**Worship**

*John 4:1-26*

**INTRODUCTION**

Everyone has difficulty with things they do not understand. It may be the ever-changing face of electronics, a particular sport, a new language, a new job, or a new culture. Often the complexities may cause one to forego the benefits of them. The same may be true with regard to biblical worship. The basic idea of worship is very simple: It is the voluntary \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of one person, physically and spiritually, to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ another. However, if simply attending a preaching service labeled a “worship service” has been the *only* worship experience, confusion can be expected. Other than misunderstanding the basic definition for worship, the next great obstacle to worship may be the misunderstanding of the object of worship.

1. **The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of worship can be confused with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of worship.**
	1. The Samaritan woman had good intentions, but those intentions were a major distraction to the real issue.
	2. It did not take this woman long to recognize Jesus as a prophet or someone from God.
		1. This understanding led to questions, and they were not questions about trivial matters.
		2. They were questions about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
	3. She began by asking Jesus where worship was to take place (vs. 20).
		1. She questioned whether worship was to take place where the Samaritans worshipped or in Jerusalem where the Jews worshipped.
		2. When it comes to worship, especially corporate worship, the place is important.
		3. However, it is not the most important criteria.
	4. Jesus sidestepped the location question and went straight to the real issue of **what** or **whom** she should worship.
		1. In verse 22, Jesus said, “*Ye worship* ***ye know not what****: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.”*
		2. Her focus was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-centered. God’s focus was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-centered.

What are some possible differences between man-centered and God-centered worship?

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1. **The Samaritan woman had good intentions, but those good intentions were a major \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the real issue.**
	1. Where you go to church is very important, but even more important is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you do when you get there.
	2. A great number of churchgoers are in the same boat. They mean well, but they are missing the main point.
		1. For instance, it is Sunday, about 9:30 a.m., and you stop for fuel. Another car pulls in, and you notice the man is wearing a suit and tie. His family in the car is dressed nicely as well. You greet them, “You folks sure look nice this morning; what is the occasion?”
		2. The answer? “We are going to church.” That is the admirable and proper place to go on Sunday morning. We have nothing but praise for where they are going.
		3. Isn’t that what the Samaritan woman emphasized—the place?
	3. Grammar may help to illustrate this truth, as well.
		1. If we say, “John hit the ball,” we have a subject (John), a verb (hit), and a direct object (ball). How much sense does “John hit” make, without the “ball”? Picture a child running into the house, blurting out, “John hit! John hit! John hit!” We would immediately demand, “What or whom!? What or whom did John hit?”
		2. Without the direct object, the sentence is not complete and does not make sense. As a matter of fact, it is confusing and frustrating.

Is it possible to “worship” at church, but not worship God? How?

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* 1. True worship of the true God is rarely mentioned.
		1. The importance of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Sunday school programs, nurseries, the music program, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the people, and the message of the pastor are all under consideration.
		2. All these are important (good intentions), but God, who is the object of the place of worship, is obscured by less meaningful objects.
	2. In our modern time, we are programmed more to a place than to a Person. However, it is because of the Person that we have a place in which to worship.
	3. Consider this illustration to clarify.
		1. A longtime friend rang your doorbell. You opened the door and bid him come in. To your surprise, rather than returning the greeting, he just walked past you and on into your house. He had been there many times before and was quite familiar with the surroundings. He made his way into the kitchen and actually found something to eat and to drink, but he was still not conversing with you. He even joined everyone in the family room and talked with the others while you just watched. He enjoyed one of your recliners for a while and then quietly left, without saying a word. It was a strange experience. It was as if he were thoroughly familiar with your home, enjoyed being there and enjoyed visiting with everyone, but felt no real need or obligation to converse with **you,** even though it was your home.
		2. This scenario may never take place in your home. But, it may be more frequent than we realize in the services of many well-intentioned \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
		3. Is it not true that people come to God’s house on Sunday morning, are greeted at the door, and walk right in? Are they not familiar with the surroundings and other people there? Do they not enjoy the congregational singing, the choir, and the special music? Do they not enjoy everyone’s fellowship, shaking hands with them at the close of the service as they leave to go home? They have benefited from a good lesson in Sunday school and have been well fed from God’s Word by the pastor. And yet they have not acknowledged the good man of the house (God) the whole time!

What are ways we can be guilty of coming to church without acknowledging God?

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* + 1. But if it seems strange for a friend to arrive and then to go without ever speaking to you, what about visiting the house of God without \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Him in a way that honors Him?
		2. A.W. Tozer said, “The modern scientist has lost God among the wonders of His world; we Christians are in real danger of losing God amid the wonders of His Word.”
	1. I wonder if our coming to the house of God so many times without acknowledging Him properly suggests to Him that He isn’t our primary reason for coming and that our purpose is accomplished \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Him?
		1. The singing and preaching of the Word of God may be intact—even inspiring and challenging.
		2. Without question, prayer would acknowledge His presence.
		3. Would it acknowledge His worth—who and what He is—as much as worship?
1. ***Who God is* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ worship.**
	1. When Isaiah saw the Lord, in Isaiah 6:1–8, everything else became a distant second.
		1. Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips…” (vs. 5a).
		2. As one commentator suggests, Isaiah groveled in the dust of his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

How does recognizing one’s unworthiness lead to proper worship?

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* + 1. “…for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts” (vs. 5b).
		2. It is imperative that we meet with God because the right view of God puts everything into perspective.
	1. The holiness of God was in focus, for both the seraphim and Isaiah.
		1. Not only were their perspective adjusted by His presence, but also their physical posture.
		2. As magnificent as these creatures were (six-winged, powerful, majestic angelic beings), in the presence of the Almighty, their demeanor and strength were drained from them.
		3. The seraphim and Isaiah did not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ come into the presence of God and miss acknowledging His presence.
		4. How is it that the masses can go to their places of worship as if going to the store?

MAIN IDEA: The object of true worship is God, and He shares that position with no other.

**APPLICATION**

1. Remember who it is we are coming to worship—\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (not the music, the fellowship, or even the spoken word of preaching)
2. Keep you mind purposed throughout the service to keep your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God-centered and not man-centered.
3. Consider your unworthiness as you come into His presence so you may be set in the right place—lowliness and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.