

**Worship in Spirit and in Truth - 4**  
**Worship in Truth**

**Sermon Delivered on August 25th, 2019**  
**AM Service**

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**Text:**

John 4:19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. 20: Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. 21: Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22: Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23: 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. 24: God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

**Introduction**

In this year 2019, we have devoted this year in the study of worship. **How important is this study?** If you are a Christian, you need to understand that, **at the heart of your salvation is worship.** Worship is **not a secondary issue** in relation to salvation but lies at the **heart and center of salvation.** The **purpose of salvation** is not simply to rescue us from the fires of hell but that we might be **brought back to God and dwell with Him for eternity and enjoy fellowship and communion** with Him even **in this present life.**

Worship is at the heart of the gospel. This is why our Lord Jesus gladly responded to the Samaritan woman's query about worship **even as He was evangelizing her.** And this is why the gospel is given to us, that we may worship and commune with the holy and righteous God. God through the gospel is seeking to bring sinners back to the place for which they were created for, that is to be true worshipers.

John 4:23 **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 not just seeking worship, He is seeking true worshipers. **God is concerned about the way His people worship Him.** In fact, when you read the Scriptures it is clear that some **people died because they would not worship God rightly.** They perished because they ignored the way God said He wanted to be worshipped. So, the way we worship is something that is very important. Worship is coming into the presence of the holy God **in the ways that He wants us to come and doing the things He wants us to do.** We must worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

To worship the Father in truth involves having **real motive**, **right rule**, and **righteous walk**. We have time to cover the first two headings, namely, **real motive**, and **right rule**.

## I – Real Motive

To worship God in truth, we must approach God truthfully. We must come to Him honestly; with true hearts. This is what Jesus was referring to when he said of the people of his day, [Matthew 15:7](#) *Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8: This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9: But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

According to our Lord Jesus, there is **no true worship unless there is honesty of heart** on the part of the worshiper. We must not pretend to worship. We must worship honestly, knowing that our hearts are open books before God.

People come to church for all kinds of reasons. This reminds of a true story that was told about King Louie XIV of France. One Sunday, he and his royal party arrived at the church but saw no one except the court preacher. The King was surprised to see all the empty seats and so he asked the minister. *“Where is everybody? Why isn’t anyone else present this morning?”* The minister answered, *“Your Majesty, I announced that you would not be here today because I wanted you to see who came to the service just to flatter you and who came to the service to really worship God. They found you are not coming, nobody came.”*

People come to church for all the wrong reasons. But if our worship is to be true and acceptable, it must be real. It must be true. It must be authentic. It must be genuine. It must be in truth. If our worship is to be true and acceptable, our motive must be real.

## II – Right Rule

If our worship is to be acceptable, our worship must worship according to the right rule. It must be in truth. And to worship God in truth, basically denotes that our worship must be **done in a context of truth** and **according to truth**. Our worship must be **regulated** by the truth of God as revealed in the word of God. And so, if we are going to worship the Father in truth, **the first thing we must do is go to the Scripture to discover what truth is**.

The Scripture alone must regulate our worship. This means we if we want a worship according to truth we must not look to at least four things.

### 1. People’s Tradition

First, we must not look to people’s tradition. Man-made traditions must not regulate our worship. Traditions are not a safe guide as how we are to worship the Father. I am not saying that all traditions are bad, but we must realize that **man-made traditions are man-made**, and because they are man-made, they can be **easily be contaminated with error**. Tradition must not be our final authority and guide as to how the Father is to be worshipped. We see this when Jesus Christ spoke to the Pharisees, how that their religion was very much **corrupted with their own**

**ideas and their own traditions** which then caused them to violate the very word of God that they claimed to uphold.

Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. 7: Howbeit **in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.** 8: For laying aside the commandment of God, **ye hold the tradition of men,** as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. 9: And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Our Lord rebukes the religious leaders of His day, because they honor and obey their tradition more than the word of God.

Colossians 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8: **Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men,** after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

And so, to worship the Father in truth means we must not look to **man-made traditions as our guide. Man-made traditions are not the final authority** and are **not a safe guide** as to how the Father is to be worshiped. It must be Scripture alone.

## **2. Personal Preferences**

Secondly, personal preferences must not regulate our worship. A lot of church goers have many different ideas about what constitutes worship. Many come to worship based on their personal preferences or **what pleases them.** But we must understand that the issue is not, does this worship please me and meet my need but rather, is this worship the kind of worship that God desires and deserves. So, the question we need to ask is, do I worship to please me or other men or to please God? A worship that is pleasing to God is not driven by personal likes and dislike but regulated by truth of God's word.

And so, to worship the Father in truth means we must not look to personal preferences are not the final authority and are not a safe guide as to how the Father is to be worshiped. It must be Scripture alone.

## **3. Popularity**

Thirdly, 'what is popular' must not regulate our worship. **We must not worship according to popularity.** If you look around and visit other churches, they do what they do in worship services because it is popular thing to do. The reasoning is that it's done that way in many churches so therefore, we have to do it that way in our church. They believe that church services must be trendy and do what the pop culture dictates.

A. W. Tozer in his book, "A Disruptive Faith: Expect God to Interrupt Your Life", wrote, "*Worship is no longer worship when it reflects the culture around us more than the Christ within us.*"

And so, to worship the Father in truth means we must not rely on what is popular. Pop culture is not the final authority and are not a safe guide as to how the Father is to be worshiped. It must be Scripture alone.

#### **4. Pragmatism**

Fourthly, pragmatism must not regulate our worship. Pragmatism has dominated the thinking of many church goers and church leaders in our day. Pragmatism is **the idea that we will do whatever works**. We will do and incorporate in our worship whatever produces the worship experience that we want.

None of these are safe guides, either people's tradition or personal preference or pop culture or pragmatism are not safe guides as to how we are to worship God. To worship in truth is **to worship in a way that is guided and regulated by the word of God plus nothing**. The authority is not tradition, not personal preferences, not what is popular, and not whatever works. It must be Scripture alone.

Going back to what our Lord said to the woman at the well,

[John 4:22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.](#)

What our Lord Jesus is saying to the woman and to everyone of us, is that **it is impossible to worship the God we do not know**. For what is worship? Worship is wholehearted giving to God praise and thanks for who He is and for what He has done. In other words, **worship is fundamentally theological**. It is our theology that produces our doxology. It is our doctrine that produces our devotion. It is the Word that produces our worship. It is the truth of God's word that will produce worship in truth. Worship must be regulated by truth, **generated by truth and energized by truth**.

The great reformer Martin Luther once said, "*The greatest worship that ever takes place in any church is while the Word of God is being expounded and as the people hear the Word of God being read to them, explained to them and applied to them their hearts soar to the heights.*"

So, when we worship **we must direct our thoughts on God**. We must **consciously and deliberately think of God**; His nature, His attributes, His character, His perfection, His glory, His grace, His mercy, His love, His goodness, His patience, His wisdom, His power, His holiness, and His righteousness. We must consciously and deliberately think of His works, His commandments, His will and His promises, and His will. And the only way to do that is by looking in the Scripture. **The Bible alone gives us an accurate knowledge of what God is like**.

This is why a great part of **our worship services is devoted to preaching**. You may be asking why do we spend so much time expounding the truth of the word of God? It's because we take our Lord Jesus Christ's command to worship the Father in truth seriously. We realize that if we are going to worship God in truth, **we must know the truth** and the truth **must be present in every aspect** of our services. This is why we **read** the scripture, we **memorize** scriptures because we want the truth of God's word to guide and regulate our worship. Because **we want an environment of truth** where we worship in a context of truth and according to truth. Here at Grace & Truth, **we read** the Bible, **we memorize** the Bible, **we preach** the Bible, **we pray** the Bible, **we sing** the Bible, this is what we believe Biblical worship is. This is what worship the Father in truth means.

In [Isaiah chapter 8](#), the people in Isaiah's time were coming to him with their visions, and their dreams, and their testimonies, and all these other things they claim to have received from the soothsayers. The people were practicing divination and following the culture around them. The prophet Isaiah received special revelation from God came to the people and said these words, [Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.](#)

To the law and to the testimony, in others words the old testament scriptures. If it does not speak according to this rule it is because there is no light. And **anything that has no light and truth in them must be rejected**. Man-made traditions, personal preferences, pop culture, and pragmatism must not be our authority and guide in our worship. These are not safe guide, only the Scripture must regulate our worship and our life.

### **Closing Thoughts**

Have you come to realize the necessity of the Scripture? Have you come to realize the sufficiency of the Scripture? Have you come to realize that worship and life are not about you? The Samaritan woman did! She acknowledged that worship and life are not about her but worshiping God in spirit and in truth. And when you come to that point your self and your own needs become a very little importance by comparison. The healthiest Christian is then who is always most consumed with he worship of the Triune God through Jesus Christ. This is why our Lord addresses this woman and her salvation on this level.

Have you come to realize your need of the Lord Jesus Christ? Run to Christ. Trust Him alone for your salvation. There is salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is forgiveness with God. But you must go to the cross of Calvary where Jesus Christ shed His blood. Go to the cross where Jesus Christ suffered and died.

To the Christians, may your spirit be so humbled before the Lord today; may your spirit be so hungry for God today; may your spirit be so responsive and receptive before the Lord today and may the truth that you heard today and that you already know reign and rule and dwell richly within you.

**AMEN!**