Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

True Worship, Part 3
Scripture: John 4:20-24
Code: 2006

Let's look in our Scriptures this morning to John chapter 4. I wish to read again our text for this brief series on worship, chapter 4 verses 20 through 24. The section is found in a conversation between Jesus Christ and a Samaritan woman. She speaks in verse 20:

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain: and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 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."

Someone has said that, "Worship is to Christian living what the mainspring is to a watch." To worship God is the very core of a Christian's response; the very heart of a Christian's activity. And to worship is simply to recognize the worth and the value and the majesty and the honor and the glory of God. In fact, it comes from an old Anglo Saxon word worship. The chief duty of every believer is to see the worth of God and to give Him the honor and the glory that is due His name. And as we saw in Psalm 45 verse 1 the word there referring to worship is one that means to boil over. And we saw that as our hearts are warmed with the knowledge of God they become hot, they become impassioned, and the boiling over is worship.

Now as we have called our attention to John chapter 4 we have focused on the most important passage in the New Testament on worship. And to begin with we've just been highlighting one major point and that is THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP. That point is not extraneous to this text; it is, in fact, inherent in it. If you'll notice the end of verse 23 it says; "The Father seeketh such to worship Him."

Worship is so important that it is that for which God seeks. God makes an effort to gain worshippers. In fact, it is the most important activity that man can be involved in ... the worship of God.

Now we've been talking already about the importance of worship. I've suggested to you that there are four reasons why it's important. And I want to review the ones we've covered and then go on.

First of all, worship is important because Scripture is so dominated by it. No matter where you turn in the Scripture you find that worship is enjoined, worship is instructed, it's all over the Scripture. And in our last Lord's Day we examined, for example, Exodus chapter 20 where the first of all the Ten Commandments to reflect the law of God is a call to worship. In Matthew 22 where the Lord Jesus Christ was confronted about what is the first commandment, He responded with a commandment of worship. We talked about the tabernacle and the temple being symbols to identify the importance of worship in the midst of God's people. We talked about the patriarchs who built altars to worship God. And that goes as far back as even Cain and Abel.

And then we went to the New Testament and we examined Romans 12: 1 and 2, and I Peter 2:5, and in looking at those two Scriptures we saw that we are as Christians called to spiritual worship which is acceptable to God. Spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. So, all the way from Cain to the church, anybody who has ever identified himself with the saints of God has been called to worship...has been made a worshipper.

So, fir t of all, then, we say worship is important because of the fact that its so dominates the life and times of Scripture. Secondly, worship is important because destiny is marked by worship. It is not only a scriptural issue; it is an issue of destiny. How a person worships is indicative of their eternal destiny. And you'll remember that we said there are two kinds of worship; unacceptable and acceptable. And one who worships unacceptably is rejected by God. One who worships acceptably is received by God.

Now, I also told you that there are four kinds of unacceptable worship. We looked at that first. There is the worship of false gods unacceptable. There is the worship of the true God in the wrong form, reducing God to an idol as they did when they made the golden calf which was supposed to represent Jehovah God. And then there is the worship of the true God in a selfstyled manner. And then there is the worship of the true God in a wrong attitude. All of those are unacceptable. To worship a false god, to worship the true God in a wrong form, to worship the true God in a selfstyled manner, or to worship the true God in a wrong attitude all of those are wrong.

The golden calf, that was the true God only in a wrong form. Cain worshipped the true God but he had been told to bring an animal sacrifice and when he brought the fruit of the ground he was working toward worship in a wrong selfstyled manner and it was unacceptable. And then as we saw last time, in Malachi chapter 1 and Amos chapter 5 and Hosea chapter 6, and Isaiah chapter 1, the people of Israel very often worshipped God in the right form and the right manner but with the wrong attitude, and that was equally unacceptable. Unacceptable worship reflects a destiny apart from God.

Now I thought about it this week, as to how I could illustrate to you unacceptable worship. And there are many illustrations that I could use but I ... I chose this one because I think it's important to the issue today.

In 1717 there was a group that began, for all intents and purposes, known as the Masonic Lodge, or the Masons. While they do not wish to be known as a religion they are, in fact, by definition clearly a religion. And they are, I think, a classic illustration of unacceptable worship.

The Iowa Quarterly Bulletin, way back in April of 1917, says this (and this is their own publication), quote: "Masonry is a Divinely appointed institution, designed to draw men nearer to God, to give them a clearer conception of their proper relationship to God as their Heavenly Father, to men as their brethren and the ultimate destiny of the human soul," end quote.

Now that is a religion. Anything that says it's a divinely appointed institution, designed to draw men nearer to God, to give them a clear conception of their proper relationship to God, to men and the ultimate destiny of their human soul—that's a religion. Masonry is a religion even though they don't want to admit it.

Now, do they worship God? They say they do. They say they worship God, they say they worship the true God in the true form, in the true manner, and with a true attitude.

Albert Pike, who has been called by fellow Masons one of the most distinguished Masons the Western World has ever produced, has written one of their very important books called Morals and Dogmas. It's so important that it appears in their edition of the Bible. They have their own Bible known as the Hertel's Bible. And this is what he has written: "Masonry reverences all the great reformers. It sees in Moses, the Lawgiver of the Jews, in Confucius and Zoraster, in Jesus of Nazareth, and in the Arabian Iconoclast, great teachers of morality, and eminent reformers, if no more, and allows every brother of the Order to assign to each such higher and even Divine Character as his Creed and Truth require. We do not undervalue the importance of any Truth. We utter no word that can be deemed irreverent by anyone of any faith. We do not tell the Moslem that it is only important for him to believe that there is but one God, and wholly unessential whether Mahomet was His prophet. We do not tell the Hebrew that the Messiah whom he expects was born in Bethlehem nearly two thousand years ago; and he is a heretic because he will not so believe. And as little do we tell the sincere Christian that Jesus of Nazareth was but a man like us, or His history but the unreal revival of an older legend. To do either is beyond our jurisdiction. Masonry, of no one age, belongs to all time; of no one religion, it finds its great truths in all. To every Mason, there is a God; One Supreme, Infinite in Goodness, Wisdom, Foresight, Justice, and Benevolence; Creator, Disposer, and Preserver of all things. How, or by what intermediates He creates and acts, and in what way He unfolds and manifests Himself, Masonry leaves to creeds and religions to inquire," end quote.

In other words, they say they believe in God but you can decide who He is, what He wants, and how to get to Him. And then they claim all these secret words and they are told that when they come into Masonry they're not allowed to speak certain words. And if you've known a Mason you may have

known the fact that he would not reveal those words but I would like to reveal them this morning.

The most sacred word that is given to the Master Mason when he stands at the...what they call the "five points of fellowship," he stands with the one who is initiating him into the Master's class, stands toe to toe, knee to knee, chest to chest, cheek to cheek, and mouth to ear, and is whispered into his ear, “Mah-Hah-Bone.” And that sacred word is supposed to be the name of God.

In a different order of the Masons they have another word, the Knight's Templar, it is the word "JahBulOn." And they say it is the Divine Trinity—Jah, from Jehovah; Bul, from Baal; and On, from the name of the Egyptian sun god.

Pike in his Morals and Dogmas further says, "To achieve salvation the Mason must first attain a solid conviction founded upon reason, that he has within himself a spiritual nature, a soul that is not to die when the body is dissolved, but is to continue to exist and advance toward perfection through all the ages of eternity, and to see more and more clearly, as it draws nearer unto God, the light of the Divine Presence," end quote.

That's hocuspocus meaning nothing, frankly. In the Mason's Bible it says: "In the opening of the lodge, the Great Architect of the Universe must be worshipped." That's what they say. The Great Architect of the Universe must be worshipped.

And then Pike says: "At the Masonic altar, the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem, the Brahmin, and the followers of Confucius and Zoroaster, can assemble as brethren and unite in prayer to the one God. The chaplain of the Masonic Lodge who prays as the voice of the lodge, does not pray in the name of the Carpenter of Nazareth or the name of Jehovah or the name of Allah. He prays to the Grand Artificer or the Great Architect of the Universe. Under that title men of all faiths may find each other his own deity. Failure to mention any deity by name is not denial but merely the practice of a gracious courtesy, so that each man for whom prayer is offered can hear the name of his own deity in the all inclusive title of Great Architect," end quote.

Well, I think you understand, that's enough…that's enough, frankly, to sicken anyone because that's a Satanic false religion. It says, “Yes, we believe in the true God,” but it reduces Him to a wrong form. It worships Him in a wrong manner and with a wrong heart attitude. It is unacceptable. And there are myriads of such unacceptable kinds of worship. And destiny is determined by that. You may think you're worshipping God, but you're not.

Acts 17, Mars hill is a classic illustration ... classic. They had an idol to the "unknown god." And Paul says You've got the right idea, but you don't know what you're doing. You are worshipping in ... what?...ignorance. Now let me tell you about Him. It does no good at all to worship God as you

imagine Him to be.

It's like they tell them in Alcoholics Anonymous that you have to have a relationship with God as you perceive Him to be. Listen, how you perceive Him to be doesn't mean anything, only how He is in reality ... unacceptable worship. It may be the flagrant, violent worship of money. It may be the creation of false deities, or it may be your worshipping supposedly the true God but in an unacceptable manner and thus you're not worshipping Him at all.

Now, let me talk about acceptable worship. And this is what I want you to think with me on especially. Your destiny is determined by acceptable worship. You're marked out as a believer by acceptable worship. The goal of salvation is to create true worshippers. And I think as I alluded to in one of my earlier messages that Psalm 24 verse 3 to 6 is perhaps the most lovely Old Testament picture of an acceptable worshipper. It says: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place?" Who has a right to go into God's presence? Who has a right to come to God? Who has a right to draw near? "He who hath clean hands and a pure heart." You can't go there unless you're washed. "And he who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity, or sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek Him." The true seekers are those with pure hearts, clean hands, honest motives, the pure, the righteous and the holy.

Now, how can you become like that? You have to be redeemed. So, redemption then is to create true worshippers who worship acceptably to God.

Now go back to the Scripture with which we ended last time, Hebrews 12:28, and I want to pick it up from there...Hebrews 12:28. The writer of Hebrews says that we receive a kingdom which cannot be moved unlike the earth which was shaken. The illustration in point here is the shaking of Mount Sinai, but he says we have a kingdom that can't be moved, or shaken. "Therefore let us have grace by which we may serve God." And the word serve is latreuo from which we get liturgy, it means to worship. So, let us have grace by which we may worship God acceptably ... mark that word. That's the word we're after...acceptable worship ... acceptable worship. Let us have grace by which we may serve, or worship, God acceptably.

And then he lists two key things; with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire. If you are to worship God there will be deep in your heart a balance between reverence and fear. Reverence is positive, in a sense it affirms the value and the worth of God. Fear is negative it affirms the judgment, chastening, punishing, consuming fire of verse 29.

And so the true worshipper worships out of reverence for God and out of fear of God. And those are essential. We are then to worship God acceptably, that is the command of verse 28. If we have been redeemed we are the true worshippers. And as true worshippers we must worship acceptably.

Now, let me say at this point, I believe that if you're a true worshipper you will, but not all the time and not always as fully as you ought to because there's still that sin that is in us. Right? But a true Christian is a true worshipper, but we don't always worship as truly as we ought to worship, or as consistently. And so we are called here to worship God acceptably with positive affirmation of who He is and all His glory and a negative affirmation of the fact that He's a consuming fire and we have reason to fear if we don't worship Him acceptably. So, acceptable worship is what He asks of His people.

Now what does it mean? What does that mean? Now follow because I'm going to show you what it means. Turn in your Bible to Romans 14 and I want you to stay clearly in mind with what we are saying now for the next five or ten minutes because its all going to wrap up in a couple of statements that are going to make a big difference. So follow along carefully in your Scriptures, if you can't turn fast enough listen, write them down. Romans 14:18 says this: "For he that in these things serves Christ is acceptable to God." What things? Well, this whole chapter is all about not making a weaker brother stumble, not grieving a brother, not destroying a brother, not using your liberty to cause him to stumble, and he says this: If you serve Christ in these areas, that's acceptable worship. So, worship, first of all, is a matter of how we treat our fellow believers. Did you get that? How we treat our fellow believers. That's a matter of worship. That's a matter of worship. That's a matter of glorifying God and honoring God.

Now look at chapter 15 verse 16, Romans 15:16. And Paul is thanking God, of course, for the grace that called him into the ministry, and then he makes amazing... an amazing statement, he says That I've been ministering the gospel of God. Why, Paul? "In order that," watch this, "the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable." Now that is the language of sacrifice. That is the language of worship. And he says, "I am offering up the Gentiles as an offering to God that is acceptable." What do you mean? This ... winning someone to Jesus Christ is acceptable worship. Paul saw his converts as offerings given to God which were acceptable to God. Isn't that a beautiful way to see evangelism? You're gaining a soul that you can offer to God as an act of holy, acceptable worship.

So, worship is how you treat Christians. And worship is winning nonChristians.

Philippians 4:18 ... Philippians 4:18, and Paul writes Philippians in part to thank the Philippians for a gift of money which they sent him. He was so glad they sent it because it was such an act of love. But he says in verse 18: "I have everything. I abound, I am full, I have received from Epaphroditus the things that were sent from you. And when they came to me they were an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God." I love that. He says Your gift of money, your gift to meet my need was before God a sacrifice acceptable that brought to His nostrils a sweet smell. Listen, worship is giving money to meet needs ... that s worship. That's right. It's giving your resources to others ... supporting the saints and the work of the church, and the ministry of Christ. That's worship.

Now listen carefully ... Romans 14 how you treat fellow Christians. Romans 15 the winning of nonChristians. Philippians 4 giving to meet needs.

Worship, listen now, worship is sharing, that's the sum of those three things...worship is sharing with others...sharing with others you love, sharing with others the gospel, sharing with others your resources. That's worship. Did you get that? That's worship. That exalts God. That honors God. That glorifies God because it puts Him on display through your life and it shows you're obedient to Him. And it shows you love what He loves, He loves the saints, and He loves the lost, and He loves the needy in a special way. That's worship.

Now listen, go to Ephesians 5:10 ... Ephesians 5:10. And here's another very, very important text. It says this: "Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." Now here again we have the language of sacrifice, we have the language of offerings, we have the language of worship. And what is the issue here? Verse 8, "Walk as children of light so that there may be the fruit of light...watch this ... goodness, righteousness, truth manifesting what is acceptable." And that's what he's saying. When your life has goodness, righteousness and truth then you are acceptable.

So, worship, a true offering to God, is righteousness, goodness, truth. That's personal holiness ... personal virtue.

Now, turn again to Philippians chapter 1 verse 11 and let me show you another Scripture. Philippians 1:11: "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness," there we are with the same concept again, righteousness and the fruits of righteousness, "through Christ which are unto the glory and praise of God." And again we see the same thing we saw in Ephesians 5:10 that righteousness, holiness, goodness, godliness, is worship that is acceptable... that is acceptable.

And just to sum it up, I Timothy 2:3 ... I Timothy 2:3...which says "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." What is? The end of verse 2: "A quiet, peaceable life lived in all godliness and honesty." Did you see that? Godliness and honesty ... righteousness, goodness, truth, holiness ... that's worship.

Now listen to me, I gave you three Scriptures that showed worship as sharing with others, I just gave you three Scriptures that showed worship as related to our own holiness...our own righteousness...our own goodness. That's worship. That's worship. It is how you live everyday of your life. Worship is a way of living. A way of living that not only manifests a personal holiness and a personal righteousness but extends that in the love of the brethren, in the proclamation to the lost, and in the freeing of all of our resources to meet needs. That Is worship.

But, let me give you the sunum bonum, where it all finally climaxes in Hebrews 13 ... Hebrews 13...verse 15. And it says; "By Him," oh I love that, that's by Jesus Christ, mentioned in verse 12, "By Jesus Christ let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." Now that is really the climax, isn't it? That is praising and glorifying with our lips and thanking God continually. That is worship. And that's what we do when we come together, we sing and we praise God with our hearts and our lips and we say thanks.

But look at verse 16: "But to do good and to share forget not; for with such sacrifices God is ... what? ... wellpleased." Did you get that? Listen to me, God wants you to come here and worship. He wants you to be here to praise His name, to glorify His name, to say thanks to Him. But He does not want you to forget that worship is a way of life in which you do good and in which you share with others. You see it? These two verses sum up all that I've been saying to you. And listen very carefully to What I say. If you think that you can live anyway you want and walk in here on a Sunday morning and worship you're dead wrong. You can't do that because worship does not occur in a vacuum. Worship is not stimulated by gimmicks. I've had people say to me we should have signs around that say This is a holy place, or Quiet! Keep silence in the temple. That we should tell people not to talk when they come in. Or, I should have bells on my suit so that when I come like the priest of old you hear the tinkle you know it's time to get holy. Listen, worship is not something stimulated by artificial gimmickry. And if you've got to have that, or certain kind of mood music to worship, what you do isn't worship. You don't need gimmicks. I can worship God on a freeway, traffic hour. So can you if your hearts right. You see, when you come together in the assembly of the saints to worship God, if it isn't the extension of a worshipping life you can't get it going. That's why it says Yes, we must assemble collectively and let us offer the sacrifice of praise with the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name, but we can't forget to do good and to share as a way of life. Or we'll never generate the worship we think we want on Sunday. It's a way of life.

May I add this? You also need Sunday to stimulate the rest of the week. That's right. It says in Hebrews chapter 10: "Let us draw near unto God." And then it says, listen carefully: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Why? Because we can come together to stimulate one another to ... what? ... love, that's sharing and good works, that's righteousness. You have to have them out there in the world in order to worship. And you have to be stimulated to them in the worship in order to live them out there in the world. Do you see the cycle? You see, one feeds the other. One feeds the other. Listen to me, you must be here in the fellowship of His saints. You must be here in the congregation of the righteous, in the living temple where God dwells among His people. It isn't the building; it's His people in whom He dwells. Because it is here that you are stimulated to love and good works. And as that stimulation affects your soul you go out and you do good and you share and when you come back the overflow is praise and a continual heart of worshipping thanksgiving.

Now if you're not in the cycle somewhere you better get in. You say How do you get in? Confess you sins, start right now. People say Well, I've got so many problems in my Christian life, I seem to be....

And you know what I think? I think it's all basically comes down to two things; one, they're not worshipping six days a week with a worshipping life, or they're not worshipping one day a week with the assembling of the saints. You need both. If you just come when it's convenient, you're never going to get your act together. Because you can't do it on your own, you've got to have that faithful consistent stimulation to love and good works, that a body of people brings to bear on your life.' And we live in such an easycome, easygo, casual, flippant society that people don't make those kinds of consistent faithful commitments. And then they wonder why they can't get their act together. You need it. You need to come and join with the worshipping assembly. I'm not saying you have to come to Grace Church but I'll tell you, there are an awful lot of churches around that have a Sunday morning service but there's no worship there. And some of them are even evangelical. They spend so much time promoting their latest activity that you couldn't even find God in the midst of the program. But you need worship because worship becomes a stimulation to doing good and sharing and doing good and sharing means that when you come in here on Sunday you don't have to say Boy, (ahem) I'm getting my act together. Put on a different suit of clothes so I feel spiritual. Whistturn the tables and come in and worship. You can't do it. It isn't going to happen.

And if you find it difficult to worship God as you come to this place, it's not because we haven't stimulated, it's not because you need different gimmicks, it's because you haven't been doing it out there and this isn't...this isn't what it ought to be in the flow, see, of a worshipping life.

Well, worship is essential. It's essential, as I said, first of all, because the way it dominates Scripture. And secondly, because it's a matter of destiny. Let me give you a third reason. Worship is essential because it is THE major theme of the universe. It's the major theme of the universe. It's the major theme of the ages. It's the major theme of eternity.

I'll take you into eternity past, before men were created, before the earth was created, what would we find there? We'd find the trinity and the holy angels. What would they do? It says in Nehemiah 9:6, simply this: "The host of heaven worships Thee." Did you get that? The host of heaven worships Thee. That's what went on in eternity past ... worship, worship, worship.

When Adam and Eve were created and put on this world they worshipped God, they walked and talked with God in the cool of the day. They worshipped Him, they glorified His ... His holy name. And the fall came because they wouldn't worship anymore. That's right. Eve chose to worship whom? Whom did she worship? Satan. Adam chose to worship whom? Eve. And as soon as they ceased worshipping God they fell.

The first division among men came between Cain and Abel. Why? The division came over the way they worshipped. One brought an acceptable, one an unacceptable offering.

When the patriarchs worshipped God properly they were blessed. When they worshipped God unacceptably they were chastened.

The nation Israel was taken out of Egypt in the book of Exodus. They wandered for forty years in the Sinai desert until a whole generation died. And the Bible says it simply, and only, they wandered in the desert and lost their lives without entering the Promised Land because they failed to worship God properly, even Moses failed to do that, and never entered the Promised Land. When they finally got into the land, according to Nehemiah 9 and I Chronicles 29, when they worshipped God as He wanted to be worshipped they were blessed. And in Acts 7:42 and 43 it says when they did not worship God properly they were punished and ultimately scattered and splattered all over the world.

When Jesus came and He was born, they came and worshipped Him. The first thing He did when His ministry began was to go to Jerusalem and the first act that He had when He went inJerusalem, John chapter 2, He walked right into the place of worship, and He took a whip and cleaned the place out. And after Held got it all straightened out and dealt with the corrupt worshippers in chapter 2, in chapter 4 He called for true worshippers. Worship was always the issue. It is the central theme of redemptive history.

When the church was born, look at Philippians 3:3, a verse you probably never even read with this in mind, one of the greatest statements on worship in the Bible ... Philippians 3:3, we find a definition of the church, here it is: "For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Oh, what a statement! That is an absolutely marvelous statement of the identity of the church. I can't think of a greater one than that. What is a church? It is the circumcision. In other words, it is those uniquely identified as God's people but it is not a physical circumcision. They worshipped God in their spirits and they rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

What is the church? The church is those who worship God in their spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. That's a Christian.... that's a Christian...a God worshipper. So, the church is to be a worshipping people. And all through the years of the church God is calling out those who will worship Him in the spirit, having no confidence in the flesh.

And if you look at the future, look at Revelation chapter 4, you will find that history consummates in worship. You go pre-creation, you go postcreation, eternity past, eternity future, and all time in between worship is the theme. But let me just show you, and the climax of this is absolutely incredible at the end of Revelation. Revelation 4:10, here you get a glimpse of the future, the glory of the Lord coming to set up His Kingdom. "The four and twenty elders fell down before Him that is seated on the throne and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying; Thou art worthy, 0 Lord." See, worship is the theme of heaven.

Chapter 5 verse 14: "And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth forever and ever."

Chapter 11 verse 16: "When the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. Then the four and twenty elders who sat before God on their thrones fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying, We give thanks, 0 Lord God Almighty."

Chapter 14 verse 7: "And here comes the angel with the everlasting gospel, preaches to them that dwell on the earth, every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters." Now note it this angel said this having the everlasting gospel. What is the eternal message? The eternal message is worship God. That's the message of the everlasting Gospel.

Chapter 15 verse 4: "Who shall not fear Thee, 0 Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee."

Chapter 19 verse 4: "And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne saying, Amen; Hallelujah."

Now listen to the last two, verse 10 of chapter 19: "And I fell at his feet," the feet of an angel ... an angel who spoke to John, "I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, of thy brethren who have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." Would you underline those two? They are the most important two words in the Bible.... worship God.

Chapter 22 verse 8, John again in his vision was so amazed, and he fell down in verse 8 to worship the angel again, and the same thing happened. The angel says, "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant of thy brethren the prophets, and of them who keep the words of this book, worship God." Underline it again. That, beloved, is the everlasting Gospel. That is the message from eternity to eternity that God has to give ... worship Me... worship Me. That is the theme of eternity, the theme of redemptive history, to worship the true and living and glorious God.

So, Scripture calls us to worship. Destiny calls us to worship. Eternity calls us to worship. And just in case somebody might fall through the cracks and think you don't need to worship, can I give you one more? The fourth reason why it's important to worship, Christ commanded it.... Christ commanded it. In Matthew 4:10 He said this and summed it all up. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve." And He said it to Satan. And in so saying swept into that command every being ever created. All are responsible to worship God.

Do you worship God? As a way of life? That's what He's asking. If you find it difficult to worship the Lord when you come on Sunday, it isn't because the music isn't right, it isn't because there's too much noise in the auditorium when you come in, it isn't because you had to hassle for a parking place. No, if you can't worship it isn't because you got distracted, if you can't worship it's because you're not in the flow, you see? Everything there is calls for worship ... everything...everything. Scripture calls for worship, destiny calls for worship, eternity calls for worship, Christ calls for worship, the angels have said worship God ... worship God. But it can't happen once a week, it's a way of life. But when the assembly comes together once a week there will be a bursting out, a boiling over of true praise and ownership of the heart because what you have enjoyed of worship individually when brought into the joy of the assembly is enriched and enhanced. And our worship becomes all the more glorious.

Let's pray.

Listen, while your heads bowed for just a moment. In Hebrews chapter 11 there's a great list of the heroes of faith. It says By faith soandso, by faith soandso, by faith soandso, by faith soandso, you know the chapter. It begins with Abel and it says regarding Abel that by faith Abel offered the right sacrifice. He worshipped. And after Abel in the list comes Enoch, and it says Enoch walked with God. Abel worshipped and then Enoch walked. And then comes Noah and it says Noah worked for one hundred and twenty years to build a boat. And I think there's a marvelous analogy in that. First Abel and worship, then Enoch and walk, then Noah and work. And I really believe that's the way the Christian life has to be seen. First we worship, then we walk, and then we work. And that's the sequence. That's the divine sequence. You've got to get in the flow somewhere so that your life is a worshipping life.

Father, we ask at this time, this morning, that You would do a work in our hearts. The text always says we are to worship but the true worship comes by Jesus Christ. If there are some in our midst this morning who have never worshipped, cause they've never even gotten involved in the cycle at all may they step in through faith in Christ and become true worshippers. Speak to their hearts, 0 God. For those of us who are Christians who find ourselves unable to worship, unwilling to worship, struggling to worship, help us to get into the flow somewhere, to not forsake the stimulating assembly, the living temple, a dwelling place of God among the living stones of His people, nor to forsake the day to day life of worship that does good and shares. For with such sacrifices Thou art well pleased. Be pleased with our worship, and make our times together but extensions, but the bubbling over of a life of worship. Teach us to be faithful every Lord's day. Teach us to be faithful every waking day to worship. And may we in response know that fullness of blessing that comes to the one with clean hands and a pure heart who is of the generation that seeks after God.

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