

The Focus of Worship

By Steve Pruitt

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

John 4:23 ESV

Picture Jesus standing at a well outside the city limits of the Samaritan city of Sychar. His disciples have just left the well on their way into town to get some food when a Samaritan woman approaches the well. Jesus asks her for a drink.

The woman was shocked by Jesus' request. Jews were not supposed to speak to Samaritans. Samaritans were considered half-breeds and were treated with contempt by the Jews. Besides, Jesus was a Jewish teacher, and it was unusual for a Jewish rabbi to speak to women in public. In fact the rabbins voiced their contempt for women by teaching that they were neither to be spoken to on the street nor taught the law.

As they conversed the woman perceived Jesus to be a prophet and challenged him about the proper place of worship. The Samaritans worshiped on mount Gerizim while the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem. Jesus' response made it clear that the proper place of worship was not the issue, rather the proper posture.

His message was that the true worshipers are not primarily concerned with traditions for traditions do not produce true worship. True worshipers are to make the Father the focus of worship. The exaltation of ritual is to be replaced by worship in spirit and truth. Those who worship in spirit and truth are the worshipers the Father is seeking to find.

Jesus told the woman that the hour had come for true worship to be restored. Why? The Father had come in the form of the Son. The Son had come to seek and save that which was lost. What was lost? True worshipers and true worship. It was time for kingdom worshipers and kingdom worship to be restored.

Are you a true worshiper? Has spirit and truth replaced tradition and ritual as the priorities of your worship? Is the Father the focus of your worship? Ask the Father to reveal something in your life that keeps him from being the focus of your worship. Ask him to show you the necessary steps to restore his proper place of worship in your life.

NOTES:

Scriptures for meditation:

Mark 12:30

Psalm 63:1-5

Psalm 73:25-26