

The Power of the Worshiper

I. True Worship and False Worship

John 4:23:

But 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.

God is looking for true worshipers. If there are true worshipers, there must also be false worshipers. Worship must begin in the spirit and then be in truth. The attitude behind worship is the most important aspect of worship. Methods of worship may be incorrect, but if a person's heart is right, God accepts his or her worship. The actions of the true worshiper will line up with the Word of God.

The story of Korah (Numbers 16) vividly portrays the difference between true worship and false worship. Korah led a rebellion with Dathan, Abiram, and 250 of the princes of Israel. These men revolted against Moses and against the system God had instituted under Aaron. Ultimately, they revolted against God.

These men came to Moses and said, "We want to be like Aaron. We want to be priests and offer up incense before the Lord." Incense is a type of worship and also represents the prayers of God's people. Worship is actually the highest form of prayer and the highest form of communication with God. All other types of prayer ask something of God or give thanks to Him for something He has given. But worship doesn't ask for anything. Worship magnifies God for Who He is.

When Korah and his followers wanted to offer incense before the Lord, their first mistake was having a wrong heart. They were not worshiping God in spirit. Next, their methods were wrong. They were not worshiping God in truth. They offered God the wrong type of incense and they offered it in the wrong censers. Instead of using gold censers, they offered them in brass censers. As a result, the ground opened up and swallowed Korah, Dathan, Abiram and their families, followed by fire descending upon the 250 princes of Israel, completely consuming them.

II. The People Blame God

Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the Lord and interceded on behalf of those remaining who had witnessed Korah's rebellion. God extended mercy upon the people and gave them one day to have a change

of heart. But instead of getting their hearts right with the Lord, they became angry at Moses and Aaron. They blamed them for the deaths of those who had rebelled the day before.

Numbers 16:41:

But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.

Imagine the people murmuring, “Moses, you killed them! Aaron, you killed them! You’re the reason they are dead! We know how you operate! If someone comes against you, you just have God kill them!” In coming against Moses and Aaron, the people were actually coming against God Himself.

Numbers 16:42-43:

And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared.

And Moses and Aaron come before the tabernacle of the congregation.

The glory of God appeared representing grace before judgment. God gave them one last opportunity to realize in their rebellion they weren’t coming against Moses and Aaron; they were coming against the presence of the Lord. To come against God’s leadership is to come against God. This doesn’t mean you can’t disagree with leadership, but to actually revolt against their position of leadership is to revolt against God. For anyone to read about Abraham, Joseph, Paul or any others God placed in positions of leadership mentioned in the Bible and say, “God didn’t choose you! You chose yourself and put yourself in the position you hold,” would be ludicrous and yet, that is what these people were saying to Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 16:44-45:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell (Moses and Aaron) upon their faces.

III. Moses Knew God’s Ways

When Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the Lord, it was because they wanted to know the ways of God. Moses sought after God’s ways but the people sought after His acts. A true worshiper wants to know the ways

of God. A true worshiper wants to know God's heartbeat. A true worshiper wants to know the thoughts, intents, and motives of God more than they want to see the acts of God—the miracles. The people were always looking for miracles. Moses witnessed the same miracles the people had witnessed, but far past the miracles, he saw the heart of God. Moses was a worshiper. Aaron was a worshiper. They knew the heart of God.

Numbers 16:46:

And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the plague is begun.

The day before the children of Israel had seen false worship. On this day, they were going to see true worship. The word *atonement* is the same word used in reference to Jesus going to the cross. The plague has begun. Even though Moses hadn't seen it, he knew it because He knew God's heart and His ways.

Numbers 16:47:

And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.

Once again, the word *atonement* is used.

Numbers 16:48:

And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.

Because of the atonement made in behalf of the people, the plague was stopped.

Numbers 16:48-50:

And he stood between the dead and the living: and the plague was stayed.

Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.

And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed.

V. Where There Are People There Are Problems

Proverbs 14:4:

Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.

People often ask, “Why do churches have problems? Can’t we just all worship the Lord without there being problems? Isn’t there some way to get problems out of the church altogether?” Actually, there is a way to get rid of the problems in the church—get rid of the people! Just as this verse is saying, if there are no oxen, the crib is clean. However, the more oxen you have, the greater the mess! As long as there are people, there will be problems. But God has given us ways to work through our problems! One way is through worship.

It would have been easy for Aaron to say to Moses, “Well Moses, I really don’t want to leave God’s presence and make an atonement for the people. I would rather stay here in God’s presence and avoid that whole mess out there!”

VI. Worship Needs to be Taken Before the World

It was never intended for worship to be confined to four walls. Worship must be before God. That is where we get our strength. It is true that we should worship God in church, in our homes, and in our cars but worship needs to be taken outside where the people are. I am not talking about doing the act of worship before the world—lifting our hands, praying in tongues, and singing. God is looking for worshipers. A true worshiper is a worshiper at all times, regardless if they are actually participating in the act of worship. Often we mistake the word *worship* to mean, “to be worshipping.” In this story, Aaron took worship to where the people were.

We don’t need to go out before the world and try to be like them. You need to go out and be like God. When Aaron went out, worship became an atonement for the people. The lifestyle of a worshiper can stop the attacks of Satan and the influence of the world.

VII. A Worshiper Becomes an Atonement for the People

The daily lifestyle of a worshiper becomes an atonement for the people that will stop the plague. You may come home from work frustrated and upset. You may get into strife with your spouse because you have brought the “plague” of the world home with you. But worship can stop it.

Centering your thoughts and attitudes on the Lord becomes a type of atonement.

Aaron didn't live in the holy place. The holy place is where he went to worship the Lord. He lived with the rest of the children of Israel. He had a tent to return to after leaving the holy place. He had a family to return to after leaving the holy place. We don't live in church. We come to Sunday and mid-week services but then we leave to go home or to our jobs. We live in the world. Our lifestyle as a worshiper should speak to the world. We shouldn't be cussing like the world or gossiping like the world, or only working when the boss is looking like the world often does. Our life should demonstrate the fact that we are worshipers.

VIII. The Salt of the Earth

God calls us the salt of the earth. The salt of the earth is a worshiper. God is looking for those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. Truth is the Word of God. Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth."

Matthew 5:13:

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

The salt of the earth must keep its savor. To keep our savor we must be filled with the Word of God.

Salt basically does three things. First, it is a preserver. In the ancient world where there was no refrigeration, they rubbed meat down with salt. It served to preserve the meat. Believers are the preserver of the land in which they live. The United States is blessed because of the salt—Word filled believers who remain strong in the Word and strong in prayer.

1 Timothy 2:1-2:

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Quietness and peace are a result of the salt of the earth. A worshiper is not a fanatic who speaks out loud in tongues with his hands lifted all day long. A true worshiper goes to work and influences everything around him. A worshiper knows God and fellowships and communes with Him.

Not only does salt preserve, it also gives flavor. Your employer should be blessed in his business just because of your presence. Potiphar's household was blessed because of Joseph's presence. Potiphar had increase because of Joseph's presence. As worshipers, our presence becomes an atonement—something that stops the plague. Aaron didn't walk out in the midst of the people and say, "Hey guys, let me give you some advice here." Aaron walked out and just stood in the midst of the people. He stood between the living and the dead and while he stood, the plague stopped. Believers need to walk in this world knowing who they are in Christ!

Not only does salt preserve and flavor, it is also a hindrance. In the ancient world, when one nation would conquer another nation, they would destroy everything in sight. They would destroy all of the buildings and then plow them under. To ensure nothing would grow on the land, they would completely cover the ground with salt. As believers, not only do we preserve and flavor situations around us, we also hinder Satan's kingdom. Jesus said, "I will build My Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." We become an atonement against the plague.

Worship is a lifestyle. Again, we are to take that lifestyle into the world and be the salt of the earth.

IX. The Outward Expression of Praise

1 Peter 2:9:

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

We are to show forth the praises of God. Praise and worship of the heart is not to be kept hidden in where no one can see it. The praise and the worship we have in our heart toward God is to be expressed outwardly. That expression may be the lifting of hands or it may be dancing before the Lord. Keeping praise and worship in our heart with no outward expression is not found in the Bible. Even nature praises the Lord. The Bible says the trees will clap their hands and the rocks will praise Him. Praise is to be demonstrated. Worship is to be demonstrated.