



## Christian Life Fellowship

*Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ*



### THE VALUE OF WORSHIP

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#### **Introduction:**

There are certain core values that help guide us in life. Over the next several weeks we will be exploring values that matter; those values are the core values of CLF. There are probably many different concepts about worship and so today we want to look at the value of worship and what worship is all about.

As we begin today, let me ask you some questions. What brought you here today? Why did you come? What was your expectation for coming to worship today? Why do we worship? Who do we worship? What does worship do for us?

#### **I. True worship is corporate and individual celebration of who God is.**

All human beings are worshippers whether they realize it or not. Worship is one of the characteristics that separate human beings from animals. As human beings we have an eternal spiritual part of us that must worship. This has been put there by Almighty God Himself. Either we will be involved with true worship of the one true Almighty God or we will be involved with false worship and idolatry of someone or something of our own choosing.

**John 4:21** - There is a story in the Bible about Jesus that summarizes the meaning of worship. The setting of this story is the well of Samaria where a woman met Jesus. She was lonely and miserable after five failed marriages. I'm sure she had tried to fill the longings in her life by marriage, but it hadn't worked for her. Time after time those marriages failed. She had come to the place where she was thirsty for something and no longer expected to find

satisfaction for her thirst. Instead of marrying again, she simply moved in with a man and was living with him.

In Jesus' conversation with this woman, they discussed worship and this lady indicated that she thought worship was something one did in a particular place. She also talked about how those in her family had worshipped on the mountain. Tradition and family heritage, while important, really does not define worship. This woman was trying to define worship. Here is what Jesus told her about worship:

#### **John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.**

The word worship from the language the Bible was written in means to reverence. God is spirit. He has created us with the capacity to revere what we understand as great. Worship in spirit and in truth engages my whole being; the emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of my being. The word *worship* actually means to ascribe worth or value to some-

thing or someone. Religious worship may take place individually or in groups, formally or informally.

There are many things that we human beings use to fill up our lives and those things can become objects of worship. Whenever money, education, other people, jobs, children, entertainment, possessions, etc. become our major focus, that is worship. For instance, entertainers and sports figures command great incomes and people evaluate their worth by how much money they make each year. Be careful not to get caught up in that trap.

Worship as a Christian is more than just coming to church once a week. It's more than singing a few songs and giving an offering. Worship is also defined by the way we live our life. The Bible talks about always honoring God. If we live our lives honoring God, then we are worshipping Him.

***True biblical worship so satisfies our total personality that we don't have to shop around for man-made substitutes. William Temple made this clear in his masterful definition of worship:***

***Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of mind with His truth; the purifying of imagination by His beauty; the opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of will to His purpose -- and all of this gathered up in adoration, the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable and therefore the chief remedy for that self-centeredness which is our original sin and the source of all actual sin.***

***Warren W. Wiersbe, The Integrity Crisis, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991, p. 119.***

To whatever we choose to give our feelings, thoughts, time and energies, that is what we are worshipping. We choose what we will worship. God has created man with the capacity to worship Him. Acceptable worship of God involves making a conscious choice to worship and serve only Him.

To allow any person or thing to usurp the position of lordship over us is disobedience. We are forbidden in the scripture to worship anyone other than ALMIGHTY GOD.

Human beings have a strong determination to imitate what we admire in others. God wants us to worship Him because of who He is and what He does. He wants us to worship Him because of His characteristics and what they produce in us. Because our desire as human beings is so strong to conform to what we admire and respect, we have a great need to worship Him. If we don't give this strong desire to conform to Him, it will be given somewhere else, to someone or something.

It is a fact that we cannot find personal fulfillment or become all that God wants us to become apart from joyful worship and submitting our lives in obedience to God. Anyone or anything that we worship other than God, our Creator and Redeemer, is inadequate. We can never rise higher or be stronger than what we worship. Worshipping anyone or anything other than the one true God can not transform us to be more Godly. Think about this. Those who set their attention on a specific athlete, entertainer or politician can slide into idolatry. They worship just another frail human being who is fallible. Worshipping anything less than God Almighty does not allow us to develop our spiritual potential in the image of God. Those who choose to trust God and worship Him have the ability to rise above what they are because we are being gradually transformed to His image and become more and more like Him.

## **II. True worship is Spiritual.**

Worship has to do with attributing worth to God who is truly here and truly worthy. Dr. Francis Schaeffer wrote a book called *THE GOD WHO IS THERE*. In his book he makes the point that even though God is invisible to our eyes, He is here. The function of believers is to learn what God is like and acknowledge Him. It is important that we reflect on the value, beauty and character of God. This is true worship.

Worship continually happens. It is taking place with every action and attitude we display. It goes way beyond a few hours on Sunday morning. Everything we do springs from our concept of what is important and valuable to us. Because true worship is the force that drives all human existence, when it is lost, life becomes dull, drab and cheerless.

People sink into despair because life seems to be no longer worth living. So worship is the most important fundamental aspect of our existence.

Jesus indicates the basic elements of true worship when He says that we must worship in spirit and truth. God is Spirit and we have a spirit as well. Our spirit dwells in a body which in God's design creates what we refer to as our soul. We have personality because we are spirits dwelling in bodies. Our spirit is designed to communicate and relate with the Spirit of God. We refer to doing things with our whole heart. By this we mean our spirit is fully engaged and we are functioning at the basic level of our humanity.

### **III. True worship is truthful**

Jesus also said that we were to worship in truth. This reference is about our view of God. The God we worship must be the "TRUE GOD". He must be the God who exists, who listens, responds, loves, forgives, heals, transforms and cares. If we cannot see, touch, feel or hear God, how do we know He is true and even there to be worshipped? The answer is that God has shown himself to us. He has disclosed Himself in three basic ways.

1. He has shown Himself in the world around us – NATURE. Scripture confirms that we get a sense of God's wisdom, majesty and power in the world of nature. One cannot possibly study this universe in which we live, with all its design, its interrelatedness, its universal laws, without coming to some conclusion that there is a Great Designer behind it all.

2. He has shown Himself in SCRIPTURE. The Bible is the most amazing book ever written. No other book, including those on religion, has the qualities and characteristics of this one. Even though it has come from many different sources over hundreds of years, it demonstrates a harmony. All the books blend together and confirm each

other. In looking at its pages, you see there are no errors or contradictions.

3. He has shown Himself in communicating through PERSONAL WORSHIP. When we take the facts of nature and the scripture and begin to respond to them in prayer and obedience, this is true worship.

Worship is one of the core values of Christian Life Fellowship Church. Worship is more than just what we do here on Sunday morning. It is more than just singing the songs, more than just hearing a sermon, more than just tithing or giving a faith promise. It is more than lifting our hands during prayer. It is giving reverence and attributing worth to Almighty God in everything we do.

### **IV. True worship is all consuming.**

Who is my hero? Who is your hero? Who are you trying to emulate? Who has captured your attention and affection? Worship has to do with my attitude when I get up to go to work. It has to do with my attitude when I mow my lawn. It has to do with how I serve God in my community.

Our worship is also connected to service. You may say, "I haven't been called to serve in the Nursery on Wednesday evening." If we can see that whatever we do is kingdom work and worship unto God, it will help us do what we do with joy and fulfillment. What about you Grandmas? Be a Grandma once a month in the nursery! Don't take the attitude, "I've done that when I was younger." When we choose to serve in the nursery, to care for the children, to be a prayer chain link, to be one who takes meals to someone who has come from the hospital, to serve in the food pantry, to help that person who needs groceries, or gas, or help with rent, we serve the Lord. It is part of our worship unto Him.

### **CONCLUSION:**

How are you serving and who are you worshipping? The challenge is to worship God Almighty alone and let Him transform and make us like Himself in the process. WORSHIP HIM – HE ALONE IS WORTHY!

In a world that worships so many things that are not the true God, we are challenged to focus our worship in spirit and truth on God alone. Worship impacts our entire life. What we do here on Sunday is significant but it is just part of worshipping God in spirit and truth.

