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July 2021 "WORSHIP 5: "THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSIBILITY"

Dear Friends,

Last month, in the fourth part on this series about worship, I pointed out that worship is God's will for a Christian. In Matthew 6:9-10, Jesus said, *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.* Then in Revelation 4:1-11, 5:8-14, 7:9-12, 11:15-17, and 19:1-9 all reveal worship as an on-going activity in Heaven. There can be no debate that what happens in Heaven is most definitely God's will. Therefore, if His will is that Heaven be filled with worship, then His will being done on Earth mandates that Christians be worshipers. Taking this further, consider the conversation between Jesus and a lady from Samaria,

⁷There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. ⁸(For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

⁹Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

¹⁰Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

¹¹The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? ¹²art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

¹³Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: ¹⁴But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

¹⁵The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

¹⁶Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

¹⁷The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: ¹⁸For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

¹⁹The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

²¹Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

²²Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. ²³But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. ²⁴God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 7:4-24)

When that lady found out Jesus was a prophet, she immediately changed the subject from drinking water to something that was extremely important to her: worshiping God. Jesus explained that the time had come when the true worshipers would be able to worship God in spirit and in truth. Those who have accepted Jesus as personal Lord and Savior now have God's spiritual life in them. This is what makes it possible for them to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Jesus said that the Father "seeketh such to worship Him." The word "seeketh" comes from the Greek word "zeteo" which means, "seek after, look for, strive to find." But there is another part of its meaning, which is, "require, demand, expect (from someone)." This means that God has an expectation that those He has adopted as children will worship Him. Thus, until a Christian becomes a worshiper, that person has not truly become what God is seeking.

Not only does our faith in Jesus to be born again result in us receiving God's spiritual life, the change within also takes us to a place of unique service unto God.

⁵And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5-6)

⁹And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; ¹⁰And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. (Revelation 5:9-10)

One of our many responsibilities as a king and priest unto God is to praise Him.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: (1 Peter 2:9)

The phrase "show forth" (Greek: "exaggello") means, "tell, declare, make widely known, celebrate." Then, the word praises (Greek: arete) means, "the glory, excellency, perfection, goodness and superiority of God revealed in the work of salvation; the virtues as a force or energy of the Holy Spirit accompanying the preaching of the gospel.' One way this is done is through singing, as seen in Revelation 5:9-10. Here a paraphrase 1 Peter 2:9,

But ye are a chosen generation of kings and priests unto God, a holy nation, a peculiar people that ye should openly tell, declare and make widely known the glory, excellency, perfection, goodness and superiority of God through speaking or singing, anointed and energized by the Holy Spirit; for God is the One Who has delivered you out of the darkness of the sin nature and into the marvelous light of His life and the Kingdom of His dear Son, Jesus Christ.

Thus, we can once again see that not only are Christians called to reach the lost with the gospel, we are also expected of God to make praise and worship a priority in our lives. There is also an interesting parallel between our priesthood and the Old Testament Levitical priesthood.

³⁸Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. ³⁹The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even: ⁴⁰And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering. ⁴¹And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. ⁴²This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee.

⁴³And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory. ⁴⁴And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office. ⁴⁵And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. ⁴⁶And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God. (Exodus 29:38-46)

Twice each day, once in the morning and once in the evening, a lamb was to be offered as a sacrifice. God said this was to be done continually. He also said that when these sacrifices were offered, He would meet with the Jewish people at the place of sacrifice, make His glory and presence known, and confirm to them that He was the Lord their God.

I realize some reading this may reply, “But we’re no longer required to offer animal sacrifices.” While that is absolutely true, there is still a sacrifice God has instructed Christians to offer.

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. (Hebrews 13:15)

- The Levitical priests had to offer the sacrifice of a lamb; New Testament priests are to offer praise as the sacrifice to the Lamb.
- The Levitical priests were to offer a lamb as a sacrifice twice a day continually; New Testament priests are to offer the sacrifice of praise continually, which would strongly indicate that God wants us offering praise and worship as a daily part of our lives.
- God promised the Jewish people that when the lambs were offered as a sacrifice, His glory and presence would be known; in Psalm 22:3, God prophetically declared that He would inhabit the praises of Christians (see my April 2021 letter, “Worship 2: Presence and Revival.”)

Notice that this sacrifice of praise is the fruit of our lips. In other words, the praise and worship must be coming out of our mouths, not silent thoughts of God’s goodness. Interestingly, the image of offering a sacrifice of praise to God was actually prophesied in the Old Testament.

The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 33:11)

Why is worship referred to as a sacrifice? One reason is because there are times when our emotions aren't in the mood to praise and worship Jesus. Arguments with family, financial pressures, problems on the job, attacks of sickness, etc, can all impact how we feel. Left unchecked, those feelings will dominate our attitude toward praise and we simply won't worship God, either at home or at church. It's at those times when we must bring the emotions into subjection to our born-again spirit and worship no matter what we feel. I can tell you from experience that worshiping during those wars with emotions will definitely change a person's attitude.

If you are born-again, you are a priest unto God. Offering praise is a part of your responsibility. When you lift your worship unto God, He **WILL** make His presence known!

In His Grace,

Jim

Don't forget that if you have not received any of the first four parts on this teaching series about worship, let me know and they'll be sent.

WORSHIP DRAWS YOU IN (Prophecy)

Your worship is a step in the direction of My presence. Your worship is as a conveyor belt that will draw you into Me. Your worship is something that not even the angels can duplicate. For you see, the angels do not have Me as their Savior; so they cannot worship Me as their Savior, but you can.

There are many who have dismissed the value of worship. There are many who have discounted what worship can do. I would have you think of the songs you sing during the season of My birth. You sing, "O come let us adore Him." You sing, "hail the Heaven-born Prince." You sing about worship. You sing, "gloria in excelsis Deo." You sing so many songs during the season of My birth that are actually instructing you to worship Me.

Now I would challenge you this day. Pay close attention to what you sing and receive instruction from yourself. For, as you sing, "O come let us adore Him," you should adore Me. As you sing about praising Me and worshipping Me, you should do that. Pay attention to what you sing and practice what you're instructing yourself to do and you will find the place in Me you have longed to experience; for there is a place in Me that can only be experienced in worship. If you'll worship, you will find that place. For those who discover it, they are going to experience a dimension of Me that will go beyond their wildest expectations.

Worship yourself into the deepest level of My glory that you possibly can. Worship yourself into the place of My presence. Let your worship be that thing which brings you in. You worship Me and you will find Me.

LIFTING THE BURDEN (Prophecy)

The heaviness that you have been feeling, you have been wondering how come it is that I won't lift it and why I won't take it away from you. I have been wondering how come you won't cast the care over onto Me. You're waiting on Me and I'm waiting on you. One of us is going to have

to (change) on this and I can tell you now, it's not going to be Me. I'm not going to take something from you that you're not willing to let go of.

What you've been struggling with, some of it is because of your own doing. If you search your heart you're going to know that is true. But the burden of this thing, the burden that you've been feeling, I want you to know today it is never going to lift from you until you decide to cast it over onto Me. You're not going to bring about the solution and you're not going to bring about the answer.

But you have been overly concerned, you've worried and you have let it become heaviness in your life. That's why your worship is hindered; why you're not free in Me the way you could be. It's not my fault, for I have already told you in My Word that if you'll cast your burdens on Me that I'll take them. So the choice is really up to you. If you want to walk free of this thing, if you want to feel this burden removed, this yoke taken away; if you want that to happen, you absolutely can. But you're going to have to turn it over to Me and stop carrying the weight of it. If you do, you are going to experience relief.

Here's what you need to do. You need to make a conscious and honest decision to let go, to turn it loose. You have to do that, that's where it starts. The next thing that you need to do is praise Me and worship Me for removing this burden. Praise Me and worship Me for receiving it from off you like I said I would. Now when you do this, you're going to feel this thing lift. When you do this, you're going to feel a release and you are going to feel different than you used to. So today I'm telling you what you need to do. I'm giving you the answer to this thing.

Now if you will go with it, you'll experience the result that I've just told you; and if you don't, you'll continue to carry this thing day after day after day after day and it's going to interfere with a lot of things in your life. But it doesn't have to be that way. So I would encourage you right now, this day, make a decision, a decision to do what I've instructed, and experience the freedom I have promised in My Word.

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