

True Worship

Exiles: The Power of Repentance Series, Part 4

The state of Jerusalem: The city was a picture of their spiritual state, broken down, in ruins, and desolate. The rebuilding of the temple and later on the rebuilding of the wall around the city was a picture of God building them back up spiritually.

The Jews were at a place where they now had to relearn how to worship the one true God

As we grow in our walk with God we are often learning and relearning things. As we study God's word and go through life our theology changes and is shaped

We have to unlearn things we learned from culture that we thought were biblical (Pastor Mark's series "Keep It real, Christian Myths we tell ourselves")
The Jews now had to relearn how to worship Yahweh, the Most High God.

I. Worship

A. Worship is NOT an event, it's a lifestyle

1. Dr. Lee Campbell says "Worship is the response of grateful and humble people to the living God where submission, sacrificial service, praise, profession, testimony and gratitude are freely expressed in innumerable ways. This is a much richer concept than mere corporate singing and praise once each week for 20 minutes - an event that could occur without any actual worship going on at all."
2. It's more than just singing words; it's living in a way that shows we value God above all else.
3. Our culture has reduced worship to just music.
4. "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me"
Matthew 15:8 (NLT)
 - a. Jesus quoting Isaiah to the pharisees. True worship involves the heart.

B. Worshipping in spirit and truth (woman at the well)

1. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." **John 4:22-24 (ESV)**
 - a. Jesus was teaching her what true worship was
 - b. True worshippers will worship in spirit and in truth

2. Worshipping in Spirit

- a. I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. **Romans 12:1 (ESV)**
- b. Being a living sacrifice, means being in total submission to God, it means dying to self, our own will. GIVING OUR LIVES TO LIVE FOR HIM
- c. We all have our sinful nature at war with our spirit
- d. Paul in Romans 7 “I don’t understand why I do what I don’t want to do”
- e. Worship is surrendering our will for His
- f. Jesus was the perfect example “obedient unto death” “not my will but your will be done”
- g. Being a living sacrifice is your spiritual worship

3. Worshipping in Truth

- a. To worship in truth, we have to know The Truth
- b. Jesus said “I am the way, the truth and the life...”
- c. We have to know Him, who He is, His character
 - The person of Jesus, study the word, pray (expound)
 - Alone time
- d. Jesus told the woman at the well “You worship what you don’t know”
- e. Worshipping in song without knowing who we’re singing about can cause us to feel disconnected

II. Learning or “relearning” to worship God in truth requires proper perspective of God’s character

- A. These postexilic Jews didn’t know God
- B. Psalm 145:8-17 emphasizes reasons to worship and speaks on attributes of God

1. Gracious and Merciful

- God showed His ultimately showed grace and mercy by giving us what we didn’t deserve, a substitute for the punishment we deserved, by send Jesus to die in our place
- (Example of grace and mercy)
- He continues to be gracious and merciful towards us by being patient towards us even when we sin against Him

2. Slow to Anger

- Some believers tend to think God is always mad at them. This can cause a hindrance when it comes to worship.

3. Abounding in Love

- God is love, He's full of it, It's what He is.
- Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4:8 (ESV)

- Knowing God will cause us to love people which is an act of worship

4. Powerful

- Sometimes we live as though we don't believe this
- God has the power to do ANYTHING

5. Faithful

- God is not like humans, he will never fail us
- He won't leave us
- He sticks to His word and doesn't go back on it
- We're unfaithful to God when we put other things before Him, but even in that, He is still faithful to us

6. Righteous

- God is good, His nature is good, there is no bad in Him
- Everything He does is justifiable and right
- He's honest, He can't lie
- Righteousness is who He is
- Because He's a righteous judge He's patient with His ultimate judgement and would rather offer mercy first (The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you,[a] not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. **2 Peter 3:8 (ESV)**)

III. After knowing who He is and remember what He's done

A. On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. **Psalm 145:5 (ESV)**

1. In Nehemiah 9 the Jews were continuing to gather together to learn and corporately worship God
2. In verse 6-38 they prayed to God acknowledging what He'd done for their nation in the past from creation to the call of Abraham, to deliverance from Egypt to provision in the wilderness, to mercy when they strayed, to their constant victories
3. We also should constantly remember the great things God has done in our lives, and when we meditate on them, our hearts begin to overflow with worship

Closing: The Jews were having to relearn how to live the life God commanded them to live, relearning His Word and relearning how to worship Him

20 years ago, Matt Redmen released one of the most powerful songs written called
“Heart of Worship”

Closing Challenge: Are we living a surrendered life that is worship to God, do we truly know who He is in order to worship Him in truth?