

THE TRUE WORSHIPER

These past few years have been interesting to me and maybe to many of you. Many things have radically changed throughout the world. I am not only speaking about the many different events that are and have taken place throughout the world but also what has taken place spiritually within the Body of Christ. Every believer must keep their spiritual eyes and ears open to see and hear what God is doing in this hour. Jesus is coming soon!!!

What I am referring to, at least in this brief essay, are the different changes that I have seen taking place within the church these days and ultimately the Body of Christ. I don't want to ruffle anyone's feathers and that is not my point. I would just like to point out some observations that I have seen taking place over these past few years.

As mentioned, there are many different areas that we can discuss. However, I would like to briefly touch on a very simple aspect of the Body of Christ which is actually so vital and important to the every member within the Body of Christ. I hesitate to discuss this and hesitate to even mention it, but here I go – I would like discuss the area of “true worship” and the “true worshiper.” I am not speaking about what you may think so please, read on.

Unfortunately, when someone mentions that word “worship” we immediately think of music and music style and the people who sing and play instruments as well as dance, banners and such. I am sure that there are plenty of opinions on that. However, I would like to briefly discuss the simple term - “worship.”

When a person mentions the word or term “worship,” many of us immediately think of songs and music that we hear on the radio, TV, mp3, videos and obviously, in church. That is what we think of when we mention the term “worship.” That is immediately where our minds go. However, that is very far from the aspect of “true worship” that Jesus and the other writers in the New Testament wrote about when they discussed the aspect of “worship.”

If we really take a look in the New Testament, we do not see music or song mentioned a whole lot. Yet, Jesus and the other writers speak of worship much and refer to the true believers as

“true worshipers” of God many times. However, when they speak of “true worship,” we do not hear them mentioning music or songs very much. This is because the “true worship” of God goes far beyond music and the other things we may do when we speak of worshiping in our churches or at our other “Christian” events or even within our own lives.

To briefly mention these items of songs, music, banners, etc we are actually referring to, what the Bible actually calls them - parts of what is referred to as the “sacrifices of praise” (Hebrews 13:15). These items are all a **part** of the total of what is known as the “spiritual sacrifices” that we are to now offer unto our God as born again children of God.

Along with the “sacrifices of praise,” we are to also offer to our God the “sacrifice of righteousness” (Deuteronomy 33:19), the “sacrifices of joy” (Psalm 27:6), and the “sacrifice of thanksgiving” (Psalm 107:22). All of these **combined** are the mainstays of our true worship unto our God. They, combined, are all to be a part of our life and lifestyle as a child of God.

I have written on this subject before, so I ask you to please, indulge me as I delve into this topic once again. I was a worship leader for over 35 years and I still have led praise at different times over the past few years. However, the Lord has directed me in a different path, so I do not lead worship and praise that much any more. (Some may say that is a good thing, which I am not going to challenge – they are probably right.)

I would simply like to review with us what “true worship” is according to Jesus and the scripture. The first thing I want to get out of the way is that when I speak of “worshiping the Lord,” I am not referring strictly to anything concerning music, music style, banners, dance or anything of the sort. Those are all some of the “ways” that we “praise” the Lord and those ways tend to change over the years. The way they worshiped in the 1700’s and the music that they had is much different then what we have today.

What I want to discuss concerns what the true “attitude of the heart” should be of all true believers in the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit – the three in one God. That is where I believe some difficulties lie. That is what I would like for us to discuss.

As we know, Jesus gives us the most direct definition of what **true worship** is as we read in John 4:24. Jesus states, *“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **must** worship him in spirit and in truth.”* I know that we all have looked at this scripture and we have studied it. What does it really say to you when it expressly tells us that “God is a Spirit” and that we **MUST** worship Him in “spirit” and in “truth.” What does, and why does, Jesus say this concerning what the true worship of God truly is.

It simply means that God is actually in another realm. The realm that God is in is what we call the “Spirit realm” or the “realm of the Spirit.” This means that God is nothing like us so we now must think differently. That is very, very difficult for us to wrap our heads around. We are to worship Him in the realm that **He is in** and not what we may want. Yes, God gives us some latitude but the true worship of God must be about what He truly desires from His people,

The essence of what true worship is, is that it only comes from a heart that has been transformed and totally changed through and by the blood of Jesus and then it is led by the Holy Spirit. Understanding this will allow us to truly enter into the presence of God. It will allow us to enter into the worship that is truly pleasing to God, not ourselves. Hmmm.....

The only way we can begin to comprehend what this truly is and what it means, is to become as our God is – a spirit being. We all had a spirit but that spirit was dead to God. It was not able to truly have a true relationship with God. It was unable to truly communicate with God. It was impossible. The only relationship we could have was with the devil. We were in his realm and under his control. But then came Jesus....

Jesus came and died on the cross and rose again on the third day. Now, through believing and trusting in Jesus and all that He did, we have been born again or born from above. We have become a new species of being – a child of God. We can now worship our God in His realm – the spirit realm and truly worship Him as He originally intended true worship to be.

God **is** Spirit, not **a** spirit, therefore, the only way to worship and communicate with God is through a born-again spirit that is now brand new and alive to God and dead to sin. Romans 6:11 tell us who we are in and through Jesus, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, **but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.**”*

We have a new "attitude of heart" that is now totally alive unto our God. Through a "born again spirit" given to us in and through Jesus Christ, our renewed spirit can now freely worship God in **every** aspect of our life. Our worship, our lifestyle is now - Spirit to Spirit.

That is what it truly means. Our **lifestyle** actually now becomes our worship on to our God. It is not the singing. It is not the music. It is not the dance. They may be a part of it, but they are not the full essence of our worship to our God. The main part of our worship is now our **lifestyle**.

I get so I get so... annoyed, when we talk about worship and we only talk about the singers, musicians, dancers, banners, etc. NO!!!! Every person who is now a child of God through Jesus is a true worshiper of God. 97% of the New Testament (maybe more) is telling us this. We have placed "true worship" as only a part of our life, a part of the church service, which is actually only a part of what our true worship truly must be. **IT MUST BE OUR LIFESTYLE!!!**

Our spirit is now alive unto God. We are now able to fully communicate and have a true relationship with Him. **THIS IS WHAT TRUE WORSHIP ACTUALLY IS!!!!** Worship does not just happen at events or services or even in our own quiet times at home. NO!!! it is our everyday life and lifestyle. That is and must be our worship onto our God. Hey, we all know people that love to sing and dance when they are in church or at an event. However, when they are home or at work or just living life in general, they are totally different people. Hmmm.....

We know that in John 4:26 it tells us that we are to worship God in spirit and in TRUTH!!! Well, if we follow our teachings than we know that the only "truth" is God's Word. Therefore, worshipping God in "truth" means to worship God by living out His Word. We all know that there is a lot more to God's Word than just singing. It is a lifestyle.

It involves embracing the truths of Scripture. It is acknowledging Jesus as the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan. It is seeking an authentic relationship with our "Creator" based on faith and obedience to Jesus' teachings and the full Word of God - Old and New Testaments. Our worship must conform to the revelation of God found in Scripture. We must learn more and be more informed about who our God is and what His character is as well as, who we are in Him.

We must know these things, understand and grasp them so that we can live it out and be His representative, His ambassador, while we are here on this earth. Through the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, we are transformed to be as He is, within our own lives, our own behavior, our own lifestyles.

There is an incorrect understanding of “spirit and truth” that has infiltrated the Body of Christ. Some believers prefer to worship only “in spirit” but care less about “truth” and following His Word. In fact, they think focusing on “truth,” God’s Word, has the potential to quench the Spirit.

Many today believe that God’s Word is outdated and “not for today”...but it is the truth!!! Therefore, the standard by which they judge the “success of worship” is the thrills and chills they experience. WHAT!!! That is not the way Jesus taught us.

In Matthew 15:7–9, we see that Jesus himself criticized the worship of the religious leaders in his day by saying that they honor God “*with their lips,*” and that their “*heart is far from*” Him. We tend to think that Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders of that day and that He was never referring to the believers today. I don’t know about that. They did their worship from their own understanding outside of God’s Word. Can some of us be doing the same. Hmmm....

Others prefer to worship only “in truth” and are actually offended when others “feel” anything or experience heightened emotions. They do not believe in music, song, dance or banners. They have a very, very low key approach to praise so as not to “offend” God.

When Jesus tells us that we are to worship God in “truth,” He means that the worshiper needs to be “real” in their worship before the Lord and they must worship in their lives and their lifestyle according to His Word. True believers must be “real” in their character and in their lifestyle. That is what “true worship” is.

We must understand and grasp the point that true worship is an “attitude of one’s heart.” Many believers from different countries and cultures “praise” God differently. Many cultures praise God in different ways than the way we may praise God. It may seem strange to us. However, they are truly manifesting their praise onto their God with the right heart and correct motives.

That is what I am speaking about. We all have different ways that we “praise” our God. However, the common bond between all true believers is the actual lifestyle that is manifested and expressed within the lives of every true born again child of God – no matter where they are from. That is the real test of who is a child of God – their lifestyle, not the way they praise.

We see David being “real” in His worship. As we read many of the psalms, we see that they start out with David telling God how bad everything is. Yet, somewhere in the middle of the Psalm, David all of a sudden changes his approach to God. He begins to extol God for who He is. Why does this happen? It happens because David was “real” before his God. He came to God open and real. He got all His stuff out. He did not try to “fake it.” He was real. When he was “real,” he got all the “woes” out and then his sorrow turned into joy!!!

We must worship the Lord with a pure heart and with no hidden agendas or desires for rewards when we are truly worshipping our God with our lifestyle. We must be pure minded and our heart must be totally for and unto Him in every aspect and part of our life. Matthew 5:8 tells us that those that worship with a pure heart shall see (experience) God in all His fullness. This refers to every aspect of our lives, not just in times of song, music, dance and banners, etc.

True worship is loving and worshipping God for who He is, not for what you want or for what you can get out of it. It is to know that you do not earn God's approval or acceptance by praising or worshipping Him. That has already been accomplished totally through the blood of Jesus. True worship is a time of literally, being real and genuine with the Lord. It is a time of being your self before God and then to others. We come to Him just the way we are. It is, most importantly, a lifestyle that is lived out every moment, every second of our lives because we love our God.

The scripture infers to the true believer that they can now truly be able to enter into the “*secret places*” of the most High God. The term “*secret place*” in the scripture refers to being “under a covering; to be hid and protected.” It refers to being under the “umbrella” of God’s providential care and to “take refuge and to be ultimately in God’s presence.” That is where we truly are. We are in God’s forever presence. There is nothing we can do to get us into that place except one thing – receiving Jesus as your personal Savior and Lord.

Psalm 81:7 tells us that we, because of Jesus, are now in the “*secret place of thunder.*” We are in His “cloud,” the “shekinah” glory of God. Psalm 91:1 tells us, “*He that dwells in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*” The children of Israel, when they were in the Wilderness, were protected under the providential care of God. They were under the “umbrella” of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

We, as true believers, now dwell within God’s “glory cloud” forever and ever, because of Jesus. We worship our God from out of our spirit. We offer onto our God our “spiritual sacrifices” of righteousness, praise, joy, and thanksgiving. The true worshiper truly “knows their God.” The true worshiper is able to enter into a deeper relationship with their God. If you are that “true worshiper,” you are able to recognize, see and know first hand through observation and experience, who our God truly is.

The term “*selah*” is found in scripture 71 times within the Psalms and 3 times in the book of Habakkuk. It literally means, “to pause and think on this.” I encourage every one of us to do just that, “to pause and think on this.”

I know there is so much more that we can say on this topic of true worship and being the true worshiper. However, the most important thing to grasp and understand is that true worship is truly an “attitude of the heart.” It must be our lifestyle now as a child of God. It **must** be expressed within the life of every true believer and every true worshiper of the one and only true God all the days of our life.

We love God by loving others and when we love others we are loving God.

That is what “true worship” is and what the “true worshiper” does.