we began this series last week, we learned that there are four types of unacceptable worship. You may recall that they were:

- 1) Worship of false gods.
- 2) Worship of the true God in a wrong form.
- 3) Worship of the true God in a self-styled manner.
- 4) Worship of the true God, in the right way, with a wrong attitude - hypocrisy.

** As you have determined to worship the Lord this past week, how have you done in avoiding unacceptable worship?

MOTIVATE

** How often should the child of God be involved in worship? The answer to that question is the heart and soul of our study for today. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers and said, "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1Corinthians 10:31). As we shall see, he was talking about worship as a way of life. That should be our goal and today we will learn three dimensions of Biblical worship.

Opening Prayer

Worship as a way of Life

INVESTIGATE

** By now we have learned that worship is not confined to what happens on Sunday at church. In fact, given any particular Sunday and any particular church, you might not even be able to tell that true Biblical worship has taken place! So what is worship? What are the three dimensions in which our worship of God Almighty, can display itself?

- 1) **The Outward Dimension**
- 2) **The Inward Dimension**
- 3) **The Upward Dimension**

Please turn in your Bibles to Romans 14:1-12, and let's begin by looking at the first dimension of the **Ultimate Priority**.

THE OUTWARD DIMENSION - Romans 14:1-12

V. 1 ** In his letter to the Romans, Paul has masterfully portrayed the gospel of Jesus Christ and how it makes both Jew and Greek into one new creature (Romans 3:21- 23, Galatians 3:28). Here in chapter 14, Paul is aware of some differences that could divide the body of Christ and addresses them with urgency.
cf. John 13:34-35

What are we to do with someone who is weak in faith, according to Paul?

"...accept the one who is weak in faith..." If we hope to worship God in a Biblical manner, it must be first observable in the "**Outward Dimension**" by how we treat one another in the fear of the Lord. cf. Ephesians 5:21

**** Who is the "weak" one in this verse?**

It is the Jewish believer in Jesus Christ, who has found it difficult to let go of all the traditions, while his Gentile brother has no problem living his life in the freedom that Christ purchased for us.

V. 2 ** Paul is going to list some non-moral preferences that could cause a division, while at the same time he is going to give us four reasons to accept our weaker brother. Here in verse two, what is the first preferential difference that existed between some Jewish and Gentile Christians?

Dietary Laws! "...but he who is weak eats vegetables only..." cf. Daniel 1:8, 12-13

V. 3 ** What two attitudes towards our brothers and sisters, must we avoid if we hope to worship Biblically?

Contemptuous and judgmental attitudes!

**** Why?** What is the first reason given for accepting our brother who has not grown as much as we, or maybe has grown even more than we?

"...for God has accepted him"!

V. 4 ** Even if we rightly observe that someone is a weak brother or sister, what is the second reason for accepting them according to the end of verse four?

"...for the Lord is able to make him stand".
cf. Psalm 37:23-24, Jude - verses 24-25

V. 5 ** What is the next typical preference that men may hold in their walk with the Lord?

Regarding "one day above another".

**** What is Paul calling all men to do?**

He is saying that in matters which are not specifically commanded or forbidden in Scripture, it is always wrong to go against your conscience.

V. 6 ** What is the driving motive behind both of these believers' actions?

They are doing what they do "for the Lord".

V. 7-8

**** These next two verses contain the third reason for us accepting one another as we manifest our worship in the outward dimension. What is it?**

"...we are the Lord's" We are not islands who stand alone, but rather vital parts of His body which have been placed there as His will directs. All see - 1Corinthians 12:12-18

V. 9-12

** Finally, the last four verses of this passage will show us the fourth and most dominate reason that we worship God by accepting one another. Let's read the text and see if we can find it.

V.10 "For we shall all stand before the judgement seat of God." Plainly, we accept one another, because we are not the Judge!

Paul knew that his worship of Jesus Christ would be deemed acceptable, first of all, by how it manifested itself in the outward dimension.

Compare **Romans 15:15-16**

"...my offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable..."

with **Philippians 4:18**

"...what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God".

Next let's look at the Inward Dimension of our worship.

THE INWARD DIMENSION - Ephesians 5:7-10

V. 7 ** If our worship is to be genuine, acceptable to God, in the Inward Dimension, what must we avoid?

Becoming "partakers with them..."

** Who are they?

The individuals of verse five who continually live a God forsaken life, in complete disregard of Jesus Christ and God.

** Did you notice how this chapter began? What is the contrast provided in the first four verses?

Imitators of God, beloved children, walking in love

vs.

Immorality, impurity, greed, filthiness, silly talk or coarse jesting

V. 8 ** So, if we are not partakers with the world's corrupt system around us, what is going to be the impact on our **Inward Dimension**, as we are truly pursuing **The Ultimate Priority - Worship**?

Our light shines bright...from the inside out! Remember what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount about our light shinning? (See Matthew 5:14-16)

V. 9 ** What is the fruit of that light?

"...all goodness and righteousness and truth..."

goodness - agathosune, "that which is willingly and sacrificially done for the good of others."

cf. 1Thessalonians 5:15

righteousness - this is how we relate to God. He has granted us His righteousness, but we must present ourselves to Him in a righteous lifestyle. cf. Romans 6:12-13

truth - this speaks of the personal integrity of the believer before God. It has to do with honesty, reliability, trustworthiness and integrity--in contrast to the hypocritical, deceptive, and false ways of the old life of darkness. cf. Ephesians 5:

V.10 ** For those who will seriously consider the impact that worship is to have on our **Inward Dimension**, what will become the passion of our heart?

"...trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord"!

** How are you doing in developing that passion? What are you doing to cause it to grow each day?

Hopefully we are "Staying in the Word" and applying it to our walk with the Lord each day!

Alright, we have seen the **Outward Dimension** of worship and the **Inward Dimension**, what about the **Upward Dimension**? What is it comprised of and how are we to approach it?

THE UPWARD DIMENSION - Hebrews 13:15

V.15 ** Let's begin with the components of our worship as it is directed to God. How often does the Lord expect us to worship Him?

Continually!

** What cost factor is our worship to have?

It is to be sacrificial!

** What is the attitude of our worship?

Praise!

** And finally, what do we say to the Lord?

Thank you, thank you, thank you...to His name!

** Secondly, how do we approach true worship of God?

"Through Him then,..." The **Upward Dimension** of our worship is only acceptable if we come through a saving relationship to Jesus!

For one of the best examples of this kind of worshipful devotion to Jesus, let's close our study by learning from Mary in Luke 10:38-42. Read passage.

The setting is in Bethany, about two miles outside of Jerusalem (cf. John 11:18) and the sisters of Lazarus welcome Jesus into their home.

Let's pick it up in verse 39...

V.39 ** What was the preoccupation of Mary?

To listen to the Lord Jesus Christ. Even to the point of sitting right at His feet!

V.40 ** What was Martha preoccupied with?

"...all her preparations"

** How does Martha's concern reflect her view of Jesus?

At this time, she is out of balance and is more concerned for her own plan than the words of Jesus!

V.41 ** How does the Lord respond to her request?

With a rebuke!

V.42 ** What commendation does he bestow on Mary?

"...Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from her". Just a footnote, Martha learned her lesson, cf. John 11:27

EXTRICATE

** What are the three dimensions in which our worship of God is to be made manifest?

Outward, Inward and Upward!

DELINEATE

** How can I know that my way of life is worshipful?

If I maintain a loving view of others, a holy walk with the Lord, and a non-distracted devotion to Christ and His word, my way of life will become worshipful!

EVALUATE

** Am I lacking in any one of these three dimensions of worship? How can I best refine my desire to worship the Lord Jesus Christ?

ACTIVATE

** Lord help me to love my brothers and sisters, which you have accepted, help me to keep my way pure before Thee and help me to be more devoted to Your Word that I may worship you as a way of life!

Closing prayer