

WORSHIP ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

John 4:21-24

INTRODUCTION

- A. Our Worship Together.
 - 1. COVID, March 18, 2020.
 - 2. Worshiped in our homes – help of recordings.
 - 3. Feb. 7, 2021 – divided, with the cry to be together.
 - 4. It is good to be together.
- B. Worship from the Beginning.
 - 1. Abel and Cain – acceptable/unacceptable, Gen. 4:3-5.
 - 2. Noah after the flood, Gen. 8:20.
 - 3. Abraham worshiped, Gen. 12:6-7.
 - a. Shechem located between the mountains Gerizim and Ebal.
 - 4. Unacceptable worship to God.
 - a. Cain's offering.
 - b. Nadab and Abihu, Lev. 10.
- C. Is our worship acceptable to God?

I. NOT DETERMINED BY PHYSICAL LOCATION, vs. 21.

- A. Contrast Jews to Gentiles.
 - 1. *"An hour is coming..."*
 - a. This "hour" is tied to the crucifixion, resurrection and the exaltation of Jesus Christ.
 - b. The sanctity of any place would be obsolete, Heb. 8:13; Eph. 2:14-15.
 - 2. *"Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem..."*
 - a. Samaritans worshiped on Mt. Gerizim.
 - i. Instructed by Moses, Dt. 27:12-13.
 - ii. Completed by Joshua, after defeating Ai, Josh. 8:30-35.
 - iii. Gerizim, mount of blessings; Ebal of curses.
 - 3. God is not confined to places, Acts 7:48-50 [*from Isa. 66:1*].
- B. *"...worship the Father."*
 - 1. The woman appealed to "our fathers."
 - 2. Jesus pointed to the one "Father."
 - 3. Worship of the Father is suggestive of a new and personal relationship, Rom. 8:15.

II. WORSHIP WHAT WE KNOW, vs. 22.

- A. Ignorance in Worship.
 - 1. The Gentiles rejected most of the Hebrew scriptures.
 - 2. Only accepted the Pentateuch (rejected the Prophets and Writings [*Psalms*]).
 - 3. They worshiped the right God, but limited their knowledge of God's nature and will.
 - 4. Their religion came from man with many erroneous teachings.
- B. The Jews Knew What They Worshiped.
 - 1. Salvation is from the Jews.
 - 2. Through the Jews would come the Messiah, Gen. 49:10.
 - a. Jews custodians of Scripture, Rom. 3:2.
 - b. OT Scripture testifies of Christ, Jn. 5:39.
 - c. Church, the Israel of God, seed of Abraham, Gal. 3:29 (27).

3. Through the Jews came the prophets and other inspired writers.
 - a. They unfolded God's entire redemptive plan.
4. The Jewish religion came from God – man corrupted it.
- C. God's Salvation.
 1. Offered to a lost world – Jew and Gentile.
 2. Based on God's gift to man (Jn. 3:16): Jesus, the Messiah, proclaimed in ***Jewish Scriptures***.

III. TRUE WORSHIP IS IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH, vss. 23-24.

- A. *"But an hour is coming..."*
 1. A new system of worship to involve true worshipers.
 2. It would render beliefs regarding Jerusalem and Mt. Gerizim obsolete.
 3. The Old Testament system of worship:
 - a. Special clothing for priests.
 - b. Burning of incense.
 - c. Instrumental music.
 - d. Animal sacrifices.
 - e. Appeal to the physical side of man.
- B. Genuine Worship Must Be in Spirit.
 1. This recognizes the essential nature of God.
 - a. 1 Jn. 1:5, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."
 - b. 1 Jn. 4:8, "God is love."
 - c. God is spirit [vs. 24], not a Spirit, not one among many.
 2. He cannot be approached on a mere physical level – worship is not just about the "acts of worship."
 3. Worship to God demands understanding, 1 Cor. 14:15.
 - a. Judaism was a worship of the letter, not of spirit.
 - b. Gentile worship was of falsehood, not of truth.
 - c. True worship is spiritual, not physical; it is inward, not outward.
 4. Worship is not about the individual; it is about God.
 - a. The praise and adoration given to God because of who He is and what He has given His people.
- C. Genuine Worship Must be in Truth.
 1. This woman "did not know who[m] to worship, where to worship, or how to worship!"
 2. We need to understand that all religions are not equally acceptable before God, because some worshipers act in ignorance and unbelief, Acts 17:23-28.
 3. Worship in spirit must be to the true God.
 - a. In harmony with the truth revealed in His Holy Word.
 - b. One may worship the true God, but still not be in harmony with the truth of His will, i.e., Cain, Nadab and Abihu, the Athenians.