

"WEEKLY WISDOM"
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For The Week of 02.15.10

"ARE YOU A TRUE WORSHIPER?"

John 4:23 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.

Back in the early 80's my life was quite different and totally focused on other things. I was in the midst of pursuing what was my passion and desire at the time of being a world champion bull rider. There was a familiar saying back then amongst those who were involved in rodeo. There are cowboys, and then there are wanna be's. At that time in my life not knowing the Lord I along with many others made fun of those who simply went to a store bought a cowboy hat and some boots and called themselves a cowboy. We didn't consider you one unless you were either involved in rodeo, or working on a ranch which at the time I had done both.

This came to mind recently when I was reflecting on this verse above. When Jesus said here that there are true worshipers who will worship the Father that obviously reveals that there are false worshipers. In my mind back in my rodeo days there were true cowboys and there were those who just played the part but never had sacrificed what it took to become one. This is clearly true when it comes to being a true Christian. Seems funny we would have to use the term "true Christian", but I am sure it seemed a little odd to people in Jesus' day to be told that there were "true worshipers" when many of His day believed they were.

To better understand what Jesus was saying we first need to define what a true worshiper is. As you will see there is no doubt in my mind from scripture that a true worshiper is a true Christian. The word in the original Greek language that is used here for "worshipers" is only used once in the entire New Testament and of course we are looking at it. The word here mean to adore. The word adore means to honor with the highest and most profound reverence, to love to the highest degree. When you think about what it means to be a true worshiper, that this is someone who shows God the most profound reverence, they honor Him above all else and they love Him to the highest degree, it is somewhat easier to understand why there are true worshipers and therefore false worshipers.

Before we dig into the rest of this verse of what it means to worship God in spirit and truth realize what the result of being a true worshiper is. The Father is seeking such to worship Him. Why? Because the whole reason God created man was so that He could have a created being to

experience who He really is. God is love, and the God-kind of love is one that you cannot contain. I don't have time to go into detail about this here but if you have ever experienced true love, you have experienced God. I have had times where it was so overwhelming I would tell God, "I don't think I can handle more of this". It's hard to describe but it is so powerful and yet so wonderful it is almost overwhelming. God is love and the God-kind of love cannot be contained. You have to share it, it compels you to do so. God could not contain who He is and He brought man forth so that He could share Himself with us. The reason that love seems almost overwhelming is because we still live in a natural body. Just as God told Moses you cannot see my face and live. But there is nothing that compares to God's love.

To experience God's love it works similar to the human type of love here on earth. You cannot make someone love you. They either do or they don't when it comes to human love. If they do love you and you love them you will experience the love they have for you, but you would never do so if you did not love them. God loves us with a love that is far beyond human love and He wants us to experience that love, but for that to happen we must choose to love Him. Remember the word "worshippers" means to love to the highest degree. When you are a true worshiper you love God to the highest degree and guess what you experience in return? That love then becomes something you cannot contain and you want others to experience it as well, thus a true Christian is one who walks in the footsteps of Jesus, doing the things He did.

You see the term for "Christian" was not used until the 11 chapter of the book of Acts. This is the first time the phrase was used and it simply means a follower of Christ. This title was given to the disciples of Jesus because they were doing what He had done. They were walking in the same compassion for the lost and hurting, and they were doing something about it. As true worshipers of God they had that love now burning in their hearts and they could not contain it. They went forth and preached the gospel to everyone they could find. They laid hands on the sick, cast out demons, and set captives free. Faith works through love. One reason we are not seeing much of the works of Christ is because if you are not a true worshiper you are not experiencing the love of God.

John 4:24 God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

So what does Jesus mean that the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth? Jesus answered that question with the following statement here in John 4:24. The first four words give us the answer. God is a Spirit. You see you don't love God to the highest degree when you are living the majority of your life being focused on and more consciously aware of you fleshly nature and desires rather than your spirit within. Jesus said it in this manner, that there is no greater love than laying down one's life for another. He also said that if you hold on to

your life you will lose it, but if you lose your life you will find true life. True life is found in a relationship with God that is growing and developing more and more. You must become more consciously aware of God then you are of what is around you and that is done through your spirit not the flesh.

John 5:19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

Have you ever for example gone to see a child or grandchild in a play or musical or some type of activity where there were other children participating as well? If you are passionate about that child you didn't fully ignore the other children and you probably even remember some things that went on around you, but what held your attention the most was that child. This is what Jesus is saying here in John 5:19. He was aware of other things around Him going on, but He was so consumed with His love for the Father that He was more consciously aware of what the Father was doing in His midst than what was going on in the natural. Jesus Himself said the works He did we can do also. A true worshiper is going to be a true Christian following in Jesus' footsteps, which He obviously loved His Father with the highest degree of love. That is simply the love of God, not manly love. Manly love is based more on what it sees outwardly, and is a conditional form of love. God's love is unconditional.

Worshiping God in spirit means we don't allow our old fleshly nature to be what determines how we live or what we do. We choose to be motivated by who we really are on the inside. This takes some practice and won't happen without getting to know God. The flesh has had it's way for so long that without a passion for God you are going to do what your flesh wants. I was so passionate about bull riding that even though it was very painful in the flesh to deal with broken bones, concussions, torn ligaments, a punctured lung, on and on I could go, but I pushed past it all because of my passion to ride bulls. I spent lots of money, time, and effort to pay the price to get good at it. It will cost you to be a true worshiper. Many will not pay the price of not giving the flesh it's own way. Just imagine how different lives would be if we were as passionate about God as we are about things in the flesh that don't even come close to giving back what God can give.

To worship God in truth means you are sincere about it. It is defined as not simulated or done for the sake of appearance, but is truly genuine. Many say they serve God but do little to sacrifice anything of their ways for God's. Remember the greatest form of love is laying your life down for another. Too many who claim to love God today go to church just to hear another sermon, sing a few songs, and then go about their lives. They don't encounter God in one of the environments where He can be most easily drawn near to. They get upset if they don't get out of church on time and to go do other things. When you are in love with someone it is

hard to walk away from any time you get to be with them in their presence.

The Father is looking for those whom He can pour His love upon and through. They are the true worshipers who so adore Him they can't get enough of God and the things of God. Doing the work of the Kingdom is a joy to such people, to others it is just a Christian duty. God wants so much more for us if we will just make the adjustment in our heart to begin to become consumed with Him. It is in Him where true life is found. The Father's looking, will He find you?