



Church of Christ

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Heart to Heart...

Do you realize there are 4 types of worship described in the New Testament? Three of the four are not acceptable to God.

Jesus calls attention to the scribes and Pharisees in their approaching God in worship in Matt. 15: 7-9. Their worship was “*vain*” or empty because they were more concerned with man’s teachings and doctrines. “*Vain worship*” is absolutely useless in God’s eyes and unacceptable.

Paul was in Athens noting all the idols they worshiped in their city in Acts 17:22-23. Their worship is called “*ignorant worship*” because of the absence of the knowledge of God’s will. It is unacceptable in God’s eyes.

Paul addresses the church at Colossae. They have allowed other teachings in, which lead them to follow the commandments and teachings of men in Col. 2:20-23. It is closely related to “*vain worship*” but here it is a self imposed “*will worship*.” The KJV version calls it “*will worship*.” The NASB version calls it “*self made*” religion. It is a worship that follows selfish desires and looks religious. It is unacceptable in God’s eyes.

In John 4:20-24, Jesus explains worship to a woman of Samaria. He calls her attention to “*true worship*.” In “*true worship*” there are two major elements involved (1) “*In spirit*”. (2) “*In truth*.” Looking closely at the verses, what did He mean by “*in spirit*”? Many teach that this is a sincerity of heart, which is true, but it goes much further than that. Sincerity was also required just as much in the Old Testament. What was Jesus trying to get her (and us) to see? To worship “*in spirit*” means worship that is spiritual in contrast to worship that is physical and fleshly. Jesus taught that “*God is spirit*” (v.23). If God is spirit, we must offer to God spiritual worship. It is worship that is keeping with His nature. Notice how many like the external elements? That’s not spiritual! “*True worship*” is geared toward the spiritual side of man, not the external, physical side or what stirs our flesh. We, being in Christ, are God’s temple, where His Spirit resides (I Cor. 3:16-17). We are priests that are to offer up spiritual sacrifices (I Pet. 2:5,9). Our prayers are to be from our heart and have meaning. The supper is to impact the heart and move us into a deep sense of love for our Lord and one another. Our giving is not a convenient time the elders set aside, but a sacrifice we offer from the heart (Heb. 13:16). Our singing is heart motivated, not physical motivated with external means of man or instrument. This is what means “*in spirit*.”

“*In truth*” many think to be according to the commands of God. This too was expected by God in Old Testament times. (Deut. 5:32-33) Jesus admitted to the Samaritan lady that the Jews were right in their worship (John 4:22). He was not contrasting “*true*” and “*false*” worship. He was contrasting that which is “*true*” with the shadow of the past. (Look at Heb. 10) “*True worship*” is that which is real and genuine! It is worship that is according to the realities of Christ and His work. That’s the sphere of “*in truth*.” It makes our worship spiritual!!! These are the ones God seeks to be His worshipers.

What kind of worship do you offer? Worship that’s “*true and spiritual*” will only move you forward and strengthen your heart. Anything less will be nothing more than going through the motions, leaving you empty, with no favor from God. Think about it!!!

Brent