God’s Responsibilities for Man: True Worship

Zanesville, OH | September 16, 2018 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** John 4:19-24

**Intro**:

* It has been said that worship was designed for God’s glory and not for our entertainment. I suppose we shouldn’t be surprised that the divine-design for worship has been taken and twisted to satisfy the flesh and our evil desires since we do it with everything else. Yet, this is not by any means an excuse or grounds for which we should refuse to honor and worship our Lord. Scriptures warned that such twisted thoughts would creep in among God’s holy pattern (cf. Acts 20:29-30; 2 Tim. 2:14-19; 2 Tim. 4:3-4). So where does that leave us? Well, we need to ensure we don’t corrupt that pattern and we maintain in unity a spirit of true worship for only with such is God pleased.

**Jesus and the Samaritan**

1. **True worship involves knowledge- Jn. 4:22; Acts 17:23**
   1. Let’s first define what we mean by worship:
      1. *To honor with extravagant love and extreme submission; as a lover* **(Webster)**
      2. *Homage rendered to God which it is sinful (idolatry) to render to any created being* **(Easton)**
   2. Why even talk about worship? Well, God has given man the responsibility of worshipping Him. We were created for a relationship with God and such a relationship demands that God be worshipped (Isa. 43:7, 21; Acts 17:24-28; Eph. 1:3-12; 2:10; Col. 1:16, 18).
   3. The conversational exchange between Jesus and the Samaritan woman denoted several key highlights pertinent to how one should worship. One such essential quality is having knowledge about the worship itself (both of who/what is being worshipped and how it is to be done).
   4. It is evident from the conversation that the woman lacked knowledge about the kind of worship she and her ancestors were involved in (cf. Jn. 4:20, 22). Such worship was not uncommon during these days (Acts 14:11-15; 17:22-23; Rom. 1:20-23; 1 Thess. 1:9).
2. **True worship is not limited or confined to an edifice or geographical location- Jn. 4:21**
   1. I’m afraid that disciples of Christ put too much stock and emphasis on a building or a geographical location when it comes to worshipping God. That was the case in the Old Testament and where did that get them (Amos 5:4-6)?
   2. We might often remark, *“I’m going to worship on Sunday morning.”* Does this refer to going to services or engaging in the actual act of worship?
   3. **Question**: When we leave this building today, should we stop saying *“I’m going to worship?”* Not if it means we are going to engage in the act of honoring our Lord.
   4. The point Jesus is making is that true worship emanates from the heart for such is what God looks at and observes when anyone worships Him. Location and shelter have nothing to do with it.
3. **True worship involves spirit and truth- Jn. 4:23-24**
   1. Jesus now answers the question of “how” one is to appropriately worship the Almighty. This ties in to point number 1 about having knowledge. We know that God is to be worshipped and it is to be done in *“spirit”* and *“truth.”*
   2. This is a radical change from what many were accustomed to. Worship would have included special ceremonies, rites, sacrifices etc. God desires worship in spirit for He Himself is spirit (Jn. 4:24; Phil. 3:3).
   3. To say one should worship in spirit is to say we should give our heart, soul and mind to God (cf. Matt. 15:7-9; 22:37). There is no rocket science behind Jesus’ statement but that our hearts draw near to Him (Mic. 6:8; Jam. 4:8).
   4. The *“spirit”* principle is paired with *“truth.”* With an open-heart willing to obey God, we must cling to His pattern for worship and our lives. Jesus tells us plainly what truth is (Jn. 17:17) and we know that Jesus was the truth, the very word of God (Jn. 1:1, 14).
   5. From such pattern we obtain the principles of **praying** (Matt. 6:9-15), **giving** (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; 9:7), **remembering Jesus’ death** (1 Cor. 11:23-26), **singing** (Eph. 5:19), **preaching and teaching** (2 Tim. 4:1-2) and **living a holy life acceptable to God** (Acts 2:42; Rom. 12:1-2). May we endeavor to worship the Almighty in spirit and truth!

**The Outcome of True Worship**

1. Souls that are nourished and joined in fellowship with God (Eph. 4:15-16).
2. A blessed people awaiting an incomparable reward (Matt. 6:33; Rom. 8:18; Eph. 1:3).
3. The proclamation of the gospel to the lost (Matt. 28:19-20).