

October 1999 True Worship

by Aaron Greenway

Last month, I began my second year at Dallas Theological Seminary and continue to be blessed by the solid, Biblical teaching of many of the professors. One of these classes that I am taking is “Sanctification and Ecclesiology,” a course taught by Professor Glenn Kreider. I am already seeing that this man runs very deep and that he cares very much about the things of God.

One point that he brought up was that of John 4:21-22, 23-24, “...the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The Father is searching for such worshipers. He is not looking for simply an emotionally-charged group of people and He is not looking for those who only go through the motions. He wants our every action and every thought to be an act of worship to Him in our every day lives. And when we come together, we are to pour our hearts and the core of who we are out before Him. We do not simply worship Him in Jerusalem, on a mountain, or in our churches (although Scripture is very clear about corporate worship) or even in our daily devotions and prayer time. We worship when we obey Him. We worship Him when we search Him. We worship Him when we love Him. And we worship Him when we lay down our lives for the sake of His name.

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Today, worship has become an event. It has become nothing more than entertainment. It focuses on the musicians instead of on the one who is worthy of it. As a Christian artist this has been a personal obstacle, to keep the focus and attention on Jesus Christ. People who are in music ministry can get sucked into this self-promotion scheme really quick if they aren't careful.

We truly have a problem if the worship leader or Christian musician comes out of concert feeling more self-important.

True worship is the basis for all other kinds of ministry and evangelism. In his book, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, senior pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, John Piper, said, “God is calling us above all else to be the kind of people whose theme and passion is the supremacy of God.... Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t.”

Lastly, true worship is an act of surrender. It is to come under the authority and the supremacy of the One we are worshiping. Sometimes, I think we feel far from God because we have robbed Him of the glory due His name. Giving honor to His most holy name with our lives instead of just giving lip-service becomes the wings of the Christian life. The Lord issued a rebuke of this nature to Israel in Isaiah 29:13, “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me...”

Who is worthy of true worship? Who deserves all the honor, all the glory, and all the praise? To make it more personal: Who has created me and given me life? Who has given me all that I have? Who has saved me from the pit of hell? Who has redeemed me and placed me heavenly places in Christ? Who has forgiven every transgression? If it is Jesus Christ, then I have no excuse to rob Him of any glory coming to Him.