

THE WORSHIP OF GOD—IN THE GOSPEL OF HIS SON

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:23-24). So spoke Jesus.

Jesus’ reference to “true worshipers” should get out attention. It implies clearly that if there are such people as true worshipers there can also be people who are false worshipers—those whose attempts to worship are not acceptable to God.

It is important, therefore, that we identify and focus on what constitutes true worship in order to prepare ourselves to be true worshipers.

Jesus put it simply. Because “God is Spirit,” man must worship him in “spirit and truth.” Simple, yes, but what does this mean?

First, because God is a spirit, worship consistent with his being must be spiritual in nature. All efforts to worship God by carnal, humanly devised means are therefore false and unacceptable.

Second, the formula for success as specified by Jesus is in two parts: spirit and truth.

The spirit referred to by Jesus is man’s spirit. It consists of his intellect, his ability to think and know (I Cor. 2:11); his will, his ability to form intentions (Matthew 26:41); and his emotions, his ability to experience feelings (Mark 8:12; Acts 17:16).

The truth of this formula is God’s own word. As Jesus expressed it, “...If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32). Again, Jesus said in prayer to the Father, “Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth” (John 17:17).

And this is how it works to produce a true worshiper. When we use our intellect to learn God’s word, bend our will to conform to God’s will revealed in his word, and harmonize our emotions, our feelings, to appreciate the blessedness of God’s will, the result will be true worship.

Notice how Paul expressed it in his own life: “For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit (his own intellect, will and feelings) in the gospel of His Son (God’s will revealed in Christ)...” (Romans 1:9).

Do you want to be a true worshiper? Then learn God’s will, conform your will to his, and do so in appreciation and thanksgiving for the incomparable blessings God bestows in Christ.

—Jerry F. Bassett