

Fil-Am Community Church

Worship in Spirit & Truth

April 11th 2010

Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman

John 4:19-24

¹⁹"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

1. Meeting at the well

In the time of Jesus, the hatred between Jews and Samaritans had endured for more than four hundred years. It went back to the time of Ezra, when the Jewish people returned from their exile in Babylonia, and began the process of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. The Samaritans were, for the most part, descendants of the Northern tribes of Israel who had been left behind when their country was ravaged by an Assyrian takeover. Because they had intermarried with non-Jews, they were declared ethnically impure and were not allowed to take part in restoring the Temple site.

Outlawed from participation in the Temple rites at Jerusalem, the people of Samaria eventually built their own place of worship at Mt. Gerazim. There, they followed the rules and rituals of Judaism and considered themselves true Israelites. But the pure-blooded Jews continued to hate them

The Samaritan Woman believes as all Samaritans that they worship God on Mt. Gerazim

Jews believe you worship God in Jerusalem in their temple.

Jesus explained that a time was coming when you would not worship on Mt. Gerazim or the temple in Jerusalem

Remember God is a spirit and not subject to limitations, he is not concerned with where we worship him, what type building it is, he is concerned with how we worship him. This was a drastic change from what they knew during that time.

Jesus points out that in light of him coming as messiah and savior, worshipers will be identified not by a particular location or temple, but by their worship of the father through the son.

Jesus laid aside all previous formulas for prescribed worship and said the **temple is now in your heart**. Worship is anywhere and everywhere.

What was Jesus talking about? Jesus was talking about the New Covenant where the true worshipers will do so in Spirit and truth.

2. The New Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31-34

³¹ "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

³³ "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Luke 22:20

²⁰In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

Hebrews 8:10-11

¹⁰This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write

them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

¹¹No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

The New Covenant was Jesus! As the resurrected Messiah, the Savior of the world, our mediator between man and God.

3. Purpose for our Worship

Worship in Hebrew is Shaha, which means to bow down, to prostrate oneself before another in order to pay honor to him.

The purpose of worship is to glorify God, to praise him, exalt him, it shows our loyalty.

Worship should not be a form of entertainment or to satisfy any form of the flesh or self gratification but should be for one reason and one reason only, to glorify God!

James 4:8

⁸Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Romans 12:2 (NASB)

²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Colossians 3:2-4 (NASB)

² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ³For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

James 4:10

¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Hebrews 12:28-29

²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God *is* a consuming fire.

4. Unfruitful Worship

Matthew 15:7-9

⁷You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ⁸"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁹They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men."

Acts 17:22-27

²²Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. ²⁵And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁶From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.

Remember what it says in ***Revelations 3:16***

¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

There was an old story about a man who dreamed an Angel came down and asked him if he could go to church with him that morning. They arrived at the church and saw the praise team take their position on stage, they saw the mouths moving and their hands being raised to the sky but could not hear a word, they saw the musicians playing their instruments and even saw the congregation opening their mouths but again nothing was heard. They saw the preacher take his position and begin to preach, you could see him walking in and out of the

pulpit, and bible in hand but not a word was heard. The man asked the angel what was wrong, and he replied that is the same way we hear it in heaven. We hear nothing because there is nothing to hear. The people are engaged in a form of worship, but its not in spirit and truth, because they are simply going through the motions they are thinking about other things not glorifying God.

This should not be the way we come together on Sunday we should make it an earnest effort to worship him in spirit and truth.

5. Worship in Spirit & truth

Jesus explains in vs. 24 that the worshipers **MUST** worship in spirit and truth. This is not a recommendation, or a subtle suggestion it is a **MUST!**

The word **Must** according to the Webster's dictionary is to express an obligation, a requirement, a necessity, a certainty and something that has to be done. It is not an option.

Spirit actually means "rushing wind". The word for spirit, "pneuma" means "wind" or "spirit" and is derived from the root word "pneo", which means "to blow" and is a root word which is translated Spirit. Worshipping God in the spirit denotes worshipping under His influence or under His control. Basically the first criteria Jesus speaks of here is that a person have a relationship with God. That they have trusted in God's work through Christ for salvation and that they are under His control.

Second, Jesus said that God is looking for people who will worship Him in Truth. The word truth here is "aletheia" which means true, and is derived from the word "alethes" which literally means "to take notice". Jesus was saying that God is looking for His children to literally "take notice of the truth" about Himself.

Worship is specifically accomplished when those that know God, take notice of all that is true about God. Worship is grounded in truth! The more we know God the deeper our worship will take us. Our worship must never be based on anything except the truth of God. Those that worship solely for the experience, or to be noticed, or to gain recognition, or for traditions sake are missing the mark.

Today Christians believe to worship God is nothing more than going to church and singing some songs, ***this is a form of worship but it is not what god is looking for.***

Romans 12:1-2

¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your **spiritual act of worship**. ²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Notice how when we offer our bodies as living sacrifices it is considered a spiritual act of worship.

We must worship God in truth, since his word is truth, we must worship him according to his word. The Bible should be the benchmark from which all things are measured.

Lets look at another example of the church, if you look at a rowboat in the sand, you see it is hard to move, but when the tide come in it is very easy to maneuver. The church is just like the same rowboat, when genuine worship is absent from the church it struggles to move, but when the tide of heartfelt praise and worship comes in it uplifts her and makes it easy to move!

We pray that ***we are not stuck in the sand*** but riding the waves of praise today.

John 17:17

¹⁷Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

The definition of the word truth is a fact that has been verified, conformity to reality or actuality, and accuracy.

Romans 12:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

Look where the Apostle Paul urges us to be Fervent in Spirit, this means we are to have an attitude of zeal, worshiping from the heart.

We must worship God as he is revealed in His Word, knowing who He really is. We need to worship him by acknowledging His qualities of holiness, faithfulness, goodness, loving-kindness, etc. So, there is only one form of worship, one that is prescribed in the Bible and not by our own preconceived notions or by other religious writings – Koran, the Vedas, etc.

We could look at an example of getting together to watch a football or basketball game, or even better a Manny Pacquiao fight. You can see the excitement build and when the opponent gets knocked down the whole room explodes in cheers and high fives. What happens when that same group gets together on Sunday to celebrate a risen savior? This is the same fervent in spirit that Paul talks about.

Psalms 122:1

¹ I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the LORD."

This should be our feeling about coming to church, we should gather as a celebration to worship a risen savior, don't allow ourselves to be stuck in the sand.

Conclusion:

The purpose of our worshiping is to glorify God; worship requires us to be an active participant not a spectator. Our Church is not a spectator sport.

When we come to worship God we need to do so with the correct spirit, we need to humble ourselves and allow God to be the one to uplift us.

We need to ensure we look to his word for guidance and use the Bible as the authority in worship.

Our worship to God should be genuine, and heart felt. We need to remember we cannot get complacent and become lukewarm because Jesus will spew us out of his mouth.

Father God search me and find anything in my worship that is not of you and remove it from me. Purge me from my own selfish desires

and make me a vessel to glorify your most holy and precious name.
Use me as an instrument to shine your light in this dying world.