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True Worshippers Shall Worship the Father.

(John 4:16-26)

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

True Worshipers shall Worship the Father.

Some may ask if Jesus is not God who should we worship? Especially when Jesus himself said a day is coming when true worshippers will worship the Father. This study sets about to answer this question, but let's start at the following verses.

- **John 4:20-22:** Our (Samaritan) fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you (Jews) say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.”²¹ Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

The mountain the Samaritan fathers worshipped on was Mount Gerizim a mountain of Samaria. Moses commanded the Israelites when they entered into the Promised Land to speak the blessing from Mt Gerizim (that comes with keeping the law) and to speak the curse from Mount Ebal. Six tribes were to stand on the slopes of either mountain. When the Israelites returned from the Babylonian exile, they refused to let the mixed races of Samaria help rebuild Jerusalem so the Samaritans built themselves a Temple on Mt Gerizim. Samaritan tradition maintains that Abraham attempted to sacrifice Isaac on this mountain and at a nearby city called Salem Abraham meet Melchizedek and Jacob's dream occurred on this mountain. The Jews of Judah worshipped at their Temple in Jerusalem while the people in the land of Samaria worshipped in their Temple on Mount Gerizim, but even though these were the two major worship centres of Israel Jesus tells the woman that a time is approaching when no-one will need these two centres to worship God.

Jesus words:

- Salvation is from the Jews (v22).

Means that the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom. 3:2) they are Israelites and children of Abraham because they are his offspring (Rom. 9:4-5, 7), to them belong the adoption, the glory and the covenants they were given the law, the worship and the promises, to them belong the patriarchs and from their race, according to the flesh came the Christ who is Lord over all.

THE TRUE WORSHIPERS WILL WORSHIP THE FATHER IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH.

- **John 4:23-26:** But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.”²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”²⁵ The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.”²⁶ Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

NOTICE: this woman and the Samaritan people had a heartfelt expectation that their promised Messiah (the Christ) was coming and would be full of wisdom and explain all things (concerning prophecy, salvation and God's eternal plans and purposes). Jesus twice says:

- The Father is seeking true worshipers who will worship Him in spirit and truth.

The spirit in the context of these verses refers to the human spirit, the heart, the mind and the authentic self. It refers to the inner most being of who we are at our core. While the truth carries the idea of a thing not being concealed.

True worshipers will worship God in spirit carry the following three ideas:

1. Worshipping from the heart.
2. Worshipping without concealing anything before God.
3. Worshipping from honesty and integrity.

Worshipping in truth carries the following three ideas:

1. Being honest before God as opposed to being hypocritical like the religious leaders of Jesus generation who Jesus rebuked with the words, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness (Matt 23:27).

They were worshipping God, but were hypocrites and self-righteous, they did not acknowledge their sin, but believed they were right with God because they descended from Abraham and adhered to the Jewish ceremonial rites, holy days and strictly kept their religious customs and traditions.

2. Acknowledging one's own sin before God contrasted to living a life of self-righteousness as the scribes and Pharisees were doing.
3. Worshipping according to the teachings of Jesus, the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The words, "Worship in spirit and truth" is not about understanding every detail of doctrine from Genesis to Revelation the primary focus is honest worship from the heart, (i.e., worship without any pretence). Ponder for a moment when the early church came together after Christ's death and resurrection it was made up of Jews who had been under Moses Law for nearly 4000 years, Samaritans who had married foreign wife's and adopted their pagan practices, and Gentiles who knew nothing about God or the Old Testament. These groups were coming together in-home churches to worship God the thing they all had in common was not intellectual head knowledge from Genesis to Revelation but their passion and love toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, the message of the cross and the Gospel was central in their lives. The love Jesus showed toward them on the cross of Calvary was the cement that held them together as they grew in their faith, in behaviour and in greater knowledge.

Jesus said:

- I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)

Worshipping in truth and in spirit is coming to God through the Lord Jesus Christ and walking in a manner worthy of him with all humility, gentleness, patience, speaking the truth and bearing with one another in love. It is putting away all bitterness, anger slander and malice and being kind to one another, tender-hearted and forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave us. It is knowing that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all and being fully aware that we are all members of one another growing up in every way into Christ who is the head from whom the whole body, is held together and grows so that it builds itself up in love eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It is building each other up until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:1). When we worshipped the Father through Christ with this attitude we are worshipping in spirit and in truth. Notice the knowledge Paul says we should all be building each other up in is the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus says God his heavenly Father is Spirit, meaning God is an eternal Spirit with a Father's heart. This is why God desires those who worship Him to worship from a true heart because it is in the heart of humans that God desires to dwell and it is through the Spirit that worshipper's commune with Him.

NOTE: worship is not limited to musical instruments and singing; worship is about communion with God. It can be a simple prayer, a cry of help, seeking God in depression or despair, worship is not something that is only about joyous times it covers every moment we are in communion with God that is why it is so important to worship and communicate with God with an honest heart that is void of any hypocrisy and pretense.

Back to our original question, "Who should be worship?" If Jesus is not God who should we worship? Is it wrong for a Christians mind and their thoughts to be more occupied with Christ than they are with his heavenly Father? This question has caused certain confusion throughout all generations amongst faithful brothers and sisters in Christ. Those who have pondered this question experience a mental dilemma between who in prayer, thought and heartfelt worship they should give the highest esteem and exaltation to and mentally wondered if it is wrong to love and esteem Christ more than God his heavenly Father?

Consider this: Adam fully loved Eve, and God was not jealous of Adam's love it was proper and right. A wife fully loves her children and her husband is not Jealous it is proper and right. Likewise, Christians can fully love and worship Christ and be confident that God his heavenly Father is not jealous of their devotion toward His Son because Christ is the glory of God and God's magnificence and love is seen in the character and nature of Christ.

It is proper and right to worship the immortal invisible eternal God who created all things and is the source of all life for without Him we would not exist, and it is proper and right to worship His Son the Lord Jesus Christ for without his willingness to lay down his life to a brutal, bloody and cruel death we would be eternally separated from the immortal invisible eternal God and left to decay in the grave with no hope of being raised from it to eternal life and everlasting glory.

It could be likened to a child asking the question, "Who should I love more, Mum or Dad?" Obviously, the child is to love both Mum and Dad and have the same heartfelt gratitude toward both parents. Likewise, Christians should love and honour God as their creator and heavenly Father and love and honour Christ as the most loved Son of God and as their redeemer, their perfect High Priest and eternal brother.