

GOD'S MAGNIFICENT IDEA

Part XXI

Matthew 16:13-19

Introduction: Being truly born again, totally transmuted, is not meant to be some vacuous, mundane life but rather an ebullient and abundant one. In my previous messages on thanksgiving and praise, we talked about how thanksgiving can be silent or softly spoken. Thanksgiving should always preface every prayer. Praise is extolling God for Whom He is. Today we are going to examine what worship is and how it should be utilized by believers. There are three important and imperative components that should accompany a believer's walk with God. They are *thanksgiving, praise, and worship*. All three are integral pieces to a whole. These three serve as access lanes to God that ultimately lead to intimacy with Him. This moves us from a *quasi religion* to true personal *Christianity*. One goes through the motions in religion (ritualistic), but the other looks for a holy communion with the Most High. 2nd Timothy 3:5.

I. God's magnificent idea

- A. Worship. The English word for worship is from the old English word, "*weordhscipe*." This word was later shortened to "worthship." It still is used in English law when the judge is referred to as "your worship" (here we say "your honor"). Worship in the verb form means to pay homage or respect. There are many synonyms that help us understand the meaning of the word – words like adore, laud, esteem, magnify, revere, venerate, and exalt. The Hebrew word for worship in the Old Testament is *shachah*. It is translated to bow down, to do reverence, to prostrate, and beseech humbly. It is impossible to understand worship without relating to an attitude of the body. Leviticus 9:24.
 1. The most commonly used word for worship in the New Testament is the Greek word *proskuneo*. This word is used over fifty times. It is a combination of two separate Greek words – *pros*, which means toward, and *kuneo*, which means to kiss. *Proskuneo* literally means to kiss towards. The meaning of the word is perfectly expressed by the woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and then kissed His feet. Luke 7:44-45.
- B. Man is made to worship. It is ingrained in his nature. His choice is not whether he will worship, but only whom he will worship. In the Scriptures, God demands man's worship. He will not share our worship with anyone else. Note that when the devil tempted Jesus, he wanted Jesus to worship him. Matthew 4:9-10. This demonstrates the innate principle of worship. The construct is that whatever we worship we ultimately will end up serving.
 1. Our nature demands that we worship. Our choice is whether it will be God or something or someone else. Throughout history, man has worshiped gods such as *asteroth, moluck, Diana, the groves, the high places, reincarnation, the new age, and the occult*, to name a few. False worship is of the devil, and real worship is of God.
 2. An example of worship is found in John 4:1-26. The deep craving she had in her spirit could not be quenched by immorality. Jesus teaches the woman that true worship is "in spirit and in truth." It involves exposing our entire life to the divine searchlight of the Holy Spirit. "In spirit" refers to a part of the total human personality. 1st Thessalonians 5:23. The body is *world conscious*; the soul is *self conscious*; and the spirit is *God conscious*. The only way to worship then is through the spirit. It is not the soul or body that worships, but the spirit.
 3. Those who truly worship are those who flow toward God in their spirit and do so according to the truth of God's Word. Ephesians 5:18. Paul is teaching here that man has an insatiable need. That craving will either lead him to God or to some substitute.
 4. The woman at the well tried everything to avoid the point of discussion. She tried to sidetrack the conversation by discussing the race issue between Jews and the Samaritans. Jesus brought her back to the subject of worship. When she tried to discuss the origin of the well, Jesus brought her back to worship. Some of us would rather discuss race, church buildings, or other issues, anything to sidestep the issue of worship. Jesus finally confronted the woman in John 4:21-24.

Conclusion: The hour to worship is now! We don't need to wait until Sunday. Worship is a response to a relationship with God. That relationship is very intimate, and it is difficult to describe exactly what it is. However, it does involve an intense fellowship with God.