



A WORSHIPPING CHURCH

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





A Worshipping Church

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A Worshipping Church

SERMON REFERENCE: John 4:23-24

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2501

We were created to worship God; it is life's greatest privilege and supreme duty to worship Him. It is the act of worship, and coming together as a worshipping Church that transforms our lives from monotonous to momentous.

First, we must understand the meaning of true worship.

John 4:23-24 says, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

In this passage, Jesus explained to a Samaritan woman what worship is, and how it differs from the religion she was accustomed to.

Adrian Rogers says, "We don't have to have enthusiastic heresy, or lifeless orthodoxy. ...It'll be a great day in any church when you stop enduring religion and start enjoying true worship."

Worship is a response of gratitude to all that God has revealed Himself to be, through Jesus Christ.

Second, we must understand the motive of true worship, and why God is seeking worshippers.

We become like what we worship. This is why it's important to know exactly who we are worshipping, because if we do not worship Almighty God, we will be susceptible to worship anything else.

Not only does God seek worshippers for what it does for us, but also for what it does for Him. Our praise gives Him pleasure as our Father; He yearns for our devotion and our honor.

Finally, we must understand the method of true worship: both in spirit and truth.

When Jesus says to worship God in spirit, He is referring to our innermost being. If our spirit is dead or warped, we can't truly worship. Our praise must come from an honest place.

But we must also remember to worship in truth; our emotions cannot dictate our praise—there must be an intelligent worship.

Adrian Rogers says, "Your worship will never rise higher than your knowledge of God."

Spirit and truth go together; we honor God by actively praising with our spirit and seeking truth in His Word.

Life Application

The ultimate privilege is to love God and worship Him in spirit and truth. Today, love Him passionately with all your heart, selflessly with all of your soul, and thoughtfully with your mind.



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SERMON REFERENCE: John 4:23-24

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) John 4:23-24
- b) What is life's highest good?
 - i) Is it service or sacrifice?
 - (1) Those are both wonderful, but life's highest good and greatest privilege is worship.
- c) Worship is transformative.
 - i) It will change your Christian life from the monotonous to the momentous.
 - ii) It will free you and fulfill you.
 - iii) It will glorify God through you.
 - iv) It will give great joy.
- d) The only way we can learn as a church to worship is to learn as individuals.
- e) In John 4, Jesus was on a journey.
 - i) The Bible says, "He must needs go through Samaria."
 - (1) John 4:4
 - ii) The Samaritans were left over from the exile.
 - (1) They had intermarried.
 - (2) The Jewish people looked down upon them.
 - (a) They had no dealings with the Samaritans.
 - (b) The Samaritans were hostile to the Jews and vice versa.
 - iii) Jesus was going through Samaria in the middle of the day.
 - (1) He was hot, tired, and worn.
 - (a) He sat on the curbing of the well of Jacob.
 - iv) A woman from Samaria came out to the well.
 - (1) She had been married five times.
 - (a) The man whom she was living with was not her husband.
 - (2) She came alone to draw water from the well.
 - (a) She didn't come with the other women because they looked down upon her.
 - v) Jesus asked her for a drink of water.
 - vi) Jesus began to speak to this thirsty woman about real living water, a drink that would satisfy her forever.
 - (1) Jesus Christ is what every soul thirsts for.
 - (a) He is the water of life.
- f) This woman was the following:
 - i) She was bound by sin.
 - (1) She had gone from husband to husband to husband.
 - (a) She got deeper and deeper into sin.
 - ii) She was blinded by Satan.
 - (1) She didn't know the way out.



- (2) She had religion, but religion was a washout to her.
 - (a) It didn't satisfy her thirsty soul.
- iii) She was broken by sorrow.
 - (1) Jesus' heart went out to her in compassion.
 - (a) Just as His heart goes out to you in compassion.
- g) This woman needed to lift her eyes from the things of this Earth and learn how to worship.
 - i) And so, Jesus taught her about worship.
 - ii) John 4:24
 - (1) The King James Version of the Bible says, "God is a Spirit", but it may be better translated, "God is Spirit".
- h) In today's message, we will learn three things about worship.

2) THE MEANING OF TRUE WORSHIP (JOHN 4:19-20, 22-24)

- a) This woman knew about worship, but she didn't understand true worship.
- b) John 4:19-20
 - i) She wanted to get into a discussion about worship.
 - ii) She didn't know anything about real worship, but she knew about religion.
 - iii) She wanted to argue about religion and worship.
- c) The Samaritans worshipped in ignorance and zeal.
 - i) John 4:22
 - ii) The Samaritans had rejected all of the Old Testament, except for the five books of Moses.
 - iii) They were certain that they knew the truth.
 - (1) They were certain that their worship was the right worship.
 - (2) They believed everyone else's worship was not the right worship.
 - iv) Today, the world is saturated with this.
 - (1) It is not that people don't worship.
 - (a) They have zeal, but it is ignorant worship.
 - (2) A fanatic is someone who has lost his direction but doubles his speed.
 - (a) This is what the Samaritans were doing.
 - v) They were worshipping in ignorance.
 - (1) They didn't know what they were worshipping.
 - d) The Jewish people had the truth, but they didn't have any zeal.
 - i) They had dead orthodoxy.
 - (1) Mark 7:6
 - (2) This is the other part of the world today.
 - (a) Some people are worshipping with ignorant zeal and others with dead orthodoxy.
 - (i) Some fry in fanaticism, and some freeze in formalism.
 - (ii) They don't have the vitality of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - e) The answer is not formalism or fanaticism; the answer is true worship.
 - i) We don't have to have enthusiastic heresy or lifeless orthodoxy.
 - (1) We don't have to have heat without light or light without heat.
 - ii) We need true worship.
 - (1) It will be a great day in your life when you stop enduring religion and start enjoying true worship.



- (2) This is the highest good.
- (3) This is the ultimate privilege.
 - (a) To worship God in spirit and in truth.
- f) John 4:23
 - i) The word “worship” comes from two words: worth and ship.
 - (1) Worship deals with worth.
 - (a) How we worship shows what God is worth to us.
 - (i) If our worship is not true worship, then we have a low estimation of God.
- g) Worship is all that we are responding to all that God has revealed in Jesus Christ.
 - i) Worship goes beyond a church service and music.
 - ii) If you are in a liturgical church, then worship goes beyond candles and incense.
 - (1) Worship is all that you are responding to all that God is.
- h) We will worship something; man is incurably religious.
 - i) Man has a God-shaped vacuum that he will fill.
 - ii) If we don’t worship the true God, then we will worship in dead orthodoxy, ignorant zeal, or we will worship an idol.
 - (1) Anything that we love more, fear more, or serve more than Almighty God is an idol.
 - (a) There is no greater sin than idolatry.
 - iii) Some people worship images that remind them of the one true God.
 - (1) Graven images are not a substitute for true worship.
 - (a) John 4:24
 - (2) There is no image or likeness that can be used as a substitute for God.
 - (a) Isaiah 40:25
- i) The meaning of true worship is to worship God in spirit and in truth.

3) THE MOTIVE OF TRUE WORSHIP (JOHN 4:23)

- a) We worship because that is what God seeks.
 - i) God wants us to worship.
- b) The Father seeks worship for two major reasons:
 - i) For what worship does for the worshipper; what worship does for us.
 - (1) We become like what we worship.
 - (a) That is the reason why idolatry is such a sin.
 - (b) First, the man molds the idol.
 - (c) Then, the idol molds the man.
 - (2) The more we worship God, the more we become like God.
 - (a) 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - (b) As we contemplate the Lord and keep our hearts open to Him, we will be changed to be more like the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (i) Do other people see Jesus in you?
 - (3) To spend time with God, worshipping, will make us godly.
 - (a) We become like what we spend time with.
 - ii) For what God desires for Himself; God desires worship for Himself.
 - (1) The need for worship is rooted in the very nature of God.
 - (a) John 4:23



- (2) Father is not what God is like; Father is who God is.
 - (a) There are people who talk about mother god, but God is Father.
 - (b) We don't get the idea of God from our fatherhood; we get an idea of our fatherhood from God.
 - (c) Jesus' favorite term for the Almighty is Father.
 - (i) He used "Father" over seventy times in the Scripture.
 - (d) God is our Heavenly Father.
- (3) There are things about God that we will never understand.
 - (a) God's omnipotence.
 - (i) His limitless power.
 - (b) God's omniscience.
 - (i) He knows everything.
 - (c) God's omnipresence.
 - (i) He is everywhere.
 - (d) God's eternity.
 - (i) He never had a beginning and never has an ending.
 - (e) These concepts are beyond the human mind.
 - (i) We don't have to understand them to know and love God.
- (4) Worship is rooted in the Fatherhood of God.
 - (a) When we worship, we are responding to the Father's love.
 - (i) 1 John 4:19
 - (ii) There is something about a father's heart that wants the love of his children.
- c) God wants us to worship because of what worship does for us.
 - i) It changes us.
- d) God wants us to worship for what worship does for God.
 - i) It gives Him pleasure.
 - (1) John 4:23
 - ii) A father wants love.
- e) What can you give to God today?
 - i) There is nobody who can love God better than you can.
 - (1) That is what God wants more than anything else.
 - (2) John 4:23

4) THE METHOD OF TRUE WORSHIP (JOHN 4:23-24)

- a) Jesus was speaking to the Samaritan woman.
 - i) She talked about worship, but she didn't have real worship.
 - (1) She had ignorant worship.
 - ii) The method of true worship is to worship in spirit.
 - (1) Jesus was not talking about the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) He was talking about the human spirit.
 - (a) Worship comes out of the inner man.
 - (i) Romans 1:9
- b) The human spirit cannot worship unless it is enjoined with the Holy Spirit.
 - i) God the Holy Spirit comes into the human spirit to help us to worship.



- (1) That is the reason we have to be saved and Spirit-filled to truly worship.
- ii) If we have trouble worshipping, then the problem is in our spirit.
 - (1) If we get bored in church, the problem is our inner spirit.
 - (a) When we get our hearts right, a service will not be boring.
- c) We worship in spirit, and then we worship in truth.
 - i) John 4:24
- d) Worship that is not built on truth is not true worship.
 - i) Worship built on truth goes beyond spirit.
 - (1) It goes beyond subjectivism.
 - ii) Psalm 145:18
- e) Our worship of God will never rise above our knowledge based on truth.
 - i) We cannot worship God ignorantly.
 - (1) John 4:22-23
 - ii) Worship is a loving response to the God revealed in the Bible.
 - (1) That is why we study the Bible.
 - iii) Some people come to church and ask if there will be a Bible study or a worship service.
 - (1) They think that when we sing, pray, praise, and fellowship, that is worship.
 - (2) The preaching of the Word of God is worship.
 - (a) We worship God in truth.
 - (i) If we don't do that, then the church becomes subjective rather than objective.
 - iv) We are to worship God with songs and with understanding.
 - (1) Psalm 47:7
 - (2) If we have all emotionalism, then we will blow up.
 - (3) If we have all truth, we dry up.
 - (4) But if we have spirit and truth, then we grow up.
 - (a) John 4:24
- f) Jesus gave the great commandment, and it deals with worship.
 - i) Mark 12:30
 - (1) The highest good and the ultimate privilege are to love God.
 - ii) How are we to love Him?
 - (1) Passionately
 - (a) We are to love God with all of our heart.
 - (b) Half-hearted worship is an insult to Almighty God.
 - (2) Selflessly
 - (a) We are to love God with all of our soul.
 - (b) The soul is the self.
 - (c) We are not to be self-centered.
 - (i) We are self-centered by nature.
 - 1. Many people go to church and say that they didn't get anything out of it.
 - a. Who said that we are supposed to get anything out of it?
 - 2. Did God receive anything from our worship?
 - a. We are here to glorify God.
 - (d) We are to serve Him selflessly.
 - (e) When we take our minds off of ourselves and focus on God, and when we stop asking



what we will get and begin asking what we will give, then the church is transformed into a worshipping church.

- (3) Thoughtfully
 - (a) We are to love Him thoughtfully with all of our heart.
 - (b) Serve the Lord with knowledge and wisdom.
 - (c) Love Him in spirit and in truth.
- (4) Practically
 - (a) We are to love Him practically with all of our strength.
 - (b) Colossians 3:17

5) CONCLUSION

- a) Worship is giving God glory.
- b) You can change the place where you work if you will just change your bosses.
 - i) You don't work for that person; you work for God.
 - (1) Ephesians 5:6
 - ii) Your workplace can be your temple of devotion and your lampstand of witness as you worship God with all of your strength.
 - (1) That is what Jesus told the Samaritan woman.
 - (a) She asked, "Do we worship here, or do we worship there?"
 - (i) Jesus said, "You worship in spirit and in truth."
 - 1. John 4:20, 23
 - (2) There is no place that is not a holy place.
 - (3) There is no ground that is not sacred ground.
 - (4) There is no time that should not be a time of worship.
- c) When you go to church to the worship service, don't go merely to worship.
 - i) Take your worship to church.
- d) You cannot worship in spirit unless you are first born again.
 - i) When you are born again, God's Spirit begins to work in your human spirit so you can praise God.
 - ii) To be born again means to be saved.
 - (1) It means to have Christ in your heart.
- e) Romans 5:1
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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SERMON REFERENCE: John 4:23-24

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Take your Bible, find John chapter 4, and look up here. In these climatic days in which we're living in the life of our church, I have been trying to distill and focus on the things that I have told you for 32 years. What kind of a church should our church be? What is the church of my dreams? What is the church of my aspirations? What is the church that I hope will be the future church? I spoke to you one Sunday on a unified church. And then I spoke to you on a steadfast church. And then I spoke to you on a miracle church. And then last Sunday on a praying church. Today, a worshipping church.

Take God's Word, John chapter 4, and look, if you will, in verses 23 and 24. Jesus said, "But the hour cometh, and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Now, we're going to revisit this morning a passage of Scripture that I've shared with you down through the years over and over again. It is a pivotal passage and it is a basic passage on worship.

I ask you a question. What is life's highest good? Is it service? That's wonderful. Is it sacrifice? Indeed, that is glorious. But, church, you listen to me, the bottom line, are you listening, of all of life's ultimate priority, life's highest good, life's supreme duty, life's greatest privilege, is worship. Now, you know what? That was a good place for an Amen. I want that to be riveted into your heart. I'm not just talking to you rhetoric; I'm talking to you about something that is transformational, something that will change your Christian life from the monotonous to the momentous. I'm talking to you about something that will free you and something that will fulfill you, something that will glorify God through you, something that will give you great joy.

Now, I say this is a classic passage on worship, and I've mentioned it to you down through the years many times, but today I want to drive the nail in, turn it over, and bend it back. I want you to learn, as a church, over and over again, to worship. The only way we can learn as a church to worship is to learn as individuals.

Now, this is a marvelous chapter, this fourth chapter of John. Jesus is on a journey, and the Bible says in John 4:4, "He must needs go through Samaria." Now, that was not the easiest way, that was the mountainous way. If He'd wanted to take the easiest way, He would have gone alongside the River Jordan, and I've made both trips many times. But Jesus, "Must needs go through Samaria." Now, the Samaritans were left over from the exile, and they intermarried, and the Jews thought of them as a mongrel race and looked down upon them. And the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. The Samaritans were hostile to the Jews and vice versa.

But now, Jesus is going through Samaria, and in the middle of the day He's hot, tired, worn. He's sitting on the curbing of a well. It's called the well of Jacob, or Jacob's well. It's a deep well. I've drunk water out of that well; it goes way down deep. You can take some water and pour it and wait a long time before you hear it splash in the bottom. Now, that well is still there today. And Jesus was sitting on the curbing, the parapet around that well. The disciples had gone into the city to get some food because it was lunch and they were hungry. And there was not a McDonald's in sight, and so they'd gone into the city to buy food. And this woman comes out there.



Now this woman was what we would call a shady lady; she's the shady lady of Samaria. She has been married 5 times. Today, we'd give her an academy award. She'd been married 5 times and now she's living with a man without even the benefit of a marriage ceremony. And she comes out there, not when the other women came out to draw water because they would look down upon her, maybe spit on her, so she comes out there by herself to draw water. And Jesus is there, and in John chapter 4 verses 7 through 11 Jesus says to her, "Would you give Me a drink of water?" She said, "How is it that You, being a Jew, would speak to me, a Samaritan, and ask of me of water?" He said, well, "If you knew who was talking to you, you'd ask Him and He'd give you living water." She said, "What do You mean living water? You don't have anything to draw with. The well is deep." And Jesus now begins to speak to this thirsty woman about real living water, a drink that would satisfy her forever and ever and ever and ever because Jesus Christ is what every soul thirsts for; He's the water of life!

Look at this poor woman. There **she was bound by sin**. She'd gone from husband to husband and to husband, and she got deeper and deeper into sin; the cords of sin had bound her. Not only was she bound by sin, but **she was blinded by Satan**. She didn't know the way out. She had religion, but religion was a washout to her. It had not satisfied her hungry, thirsty soul. Bound by sin, blinded by Satan, and **broken by sorrow**; think of this woman! Think how pitiful her life was. Jesus' heart went out to her in compassion, as He goes out to you in compassion. And this woman needed to lift her eyes from the things of this Earth and learn how to worship. And so, Jesus teaches her now about worship, and Jesus said in John 4:24, "God is spirit." Not a spirit. The King James says, "a spirit," but may be better translated, "God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Three things I want you to learn about worship today. May God the Holy Spirit impress them upon your soul or rivet them into your consciousness and cause you to remember them forever and ever. First of all, I want you to see what I'm going to call **the meaning of true worship**. Now, this woman knew about worship, but she didn't understand true worship. Look, if you will, in John 4 verses 19 and 20, "The woman saith unto Him, 'Sir, I perceive Thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and Ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.'" Now, what she wants to do is to get up a discussion about worship. She didn't know anything about real worship, but she knew about religion. As I said, religion had been a washout to her. And now what she wants to do is to argue about religion, to argue about worship. "You Jews say that Jerusalem is the place to worship. We say here in Samaria our mountain is the place to worship." "Now, if You're a prophet, You tell me which is the right place to worship."

Now, I want you to see the tension that was here. You remember, obviously, the Jews and the Samaritans are not getting along. Now, the Samaritans worshipped in ignorance and zeal. Now, notice what Jesus said. Look down in John 4 verse 22, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." The Samaritans worshipped in ignorance, but they worshipped in zeal. As a matter of fact, I have been to Samaria. There's still a group of Samaritans to this day who have the five books of Moses and an ancient scroll. I've seen it. The Samaritans had rejected all of the Bible, all of the Old Testament, except for the five books of Moses. And they were so certain that they knew the truth. They were so certain that their worship was the right worship and nobody else's worship was the right worship. So what they had was zeal and ignorance. May I tell you that today the world is saturated with that! It's not that people don't worship. Oh, they have zeal, but it's ignorant worship. Do you know what a fanatic is? Somebody who has lost his direction and doubles his speed. That's what these Samaritans were doing. Jesus said, "You're worshipping in ignorance. You don't know what you are worshipping."



Now, that's the Samaritans, what about the Jews? While the Samaritans had ignorance and zeal, the Jews had the truth, but they didn't have any zeal. The Jews had dead orthodoxy. Now, you, I, I would reference to you Mark chapter 7 and verse 6. Jesus is speaking to them, "He answered and said unto them, 'Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.''" Now, over here you have ignorant zeal; over here you have dead orthodoxy. Now, that's the other part of the world today. Some people are worshipping with ignorant zeal and others with dead orthodoxy. Some fry in fanaticism and some freeze in formalism, but they don't have the vitality of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, folks, listen. The answer here is not formalism or fanaticism; it is true worship, true worship. We don't have to have enthusiastic heresy, we don't have to have lifeless orthodoxy, we don't have to have heat without light or light without heat; we need true worship. Do you know, it'll be a great day in your life, it'll be a great day in any church when you stop enduring religion and start enjoying true worship! I want you to understand this, folks, this is the bottom line. This is the highest good. This is the ultimate privilege: to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Now, look again, if you will, in John 4 verse 23, Jesus said to this woman, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers," underscore that, "the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Now, look at that word worship, do you see it? That word comes from really two words: worth and ship. You see, worship deals with worth. You show me how you worship and I will tell you what God is worth to you. You show me how you worship and, my dear friend, I'll tell you what you think of God. If your worship is not true worship, you have a low estimation of God. Worship is all that we are responding to all that God is revealed in Jesus Christ. That's what worship is. Now, friend, worship goes beyond a church service. Worship goes beyond music. Worship goes beyond, if you're in a liturgical church, candles and incense. Again, I want to tell you that worship is all that you are responding to all that God is.

Now, you're going to worship something. You see, listen. Man is incurably religious. Man has a God-shaped vacuum and he's trying to fill that vacuum, so you're going to worship something. If you don't worship the true God, you're going to worship in dead orthodoxy or ignorant zeal or you're going to worship some idol. Anything that you love more, fear more, serve more than the Almighty is your idol. It may be a movie star. It may be a sports idol. It may be money. It may be pleasure. It may be illicit sex. For some people that's a no-brainer. If they had to choose between the Super Bowl and church, they'd choose the Super Bowl. You think about it. Anything that you love more, fear more, serve more than Almighty God is an idol. And there's no greater sin than idolatry.

Now, if you don't practice true worship, you will find a substitute for worship, because nature abhors a vacuum. Some worship images. Today, you can go into what is called a house of worship and you'll find images; people lighting candles and putting candles in front of those images; people bowing down and kissing those images. They call that worship. You say, "Why do you have those images?" "Well, they remind us of the one true God." Suppose a woman walks into a room and finds her husband embracing another woman, and he says, "Now, wait a minute, sweetheart. Don't get the wrong idea. She just reminds me so much of you" Oh, friend, graven images are not a substitute for true worship. John 4:24, "God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." There is no image, no likeness that you can use as a substitute for God. Isaiah chapter 40 verse 25, "'To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal?' saith the Holy One." Now, what is the meaning of true worship? It is worshipping God in spirit and in truth.



Now, secondly, what is the **motive of true worship**? Why do we do this? Look again in John 4 verse 23, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.” If you don’t mind marking in your Bible, mark the word spirit and mark the word truth. But then it goes on to say, “For the Father seeketh such to worship Him.” Now, why would we worship? Because that’s what God seeks. That’s what God wants of you. Say to yourself, “God wants me to worship.” The Father seeks that for two major reasons. Reason number one is for what worship does for the worshipper, what worship will do to you. You see, we become like what we worship. That’s the reason idolatry is such a sin. First, the man molds the idol and then the idol molds the man. We become like what we worship. Now, that’s true in the negative sense; it’s also true in the positive sense. The more you worship God, are you listening? The more you worship God, the more you will become like God.

If you have an old-fashioned fireplace with a poker; that is, a piece of iron that you arrange the wood with, you leave that poker in the fire very long, before long the fire will be in the poker. When you worship God, it is not very long until you become like what you worship. And God’s fire will be in you. We become like what we worship. Put down in your margin Second Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 18, “But we all, with an open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.” As you contemplate the Lord, as you worship the Lord, as you keep your heart open to the Lord, you will be changed more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

May I ask you a question? Do other people see Jesus in you? Do they? I mean, don’t answer it rhetorically; answer it sincerely in your heart. Are you being changed day by day by day into the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? To spend time with God worshipping will make you godly. We become like what we spend time with. They say even a husband and wife, when they live together for a long time, begin to look like each other, and Joyce is getting worried. Why do we worship? Because of what worship does for us. But not only for what worship does for us, but because of what God desires for Himself. God desires worship for Himself.

The need for worship is rooted in the very nature of God. How did Jesus describe God in this passage on worship? Listen very carefully again to John 4:23, and don’t miss this, “The Father seeketh such to worship Him.” “The Father seeketh such to worship Him.” Now, you’re going to get an idea of why God desires worship. And let me say this: Father is not what God is like; Father is what God is. We have these feminists today trying to talk about mother god. That is absolute, unmitigated gall and ignorance. God is Father! Now, we don’t get our idea of God from our fatherhood; we get an idea of our fatherhood from God. That’s not to put women down at all, but God is Father. If you take away the Fatherhood of God, you miss the entire thing in the Bible. God is Father! Jesus’ favorite term for the Almighty is Father. He used that over 70 times in the Scripture. Now, that’s very important. God is our heavenly Father.

Do you know there are things about God you’ll never understand? I don’t even know if you’ll understand them when you get into glory. God’s omnipotence; His limitless power. God’s omniscience; He knows everything. God’s omnipresence; He is everywhere. God’s eternity; He never had a beginning, never has an ending. Those are concepts beyond the human mind, but you don’t have to understand them to know and love God.

When I was a little boy, my daddy would go off to work. I would see my daddy kiss my mother goodbye. My daddy always dressed up when he went to work. He was a very spiffy guy. And he dressed up, kissed my mother goodbye. He had a little valise or thing that he kept his papers in. And he would go off. I would be



a boy: 4, 5 years old. My daddy would go to work. I would watch him leave. I had no idea what he did, what his job was. I didn't know that. But I'll tell you one thing. I knew my daddy! Are you listening? You don't have to understand all of the intricacies of Almighty God: His omniscience, His omnipotence. You don't have to understand how He keeps the sun, moon, and stars in orbit to call Him Father if you've been born again. You see, this thing of worship is rooted in the Fatherhood of God. Do you know what my father wanted from me? He didn't want me to understand his profession; he wanted me to love him. You see, when we worship, we're just responding to the Father's love. I love my father because he first loved me. There's something about a father's heart that wants the love of his children.

We had a banquet here at the church; it was a father-daughter banquet. And the fathers brought their girls to this banquet. I wish you could have seen those beautiful little girls all dressed up with their daddies at that banquet. It was wonderful. And my daughter Janice and I were the program. And Janice stood up first and spoke of what her father meant to her. I could not tell you how my heart was blessed, how deeply moved I was, how grateful I was to hear my child speak not only privately to me, but openly and publicly of her love and her devotion to her father. Now, friend, that's the way God's great heart is. You see, God wants us to worship, first of all, because of what worship does for us. It changes us. And then what worship does for God. It gives Him pleasure. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him." A father wants love.

Now, I've got some good news for you. Every Father's Day little children wonder, "What can I get for daddy? What can we give daddy?" Well, you could give him some slippers or you can give him a necktie, but you know what your daddy wants? Love! Love! What can you give to God today? You say, "Well, I can't sing like these people sang. I can't preach like so-and-so. I can't do this. I can't do that." There is nobody who can love God better than you can! And that's what God wants more than anything else. Isn't that great? Nobody on Earth can love God better than you can, and that's what God wants more than anything else. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him."

Now, let's move to the third and final thing. I've talked to you about the meaning and the motive. Let me talk to you about **the method of true worship**. Look again now in John 4 verses 23 and 24, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." Now, Jesus is speaking to this woman. Now, she talks about worship, but she doesn't have real worship; it is ignorant worship. What is the method of true worship? Jesus said we're to worship in spirit. Do you see that? Now, He's not talking about the Holy Spirit. He's talking about the human spirit. That is, worship comes out of the inner man. Romans chapter 1 and verse 9, Paul said, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit." He's talking about the human spirit. Now, the human spirit cannot worship unless it is enjoined with the Holy Spirit, but God the Holy Spirit comes into the human spirit to help us to worship. That's the reason you have to be saved and Spirit-filled to truly worship. Now, if you're having trouble worshipping, may I tell you what your problem is? It's in your spirit. If you get bored in church, the problem is your inner spirit.

Joyce had a brother, he's now in Heaven. He was a sort of a playboy; raced boats and automobiles and was a businessman. Joyce and I prayed for him and prayed for him and prayed for him. Every now and then, grudgingly, he'd come hear me preach. And then he got saved. Not only did he get saved, he got saved and a half; I mean, he was radically, dramatically saved. And he came to hear me preach, and he said, "Adrian, boy, that's great. You don't preach like you used to." I said, "Gordon, I preach the same way I've been preaching. You don't hear like you used to." Listen, friend, when you get your heart right, a service is not going to be



boring. You've never been in a boring worship service. There is no such thing. You worship in spirit and then you worship in truth. Now, worship that is not built on truth is not true worship. Worship built on truth goes beyond spirit. It goes beyond subjectivism. Psalm 145 verse 18, "The Lord is high unto all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Your worship of God will never rise above your knowledge based on truth. You see, you cannot worship God ignorantly. Jesus said, "You don't know what you're worshipping, woman. God must be worshipped in truth." Worship is a loving response to the God revealed in the Bible. That's why we study the Bible.

Some people say, "Well, what are we going to have today? Are we going to have a Bible study or a worship service?" Yes! Some people think when we sing and pray and praise and fellowship, that's worship. Friend, the preaching of the Word of God is worship. We worship God in truth. And if we don't do that, the church becomes syrupy. It becomes subjective rather than objective. Now, we're to worship Him with songs and worship Him with understanding. Here's a great verse for you and all in our music department. This is Psalm 47 verse 7, "For God is the King of all the Earth: sing ye praises with understanding." That's spirit and that is truth. If you have all emotionalism, you blow up. If you have all truth, you dry up. But if you have spirit and truth, you grow up. Jesus said we're to worship in spirit and in truth.

Well, very quickly I must close. Jesus gave us the great commandment and it deals with worship. Mark 12 verse 30, "And thou shall love the Lord thy God," now, listen, "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." Remember when I said what is the highest good? What is the bottom line? What is the ultimate privilege? Here Jesus is saying it so clearly; we're to love God. How are we going to love Him? I want you to write down four words and put them in your purse, your pocketbook, your shirt pocket and carry them with you this week. The first word is **passionately**. We're to love our God passionately; that is, with all of our heart, as much as in us is. Half-hearted worship is an insult to Almighty God. Does God have all of your heart passionately?

Number two: You're to love Him **selflessly** with all of your soul. The soul is the self. You're not to be self-centered. You're self-centered by nature. Have you ever heard anybody say, "Well, I came to church and I didn't get anything out of it?" Who said you were supposed to get anything out of it? Ask yourself this question: Did God receive anything from my worship? Did God get something out of it? We're here to glorify God! We're to serve Him selflessly. When you take your mind off of yourself and put your mind on God and stop saying, "What am I going to get?" and begin to say, "What am I going to give?" The church is transformed into a worshipping church.

And we are to love Him **thoughtfully** with all of our heart. A full heart's no excuse for an empty head. Serve the Lord with knowledge and wisdom. Love Him in spirit and in truth.

And then we're to love Him **practically** with all of our strength. Everything we do. "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God."

What is worship? It's giving God glory. You can change the place where you go to work tomorrow morning if you'll just change your bosses. You don't worship for that, you don't work for that man; you work for God. That's exactly what the Bible teaches. The Bible says in Ephesians 6:5, "Serve your masters, according to the flesh, as if they were Jesus, for you serve the Lord God." Your workplace can be your temple of devotion, your lampstand of witness as you worship God with all of your strength. That's what Jesus was telling this



woman. She said, “Do we worship here or do we worship there?” Jesus said, “Woman, you worship in spirit and in truth.” There is no place that is not a holy place. There is no ground that is not sacred ground. There is no time that should not be a time of worship. So when we come to church to the worship service, we don’t come merely to worship; listen, church; we bring our worship to church! When you come in here with a heart aflame, if you come in here hardly can wait to sing these songs, to fellowship, to love to study the Word of God, then this becomes a worshipping church. And that, my friend, will make our church in the future the church that God desires her to be. Let this church be a worshipping church. Amen and Amen.

Remember what I told you, that you worship in spirit? And you cannot worship in spirit unless you’re first born again. When you are born again, God’s Spirit begins to work in your spirit, the human spirit, so you can praise God. To be born again means to be saved. It means to have Christ in your heart. And how do you receive Him into your heart? By faith. “Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Believe that Jesus Christ paid your sin debt with His shed blood on the cross. Believe that God raised Him from the dead to show that He is the Son of God. Believe that He can save you, wants to save you, and will save you if you’ll trust Him. And then, trust Him with a childlike faith. Don’t ask for any special feeling. Don’t ask for a vision. Just put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Trust Him to save you.

Bow your heads in prayer. Our Father and our God, we pray as individuals, and I pray for myself, that You would teach us, Lord, to worship in spirit and in truth with true worship. Father God, I pray now that many in this building will give their hearts to Jesus. If you’re not certain that you’re saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, “I’ve come that you might have life.” Could I lead you in a prayer? We’ll call this prayer the sinner’s prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? “Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You’re the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen.”



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