

RIGHT WORSHIP.

John 4:20-24.

July 9, 2006, Sunday A.M.

INTRODUCTION.

- A. What do you give someone who truly has everything?
- B. This is the dilemma we face when we approach God.
- C. Jesus provides the answer for us in his encounter with a Samaritan woman (John 4:20-24).
 1. The answer is worship. This is what we give God.
 2. In this passage Jesus tells us the right way to worship God. But before we consider the right way, lets consider the wrong way to worship God.

I. THE WRONG WAY TO WORSHIP.

- A. Worshiping the wrong person or thing (Matthew 6:24).
- B. Worshiping the wrong way: ritualism (Micah 6:7-8).
- C. Worshiping with the wrong attitude (Matthew 15:7-9).
- D. Example: Cain (Genesis 4:5-7).

II. THE RIGHT WAY TO WORSHIP (JOHN 20:20-24).

- A. The right place of worship (20-22).
 1. The Samaritans said Mt. Gerisim is the right place of worship (Deuteronomy 11:29).
 - a. Samaritans built their own temple on Mt. Gerisim after the Jews returning from Babylonian exile refused their help in rebuilding the temple (Ezra 4:1-4; Nehemiah 2:19-20, 13:28).
 - b. This temple was destroyed by the Maccabees in 125 B.C.
 2. Jews said Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem is the right place of worship. It was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D.
 3. Where is the right place to worship?
 - a. In the temple of our bodies (I Corinthians 6:19).
 - b. In the temple of our assembly (Matthew 18:20; Ephesians 2:19-22; I Peter 2:5; Hebrews 10:24-25).
 4. What is the right style of worship? In Jesus' day the Jews and Samaritans argued over the right place to worship. Today, Christians argue over the right style of worship. There is no right style. Most of our preferences for music, etc are cultural not scriptural.
- B. The right attitude of worship (23).
 1. When it comes to our attitude toward God in worship, I have often found Christians to be like the woman in the Lexus TV commercial. On Christmas morning, she finds a full-sized luxury SUV in her living room. The vehicle is topped with a gigantic, picture-perfect red ribbon. Turning to her husband with a look of astonishment on her face, all she can think to ask is, "Where did you get a bow that big?!". She has a fully equipped SUV in her living room, yet she is transfixed by an ornament. A decoration has distracted her from the real mystery. Is it possible that we can become focused on incidentals when we gather to celebrate all God has for us in Jesus Christ?
 2. What does it mean to worship with the right attitude?
 - a. First, it means to "worship in spirit" (little "s").
 - i. Means the human spirit or the inner person (Matthew 22:37- 38).
 - ii. Point: worship is from the inside out (Psalm 103:1; 51:15-17; Romans 1:9).
 - iii. Ex. of worshiping without the spirit or inner person (Matthew 6:1-8).
 - b. Second, it means to "worship in truth".
 - i. This means according to gospel of Christ (John 14:6).
 - ii. The point: Not all worship conforms to the truth of Christ.

III. THE RIGHT OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

- A. Wendy Kaminer, an avowed agnostic who has authored five books, including, *Sleeping with Extra-Terrestrials: The Rise of Irrationalism and Perils of Piety*, expresses her discomfort with religious beliefs:.
- Apart from the comfort I might find in religious belief, when I think about the question, "Does God exist?" I put it in the category of things I can't worry about. Questions I can't know the answer to. My feeling is that, even if God does exist, it is really not my job to worry about him. If God exists, he's going to exist whether or not I believe in him. He'll be fine without me.
- Something that greatly bothers me about public religiosity is the mandate to worship. I don't have a lot of respect for the view of God as some authority figure who wants you to come and kneel before him every week. There's this sense that you are to go to your church or your synagogue or your mosque or wherever it is that you go and, in some way, abase yourself before the Lord. That seems to me to be such a demeaning way of seeing God - such an expression of human vanity! When human beings imagine God, they imagine a king. They imagine a flawed human being who needs to be worshiped.
- Wendy Kaminer, "The Trials of Being Agnostic: A Conversation With Skeptic Wendy Kaminer," *Books and Culture* (Jan./Feb. 2000), p.
- B. The truth is God does not need our worship. Jesus told the Jews that even the rocks can rise up and praise God. We are the ones who need to worship God. Its for our own good that we do so.
- C. Who then should we worship? Jesus provides two answers in this passage.
1. First we worship God as Father (v. 23).
 - a. Who's father?
 - i. In one sense, Jesus' Father (Ephesians 1:3).
 - ii. In anther sense, our Father (Matthew 6:9).
 - b. The term Father includes the Trinitarian concept (John 14:6-11).
 - i. Jesus often spoke of being equal with the Father (John 5:17- 18, 10:29-33; 17:1-5; Matthew 11:27; John 14:6-11).
 - ii. We cannot worship God apart from worshipping the Son (John 5:23, 14:6; 20:28).
 - iii. Although there is no direct scriptural admonition to worship the Holy Spirit, He, too, is God (Matthew 3:16; Romans 8:9).
 - iv. The proper understanding is that we worship the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.
 2. We are to worship God as Spirit (v.24).
 - a. In Greek the article "the" does not appear. It is added according to the context. In this verse it should not be used. Therefore, this verse isn't saying God is "the" Spirit (i.e. Holy Spirit). Rather it says God's nature is spirit.
 - b. What does it mean that God is a spirit?
 - i. Since He has no body He can't be reduced to an idol or I mage (Isaiah 40:18).
 - ii. Since He has no body He can't be confined to a particular place (Jeremiah 23:23-24).
 - c. Worshipping God means our spirit (inner self) approaches His spirit. This involves all our senses.
 - i. Physical sensesCsight (architecture), hearing (music), smell (incense), taste (L.S.), touch (pews, hymnals, etc.).
 - ii. Minds (Matthew 22:37-38).
 - iii. Emotions (Matthew 22:37-38).
 - iv. Wills.
 - v. Sub-conscious (music, art, drama, "still small voice").

CONCLUSION.

- A. There is a difference in just coming to church and really worshipping.

B. "Lord, teach us to truly worship you."