

PART THREE

LIVING WORSHIP

Mystical religions view worship as an event. It is something that occurs in a specific time and in a specific place. Worship to the mystic generally involves the act of transcending to the supernatural world through an altered state of mind. The mind is altered through the use of drugs and mantras. Mantras involve the use of repeated words that help the worshipper to escape the world by turning off his/her mind. Jesus Himself offered up a rebuke in regards to the utilization of these meaningless repetitive phrases. (**Matt 6:7**) In addition the mystic attempts to reach God through self-abasement exercises meant to appease. (**I Kings 18:28**) Jesus rebuked this type of activity as well. (**Matt 6:16**) The self-abasement or mutilation principle has created the mystic “worship leader” such as the Hindu yoga who attempts to “disappear” so that he can become a channel to God. If the worshipper’s attention is drawn to a person, it is believed that worship is hindered. Therefore, the gifts and abilities of the individual are suppressed in order to insure that God can be contacted without human distraction. This is believed because worship to the mystic is an event centered around the act of finding God. When one is using worship to connect with God, then humanity could only be an unwanted distraction.

Christian worship, on the other hand, emanates from a daily acknowledgment of the God who is there. People are not seen as obstacles to worship, but rather the vehicles of worship. God is glorified in the life of the believer and, as worshippers see His glory manifested through humanity, He is glorified and worshipped all the more. Humanity and the gifts that God has given, are seen as attributes which inspire worship rather than being inhibitions. Christian worship is not an act of finding God, but rather a living response to the God who has revealed Himself in the creation, through His people and through His Holy Word. As Jesus explained to the woman at the well, Christian worship is not an event that occurs in a particular place and a specific time. Rather worship is a lifestyle accomplished in spirit and truth. (**Jn 4:21-24**). The Christian worshipper lives his entire life in an appropriate fashion before the ever-present God who is always near.

The following materials will uncover the nature of this lifestyle of worship as it is manifested in the believer’s life.

Those who worship the True and Living God present their whole bodies before Him and an act of daily sacrifice.

Romans 12:1-2

LESSON ONE: The Definition of Worship Part 1

- ◆ **Ex 34:4-9** Worship is a conscious and intelligent act that involves man responding to God rather than God responding to man.
- ◆ This dynamic of man's response to God is demonstrated in the entire Christian life.
 - ⇒ **John 3:16** Man responds to God in becoming saved
 - ⇒ **I John 4:7-11** Man responds to God when he loves
 - ⇒ **John 13:14** Man responds to God when he serves.
 - ⇒ **Matt 10:8** Man responds to God when he gives.
- ◆ Therefore, our expressions of worship should not be determined by what we think God will do as a result. Our daily worship should be accomplished as a result of who God is and what He does for us.

Q. Describe the things that you do, or think of doing, that is for the express intention of getting God to respond to you. How might those dynamics in your life be altered to a more biblical perspective? _____

- ◆ **WORSHIP IS AN ACTIVE AND DAILY RESPONSE IN EVERYDAY LIFE WHEREIN WE DECLARE GOD'S WORTH THROUGH OUR TESTIMONY OF HIM AND LIVING OUR LIVES ACCORDING TO HIS PRECEPTS.**
 - ⇒ We don't worship God to get a response from Him. We don't worship God in order to find Him. We worship the Living God who has been revealed to us for He is worthy. His worth has been proved to us because of who He is and what He does.
 - * **Psalm 96:7-8** Give God the glory that is due His name.
 - * **Rev 5:12** God is worthy of our worship.
 - ⇒ The origin of the word *worship*.
 - * The English word *worship* comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "weorthslip."
 - * This word has been modified to *worship*.
 - * The English word *worship* means "to attribute worth" to something or someone.
 - ◇ We worship someone or something because we think it has value or worth.
 - ◇ We worship God for the same reason.

Q. List some items or people in your life who you believe have worth to you. To what extent do you worship these people or things? To what extent do you allow these things to undermine your daily acknowledgment and resultant worship of God? _____

Q. It is okay to enjoy the things that God has given to us. However, if these things cause us to worship the wrong things or the wrong gods, then these things have become idols. **I Cor. 8** What place must the people, things and pleasures of this life have in relation to God? **Psalms 86:12; Rom 1:21-23** _____

- ◆ In the Greek New Testament text, the word *worthy* is “axios.” The definition of axios according to the Strong’s concordance is “deserving or suitable (as if drawing praise). . .” Examples of this use are **Rev 4:11; 5:2,4,9,12;16:6**.
- ◆ In ancient times the word axios was used to designate a coin of full weight.
 - ⇒ A coin whose metallic value was worth as much as its face value was said to be “axios” or worthy.
 - ⇒ In ancient days, due to inferior minting techniques, as a coin wore out, it lost some of its actual value. It became unworthy, worthless or **LESS WORTHY**.
 - ⇒ Our position before God is like the worn-out roman coin. It is not that we aren’t worth anything, but our value cannot be compared to God’s. Therefore, we praise Him whose worth far exceeds ours.

Q. Rom 12:1-3 Many times we think more of ourselves than we ought to think. For example, we think we can do things without God. How can this attitude of pride affect our ability to worship God in our everyday lives? _____

Lesson Two: The Definition of Worship Part 2

- ◆ **Exodus 34:14** To worship God is to prostrate one's self before the Lord. In the Hebrew, the word worship here is "shachah." According to the Strong's Concordance the definition of shachah is:
 - shachah** {shaw-khaw'} a primitive root; - worship, bow, bow down, obeisance, reverence, fall down, themselves, stoop, crouch,
 - 1) to bow down
 - 1a) (Qal) to bow down
 - 1b) (Hiphil) to depress (fig)
 - 1c) (Hithpael)
 - 1c1) to bow down, prostrate oneself
 - 1c1a) before superior in homage
 - 1c1b) before God in worship
 - 1c1c) before false gods
 - 1c1d) before angel
- ◆ **Rev 3:9; 4:10; 13:8; 14:7, 9; 15:4; 19:10; 22:8-9** In these instances the Greek word for worship is "proskuneo." According to the Strong's the definition of proskuneo is:
 - proskuneo** {pros-koo-neh'-o} (meaning to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand);
 - AV - worship
 - 1) to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence
 - 2) among the Orientals, esp. the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence
 - 3) in the NT by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication
 - 3a) used of homage shown to men and beings of superior rank
 - 3a1) to the Jewish high priests
 - 3a2) to God
 - 3a3) to Christ
 - 3a4) to heavenly beings
 - 3a5) to demons
- ◆ **Ex 3:1-6; 4:28-31; 34:1-8** Worship, therefore, is to prostrate oneself before God -- to bow before Him while acknowledging the person of God whom one addresses.
 - ⇒ **Psalm 95:6-11** God insists that His worshippers bow down to Him. The central thing that inhibits this in man is pride.
 - ⇒ The aspects of pride that inhibit worship is shown in **James 4:13-15**. This scripture details the situation wherein the human will stubbornly opposes God's sovereign will. God is not worshipped by those who insist on their own way in direct opposition to God's commands.

Q. Pride and the worship of God are completely opposed to each other. What does that say, therefore, for the worshipper who dares to believe that he/she can work his way into God's presence through human means? What does that say for the worshipper who believes that he/she can do "worshipful" or "religious" things and that God will respond like a puppet on a string? Does the humble person worship to get a response from God or worship as a response to God? _____

- ◆ Respect is the central theme of worship. **I Tim 5:4** utilizes the word worship in this context.
 - ⇒ The Greek for *worship* here is "eusebeo." According to the Strong's eusebeo is defined as "to be pious, i.e. (towards God) or (towards parents) to respect (support): - show piety, worship."
 - ⇒ There is a comparison made here between respecting your parents and worshipping God.

Q. Can one who has disrespect for authority truly say he/she is a worshipper of God? Explain: _____

- ◆ **Acts 10:12** details another aspect of the respect aspect of worship. The Greek word for worship here is "eusebes." According to the Strong's this means "well-reverent, i.e. pious: devout, godly." The implication is that those who worship the Lord must fear Him. They must be devout.

Q. God is our friend, but He is also our father. Today the idea of fearing the Lord is very foreign to people. Pious and devout worship are linked with traditional understandings of God that is repulsive to many Christians today. Christians today desire to have a chummy relationship with God rather than one that demands respect and honor to our God who is exceedingly worthy of respect. What do the above scriptures say about these attitudes? _____

- ◆ **Psalm 18:1-15** points out that God is to be feared by those who worship Him.
 - ⇒ **Rev 9:1-9** indicates that we must worship God reverently because He is of good reputation and exceedingly great. There are two Greek words for worship that are very significant in that regard.
 - * “Dokeo” According to the Strong’s, the definition of this word is “be accounted, (of own) please (-ure), be of reputation, seem (good), suppose, think, trow.
 - * “Doxa” is a derivative form this word that means dignity, glory (ious), honor, praise worship.
 - ⇒ **Ps 104** God is great so worship Him.
 - ⇒ **Psalm 8** God is majestic and yet He is concerned about us.

Q. Based upon the above scriptures, why is it that God is worthy? What does it mean to worship God for He is worthy? _____

- ◆ **Phil 3:3; Acts 24:14** These scriptures indicate that worship involves serving the Lord. The Greek word for worship here is “latreuo.” According to the Strong’s the definition of “latreuo” is “to minister (to God), i.e. render religious homage: - serve, do the service, worship.”
 - ⇒ **I Tim 1:12-14** It is according to God’s work that we are rendered suitable to serve Him. We see the worship of the server as a response to God.
 - ⇒ **Heb 10:15** We cannot preach lest we are sent by God to do so.

Q. According to the biblical definition of worship, worship is serving God with fear in humility, reverence, awe and respect because God is worthy. Service to God, rather than being a sporadic event to be pursued according to convenience of whim, is, to the Christian, a lifetime endeavor involving the entire Christian being. Understanding who God is, it is only reasonable that we should worship God in this manner. (**Rom 11:33-36; 12:1**) Understanding that service to God is the worship of Him, when and where we are to worship God? What does this have to say about the theology of those who live life as they please only to wait to worship God in church? _____

LESSON Three: Worshipping in Spirit and Truth

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshippers must worship in spirit and truth.

(Jn 4:21-24 niv)

- ◆ Jesus easily could have defended the Jewish position
 - ⇒ God had established Himself with Hebrews, not Samaritans
 - ⇒ The Samaritans
 - * Samaritans were people who came into northern Kingdom after the Assyrians conquered Israel and dispersed them.
 - * The Samaritans hated the Jews
 - * The Samaritans thought God dwelt on Mount Gerizim. This location was significant in Jewish history. It was the place where Law read to congregation of Israel for the first time after entrance to promise land.
 - ◇ **Deut 11:26-31** They read blessing and cursings there.
 - ◇ **Deut 27:4-7** They built an altar there.
 - ◇ **Josh 8:30-35** Moses commands were carried out there.
 - Mount Gerizim is mountain of blessings of law.
Represents man's works.
 - Mount Ebal is mountain of cursings of law.
 - Altar at Mount Ebal -- God's grace in the midst of man's failure.
 - ◇ Jacob's well, where the woman was located, was in a valley between these two mountains.
 - ⇒ The Jews
 - * **Ex 3:1-5** Moses had witnessed the glory of God on Mount Sinai
 - * **Ex 40:34-38** God's Glory, for the Jew, inhabited the temple.
- ◆ Jesus realized that God is everywhere
 - ⇒ We do not worship Him one place or another
 - ⇒ Since everything we do is done before God, we are to worship Him wherever we are in whatever we do.

Q. Describe situations wherein you are like the woman at the well, seeking for a place and time to worship God rather than worshipping with your whole life. _____

WORSHIPPING IN SPIRIT

- ◆ Many worship with lots of spirit, but with little truth.
 - ⇒ **Existentialism in modern age** -- People today determine whether or not something is true based upon experience or feelings rather than biblical truth. Experiences are said to be Christian based upon whether-or-not the person “feels” the Holy Spirit rather than whether-or-not the experience is true according to biblical standards.
 - * **Salvation is defined** by many according to single experience rather than life-commitment.
 - * **Worship defined** as emotional experience rather than placement of life according to truth.
- ◆ **Rom 12:1** The NIV Bible translates this as “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God -- which is your spiritual worship.” In contrast to the existential interpretation of “in spirit”, this scripture describes what it means to worship in spirit. Spiritual worship is presenting one’s body as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God. It is living a holy life daily with one’s body.

C.S. Lewis in his book *Miracles* demonstrated that the very existence of man proves that there is a supernatural world. Man himself has a supernatural side to him. The rest of the creation is a closed system. This is to say that the animals, for example, because they do not have souls or a spirit, can only respond to their surroundings. As Pavlov and B.F. Skinner found out, animals are conditioned by their environment and heredity. Everything animals do is a result of their surroundings. They cannot make independent decisions. However, these two psychologists attempted to say that man was just as the animals. Therefore, they believed that man was conditioned by his surroundings and everything he thought and did resulted from this conditioning. Skinner’s theories about conditioning are called determinism. Determinism means that man has no choice in what he does because he is completely conditioned by the circumstances that surround him. Fascism and Communism owe a lot to these deterministic theories.

However, both Fascism and Communism failed to take care of the needs of man. This is partially due to the fact that Pavlov and Skinner were wrong.

Man has a supernatural part to him -- a soul and a spirit. Because of this, he is not a product of his environment and heredity. Unlike the animals, man can make decisions that can change the course of history. Unlike the animals, man can choose, according to the exercise of his independent will, to obey, or disobey God. Unlike the animals man can reason and love unconditionally. Since man has a supernatural side to him in addition to his physical nature, every time he exercises his will in a way to alter the circumstances around him, a supernatural act has occurred.

Q. Understanding that the exercise of man's will is an expression of the spiritual world, describe why presenting one's body as a living sacrifice is spiritual worship. _____

Q. Since the act of presenting one's body as a living sacrifice is a spiritual exercise in worship that glorifies God, do the acts that believers accomplish in that regard distract others from God in a manner that inhibits their worship? What is the proper response of a Christian worshipper who witnesses a believer daily worshipping God by performing the most excellent music for the glory of God, excelling in school or sports while bearing witness of Christ, competing effectively in the business world with honesty and integrity, working in the political world in a manner that promotes Christianity in his culture, or teaching in schools in a manner that promotes truth? (**II Sam 12-23**) _____

Q. J.S. Bach was heavily criticized in his own day because his music was too ornate for those who indicated that it distracted from God. Yet, this servant, who ended out being one of the greatest composers of all time, put "To God be the Glory" on each piece that he wrote. Is mediocrity more spiritual than excellence? Is excellence that which glorifies God and generates worship? If Christians desire to inspire the worship of God in their culture, what steps ought they make in regards to their own performance? With this in mind, is it important that Christians gain the attention of others in everything they do for God's glory? _____

WORSHIPPING IN TRUTH

Pagan mysticism teaches a different understanding of truth than Christianity. According to pagan teaching, truth is relative to the individual. . R.C. Zaehner in "Hinduism" detailed that in Hinduism, for example, truth (dharma) is determined by each individual's karma. What is true for one person is not necessarily true for another. Just as long as one is living according to his own karma, it is understood that he is living according to truth. In India, therefore, the people are segregated into different classes or casts. A different standard of living based upon a different truth is established for each class. Therefore, truth is completely relative. This is true in the New Age Movement as well.

According to Francis Schaeffer in *How Should We Then Live?*, in Western society, this relativistic truth base has been mainly promoted through modern philosophy, and particularly the philosophy of existentialism. Existentialism teaches that truth is determined by experience. Therefore, since each person experiences something different, then truth is relative to each individual. Added to this is the philosophy of hedonism which can be summed up in the statement, "If it feels good it is right." Truth, here, is determined by how something feels. Again each person makes up his own truth in this philosophical system because each person feels differently about each thing.

Largely because of the work of Soren Kierkegard and Karl Barth, existentialism has become the truth base of much of the modern church. Biblical truth has become secondary to experience. The truths of science are determined by the experiences of the scientists. Scientific experiments are nothing other than experiencing certain natural phenomena in action and drawing conclusions from these experiences. Therefore, if scientists, based upon their experience, believe that evolution is true, then the creation account in Genesis 1-2 is thrown out the door. Much of the Bible has been discarded by the existentialists who believe that truth is determined by individual experience.

In many corners of Christendom, worship in the church has taken the same turn. More-and-more church leaders are entering into worship practices that have little-or-no foundation in the Bible. Congregational members are encouraged to connect with God through repetitive songs that have very little or no theological value. They are told that worship is when they gather together, sing these songs, put the world behind and connect with God. This model of worship is an exact replica of pagan practices. In order to support this worship model, the leaders claim that they felt this or that as a result. They claim that this feeling came from the Holy Spirit. As a result of this philosophy, congregational members in many instances are slain in the spirit, convulse on the ground and are lead into visualizations as the "worship band" plays on.

The rationalization behind this worship practice is firmly based on the existential model of truth evaluation. However, the Bible is very clear in detailing that the existential model of truth evaluation is wrong.

- ◆ **Jn 14:6-7** The truth is not relative to the individual. It is embodied Jesus
- ◆ **John 8:32** To know the truth is to adhere to the teachings of Jesus. Hence, the Bible, which reveals this truth is the ultimate truth authority.

Q. Those who adhere to relative or situational truth do so in order to be free. In particular, they seek to free themselves from the restrictions of traditional Christian morality. According to Scripture, how is freedom actually attained? (**Isa 61:1; Lk 4:18; Jn 8:36; Rom 6:5-7; II Cor 3:17-18; Gal 5:1, 13; Ja 1:25; I Pet 2:16; Rev 1:5-6**) _____

THE TRUTH TEST

- ◆ Common among modern worshippers are phrases such as “The worship was very good this morning” or “I could not worship because they were singing hymns,” or “I could not worship because they were singing praise songs” or “I could not worship because of what the song leader was doing.” Many call themselves worshippers while they live in sin or deny the precepts of the Bible.
 - ⇒ What does it mean, “The worship is good this morning?” This implies that worship occurs in a particular place. This is the pagan mystical model and not worship according to truth.
 - ⇒ What does it mean when one says “I can not worship here because. . .”? This implies that worship needs a worship leader and is dependent upon certain events to occur. This is the pagan mystical model and not worship according to truth.
 - ⇒ Many in the Church today look primarily for the emotional aspects that occur in music. They define this musical experience as worship because it generates excitement. Yet many of these same people deny the infallibility of Bible. . and the authority of Scripture. This is acceptance of the existential model of truth gathering and not worshipping according to God’s truth
 - ⇒ Many boast that "They follow the Spirit" while they live inconsistent lives as sin continues to be tolerated in the church. This is relative morality and not worship according to God’s truth.
 - ⇒ Many churches emphasize expressive singing demonstrating "intimacy with God" while they allow un-biblical practices to pervade. This is not worship according to God’s truth.

Q. Since worship is a lifestyle rather than an event, does it make sense to call congregational singing “worship” in order to distinguish it from other parts of the church service? What part of the church service is worship? (**Acts 2:42**) _____

- ◆ **How is the truth evaluated? What determines if worship is true or not?**
If the crux of Christianity is abiding above the truth line, then Christianity can be defined as living according to the truth. *Since worship is the act of daily living the Christian life to glorify God*, then true worship is living according to the teachings of Jesus as defined in the Bible. True worship is constant living in conformance to God's Word.
- ◆ Charles Spurgeon, in his book *Soul Winner* indicated that emotionalism should not be the basis of our worship. However, he cautioned that worship should not be devoid of emotion. Rather worship should be full of emotion, for who can think about our great God and the things He does without becoming emotional. Living above the truth line is a question of having things in the right order. The mystical worshipper starts with his emotions and basis his understanding of truth on that. The Christian worshipper starts with the truth as proclaimed in the Bible and bursts out with emotion while understanding what these truths mean to him/her.
- ◆ **God has already granted us everything through the death of His Son. Worshipping is what we do for Him as a result of this fact, for God is worthy. Worship is our duty as Christians.**

*Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness;
come before Him with joyful songs.
Know that the Lord is God.
It is He who made us, and we are His;
We are His people, the sheep of His pasture
Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise;
And give thanks to Him and praise His name.
For the Lord is good and His love endured forever;
His faithfulness continues through all generations.*

Ps 100 niv

- ◆ **Heb 13:11-16** Worship is an offering of praise and thanksgiving for who God is and what He has given us.

Q. Think about who God is and what He has done for you. In particular, consider the fact that He died to save you from your sins so that you will avoid an eternity in hell in order to live forever in paradise with Him. What emotions should these facts elicit? _____

LESSON FOUR: The Worship of the Martyrs

- ◆ **Acts 7:54-60** Stephen was the first martyr of the Church. In the face of the horrible circumstances of being stoned, Stephen kept his eyes on God. In fact, as he was being stoned, Stephen prayed to God while forgiving his persecutors. He was a worshipper in the most diverse circumstances.
 - ⇒ The attitude of the early sufferers for Christ can be summed up by the words of Justin Martyr (100-166). As he was being beheaded for his testimony of Jesus along with his fellow Christians, he declared, "We desire nothing more than to suffer for our Lord Jesus Christ; for this gives us salvation and joyfulness before His dreadful judgment seat."
 - ⇒ It was during the tenth year of Trajan's reign that a brief era persecution was instigated. This time saw the death of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch. The holy man had boldly preached the Gospel to the emperor himself. True to Roman form, Caesar made his rejection of the Gospel known in dramatic fashion. He had Ignatius cast into prison and dreadfully scourged. The man of God was forced to hold scorching fire in his hand while papers dipped in oil were placed on his side and lighted. Finally, his flesh was torn to pieces by pinchers and he was fed to the wild beasts. His courage was described in a letter that Ignatius had written to his dear friend Polycarp. "Let fire, the gallows, the wild beasts, the breaking of bones, the pulling asunder of members, the bruising of my whole body, and the torments of the devil and hell itself come upon me," the wise man proclaimed, "so that I may win Jesus Christ!"
 - ⇒ Probus declared in his trial before the emperor Maximus, "I come better prepared to die than before; for what I have suffered has only confirmed me in my resolution"
 - ⇒ Andronicus also appeared before Maximus asserting, "I neither know your gods nor your authority; fulfill your threats, employ every cruel art in your power; I am prepared to bear it for the sake of Christ."
 - ⇒ While cast back in prison Theodotus declared, "It is but just that Christians suffer for Him who suffered for us all." Five days later he would present his body unto the Lord as the greatest sacrifice one can make for the sake of love. He was brought up out of prison, tortured, and finally beheaded.

Q. We have read the testimony of worship declared by the martyrs of the Church who demonstrated their love and devotion for Christ by going to their deaths. Truly, they presented their bodies as a living sacrifice as the Scriptures commanded them to do. Though they were being stoned and though they were fed to the lions, they continued to affirm their faith and praise God before their accusers. Many today claim they cannot worship God unless all the circumstances are right in church. In light of the martyrs, how valid is that belief? What does the testimony of the martyrs tell us in regards to when and where God is to be worshipped? _____

- ⇒ Ancient records testify to us today of the steadfastness of the Christian message that was preached before the rulers of Rome. Rome saw Christianity as a threat. Nicknames were accorded to Christians such as "the sect that worshipped the ass's head." The Roman writer Tacitus claimed that the Christian faith was among the "atrocious and abominable things" and further labeled it "a baneful superstition." Pliny called them "vile and indecent," and Justus said they were "hated and reviled by the whole human race." Tacitus in *The Annals* wrote of the era of Nero to illustrate how Christians "were covered with wild beast skins and torn to death by dogs; or they were fastened on crosses, and when the daylight failed, were burned to serve as lamps by night. Nero had offered his gardens for the spectacle, and gave an exhibition in his circus, mixing the crowd in the habit of a charioteer."
- ⇒ Rome knew that a Christian defined himself according to the fact that he worshipped God and God alone. Therefore, in order to test whether-or-not a person was a Christian, the Romans would place the Christian in front of a statue of Caesar and demand that he/she bow before it. If the accused bowed before the idol, then he/she would be freed, because Rome knew that a true Christian would refuse to worship the idol. However, if the accused refused to bow before the idol, then the suspect would be revealed as a Christian and subjected to the most grueling death.
- ⇒ Pliny was one Roman governor who utilized this litmus test. A look into a letter that he wrote to his emperor is very revealing in regards to what the ancient Christian considered worship to be. Pliny wrote to Trajan in 96 AD, ". . . Meanwhile I have taken this course with those who were accused before me as Christians: I have asked them whether they were Christians. Those who confessed I asked a second time, threatening punishment. Those who persisted I ordered led away to execution. For I did not doubt that, whatever it was they admitted, obstinacy and unbending perversity certainly deserve to be punished. . . . An unsigned paper was presented containing the names of many. But these denied that they were or had been Christians, and I thought it right to let them go, since at my dictation they prayed to the gods and made supplication with incense and wine to your statue, which I had ordered to be brought into the court for the purpose, together with the images of the gods, and in addition to this *they cursed Christ, none of which things, it is said, those who are really Christians can be made to do.* Others who were named by an informer said that they were Christians, and soon afterwards denied it, saying, indeed, that they had been, but had *ceased to be Christians*, some three years ago, some many years, and one even twenty years ago. *All these also not only worshipped your statue and the images of the gods, but also cursed Christ.* They asserted, however, that the amount of their fault of error was this: that they had been accustomed to assemble on a fixed day before daylight and sing by turns a hymn to Christ as a god; and that they bound themselves with an oath, not for any crime, but to commit neither theft, nor robbery, nor adultery, not to break their word and not to deny a deposit when demanded; after these things were done, it was their custom to depart and meet together again to take food, but ordinary and harmless food; and they said that even this had ceased after my edict was issued, by which, according to your commands, I had forbidden the existence of clubs. On this account I believed it the more necessary to find out from two maid-servants, who were called deaconesses, and that by torture, what was the truth. I found nothing else than a perverse and excessive superstition. I therefore adjourned the examination and hastened to consult you. The matter seemed to me to be worth deliberation, especially because of the number of those in danger. For many of every age, every rank, and even of both sexes, are brought into danger; and will be in the future. The contagion of that superstition has penetrated not only the cities but also the villages and country places; and yet it seems possible to stop it and set it right. At any rate, it is certain enough that the temples, deserted until quite recently, begin to be frequented, that the ceremonies of religion, long disused, are restored, and that fodder for the victims comes to market, whereas buyers of it were until now very few. From this it may easily be supposed what a multitude of men can be reclaimed if there be a place of repentance."

⇒ Then Trajan answered to his governor: "You have followed, my dear Secundus, the proper course of procedure in examining the cases of those who are accused to you as Christians. For, indeed, nothing can be laid down as a general law that contains anything like a definite rule of action. They are not to be sought out. If they are accused and convicted, they are to be punished, yet on this condition, *that he who denies that he is a Christian and makes the fact evident by an act, that is, by worshipping our gods, shall obtain pardon on his repentance*, however much suspected as to the past. Papers, however, which are presented anonymously ought not to be admitted in any accusation. For they are a very bad example and unworthy of our times."

Q. The worship litmus test first set up by Nebuchadnezzar (**Dan 3:4-12**) and carried out in faithfulness by the emperors of Rome, who ruled the kingdom represented by the legs of Nebuchadnezzar's statue (**Dan 2: 40**), is still in effect. In fact, the last ruler from Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the Antichrist who will rule over in the kingdom represented by the feet of iron and clay (**Dan 2:41-44**), will institute the same test of a Christian worshiper. (**Rev 13: 15**) How well do you think the church today would fare if it was presented with these dire circumstances? If this litmus test were used today to test who was a worshipper of God, how many would pass the test? Explain: _____

- ◆ One example of the testimony of ancient worshippers comes from the *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs* in which the Christians -- Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Donata, Secunda and Vestia -- stood before the proconsul Saturninus. Excerpts from this interview should provide enlightenment regarding the uncompromised testimony the church today ought to maintain in the face of modern Rome.

Speratus said: We have never done ill, we have not lent ourselves to wrong, we have never spoken ill, but when ill-treated we have given thanks; because we pay heed to our EMPEROR.

Saturninus the proconsul said: We too are religious, and our religion is simple, and we swear by the genius of our lord the Emperor, and pray for his welfare, as ye also ought to do.

Speratus said: If thou wilt peaceably lend me thine ears, I can tell thee the mystery of simplicity.

Saturninus I will not lend mine ears to thee, when thou beginnest to speak evil of our sacred rites; but rather swear thou by the genius of our lord the Emperor.

Speratus said: The empire of this world I know not; but rather I serve that God, whom no man hath seen, nor with these eyes can see. I have committed no theft; but if I have bought anything I pay the tax; because I know my Lord. The King of kings and Emperor of all nations.

Saturninus the proconsul said to the rest: Cease to be of this persuasion.

Speratus said: It is an ill persuasion to do murder, to speak false witness.

Saturninus the proconsul said: Be not partakers of this folly.

Cittinus said: *We have none other to fear, save only our Lord God, who is in heaven.*

Donata said: *Honor Caesar as Caesar: but fear God.*

Secunda said: What I am, that I wish to be.

Saturninus the proconsul said to Speratus: Dost thou persist in being a Christian?

Speratus said: I am a Christian. And with him they all agreed.

Saturninus the proconsul said: Will ye have a space to consider?

Speratus said: In a matter so straightforward there is no considering.

Saturninus the proconsul said: What are the things in your chest?

Speratus said: Books and epistles of Paul, a just man.

Saturninus the proconsul said: Have a delay of thirty days and bethink yourselves.

Speratus said: I am a Christian. And with him they all agreed.

Saturninus the proconsul read out the decree from the tablet: Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Donata, Vestia, Secunda and the rest having confessed that they live according to the Christian rite, since after opportunity offered them of returning to the custom of the Romans they have obstinately persisted, it is determined that they be put to the sword.

Speratus said: *We give thanks to God.*

Nartzalus said: To-day we are martyrs in heaven; thanks be to God.

Saturninus the proconsul ordered it to be declared by the herald: Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Veturius, Felix, Aquininus, Laetantius, Januararia, Generosa, Vestia, Donata and Secunda, I have ordered to be executed.

They all said: *Thanks be to God.*

And so they all together were crowned with martyrdom; and they reign with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, forever and ever. Amen.

Q. In the above dialogue, how did the accused define their Christianity? Compare and contrast their understanding of what it meant to be a Christian worshipper with the understandings we have today. _____

Q. What was the response of the accused to their death sentence? What should we learn from their testimony of faith? _____

Q. Heb 11:32-40 Worship, rather than being a feeling or an exercise of finding God, is a stance of faith for God in everyday life. The martyrs of the Old Testament held their faith even though they did not receive the promised Messiah. We have beheld the promise in the person of Jesus Christ. What, then, should our worship stance be in the world? _____

LESSON FIVE: The Priesthood of the Believer Part 1

When God set up the worship system of the ancient Jewish people, He established the fact that He would be worshipped in the tabernacle (and later the temple). One of the tribes of Israel, Levi was set up as a priesthood to minister to the Lord in worship. God established that He would be worshipped in a particular place by particular people to provide us with an example of how worship operates in the heavenlies. (Heb 9)

Jn 4:21-24 *However, just as Jesus informed the woman at the well, the time would come when God would not be worshipped in any particular place. Rather He would be worshipped in Spirit and Truth in the lives of his holy priesthood, the body of Christ.*

THE OLD TESTAMENT PRIESTHOOD

- ◆ **Numbers 3:10-13** God established His priesthood.
 - ⇒ **Ex 13:2** God required the firstborn male to be given to Him
 - ⇒ The priest was the firstborn of man belonging only to God and His service.
 - ⇒ There was a separation between the priest and the layman: only the priest could minister to God in worship.
 - ⇒ **Ex 28:1-4** The priests were set apart to minister to the Lord in the tabernacle.
 - ⇒ **Heb 5:1** The priest offered sacrifices unto God.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF JESUS THE HIGH PRIEST

- ◆ **Heb 9:1-7** Only the high priest could enter into the Holy of Holies once a year for the atonement of Israel's sins.
- ◆ **Rom 8:29** Christ was made the firstborn of man because we were predestined to be conformed to His image.
- ◆ **Heb 8:1-3** Jesus entered into the true tabernacle, not made of hands, to make the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of the world.
- ◆ **Heb 9:11-12** Jesus offered the sacrifice of His own blood.
- ◆ **Heb 9:24-28** Christ offered this sacrifice in not just once a year but once and for all for all whom He has chosen.
- ◆ **Heb 10:11-13** Jesus was resurrected and ascended into heaven. He now sits at the right hand of God.

Q. In what way is the ministry and calling of Jesus similar to that of the Old Testament Priesthood? In what way is it different? _____

LESSON SIX: The Priesthood of the Believer Part 2

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER

- ◆ **Is. 61:6** It was prophesied in the Old Testament.
- ◆ **I Pet 2:9-10** The levitical priesthood has been eliminated. We, the body of Christ, are now the priests of God.
- ◆ **Rom 6:17-18** As the Levitical priests belonged to God, so do we (**I Pet 2:9-10**)
- ◆ **I Pet 2:9** As only the Levitical priests could minister to God in worship, Christians are the sole ministers of God. Christians are set apart for His service. (**Rev 5:9-10**).

Q. Many religions, and even Christian denominations, today maintain a priesthood. These priests are handed special sacramental duties of worship that are not shared by the lay person. Does this practice measure up to the scriptural test? _____

- ◆ **I Cor 6:14-18** Since the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians, each believer is now the temple of God.
 - ⇒ The Levitical priesthood was set up to worship in the tabernacle and later the temple. The temple is now the believer himself. Therefore, the believer's ministry is to worship, not in a building, but with and through his body which is the temple of God.

II Cor 6:14-18 Since the Christian is the temple of God, he/she must not fellowship with the things of the world. Therefore, the worship of the believer consists in using his body for the glory of God through living a chaste life according to the dictates of Scripture.

Q. According to Alexander Hislop in *The Two Babylons*, though the New Testament writers detailed the priesthood of the believer, the Middle Age Catholic Church later set up a priesthood whose duties exactly mirrored that of pagan priests. Eventually all worship in the church was centered in the church building and administered only by the priest. Monasteries were set up so that monks and nuns could get close to God as they separated themselves from the affairs of the world. The common man was left out as a worshipper and, because he could not separate himself from daily life, could not know God as the monks and nuns did. During the Reformation, men such as John Calvin and Martin Luther re-established the priesthood of the believer, and eliminated the priesthood along with its monks and nuns. Ministers were viewed as being on the same spiritual level as their congregations. This is how the Protestant church began. In what ways have many Protestants today elevated their church leaders to a higher spiritual plain than the common folk? _____

LESSON SEVEN: The Priesthood of the Believer Part 3

THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE BELIEVER

◆ **II Cor 3:7-18** The glory of the Lord

⇒ The ministry of condemnation (the law):

- * **Verse 9** had glory as it was demonstrated in the face of Moses. However, this glory faded away. **Ex 28:1-4** The special clothing that the Levitical priest wore represented God's glory. Hence, they were only covered in God's glory

⇒ The ministry of righteousness (the Spirit):

- * **Verse 9** abounds in glory
- * **Verse 18** is shown in the life of believers
- * **Verse 11** never fades

◆ **I Cor 6:19; John 14:17, 20** God's royal priesthood today has God's glory dwelling inside them.

Q. Since the believer has the glory of God dwelling inside, of what importance is the role of the believer in conveying God's glory to the world? Is the Christian a distraction God or an asset in regards to the revelation of God? Explain: _____

I Pet 4:11 As Christ was glorified, His followers must glorify Him in all that they do. (**I Cor 10:31**)

Q. List ways in which you can better display God's glory in your life. Have there been times when God has been glorified through you even though you didn't realize what was happening at the time? Describe some times this has occurred and discuss the impact of these events. _____

LESSON EIGHT: The Priesthood of the Believer Part 4

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOD'S ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

- ◆ **I Chron 23:13, I Pet 1:14-16** As a Royal Priesthood Christians are to worship God by living holy lives.
- ◆ **Rev 5:10** As a Royal Priesthood Christians are to worship God by serving Him.
- ◆ As priests, Christians are to worship God by offering continual sacrifices unto Him.
 - ⇒ **Heb 9:22-25; 10:10-14** Jesus perfected the sacrificial system by the shedding of His own blood for our sins that we might be perfected in Him.
 - ⇒ **I Pet 2:4-5** We have been made worshipping priests to offer spiritual sacrifices. The sacrifice of God's Royal Priesthood are not animal sacrifices but spiritual sacrifices.
 - * **Rom 12:1-2** The sacrifices offered by Levitical priests has a counterpart in us which involves our whole being in worship.
Physically with our bodies: This is a bloodless sacrifice as Christians present their bodies as living sacrifices before the Lord for His use. This is done because God mercifully offered up His own body in death.
 - * **Psalm 51:17** The sacrifice that God desires is accomplished by a Christian whose whole will is under the dominion of God and whose heart is shaken from those things that keep him from worshipping.
 - * **Heb 13: 15-16** The sacrifice of worship involves the fruit of the Christian's lips in praise, doing good and sharing.
 - * **II Cor 10:5** The sacrifice of praise involves bringing one's whole mind in captivity to God.
 - * **Zech 7:5-6** God will only accept those sacrifices that come from a whole life and those that are done for His name only.

Q. Many Christians today limit their sacrifices to church work while living for themselves the rest of the time. How is it that these people are not true worshippers of God? _____

LESSON NINE: The Priesthood of the Believer Part 5

MINISTERING IN SONG

- ◆ **I Chron, 9:33; 15:16, 27; 23:3-5; 25:6-7** A particular part of the priesthood was set aside by David to praise the Lord in song.
 - ⇒ **Amos 6:5; I Sam 16:14-23** David was a musician himself who wrote a good number of the psalms. In particular, he wrote **Psalms 2-32, 34-41, 51-65, 68-70, 86, 95, 101, 103, 108-110, 122, 124, 131, 133, 138-145.**
 - ⇒ **Psalm 33** The psalms were songs sung to the Lord. They were public declarations of praise that affirmed God's attributes and goodness with intentions to glorify Him.
 - ⇒ **Ps 81:1-4; Isa 30:29** The Israelites were commanded to praise God in song.
 - ⇒ **II Chron 20:21-22; II Chron 23:13; Ezra 3:10-11; Neh 12:27-47; Mark 14:26; Psalm 95:1-5; 150; Acts 16:25** The purpose of music is to praise the Lord. Many musical teams today are called "worship teams." A more precise biblical designation would be "praise team."
 - ⇒ **Col 3:16; Eph 5:19, James 5:13** Music was utilized in the Early Church as a vehicle for congregations to speak the word of God to each other with an attitude of praise and thanksgiving. The worshipper must sing songs that quicken the Word of God in the Christian's life. Singing must be filled with the Word of God. Unlike pagan mantra worship, singing must involve the activity of the mind. It must be done with understanding. (**I Cor 14:15**).

Q. According to the word of God, what is the value of music in the Church? _____

Q. Since the primary use of music in the Church is to praise God by declaring His attributes and goodness according to the word of God, what should the lyrical content of church music convey? _____

Q. The levitical priesthood was set up to minister in song. Today the entire body of Christ is God's royal priesthood. What are the ramifications of that in regards to congregational singing? If every Christian is a priest who are the song leaders in the Church? _____

LESSON TEN: The Priesthood of the Believer Part 6

BLESSING THE LORD

The ultimate purpose of worship is to bless the Lord. Blessing the Lord is accomplished through dedicated lives that are committed to worshipping God continually. (Psalm 103)

- ◆ **I Chron 23:13** the duty of the Levitical priest was to bless the Lord continually.
 - ⇒ **Neh 9:5-8** Bless the Lord forever for He is worthy.
 - ⇒ **Psalm 103:1** Let all that is within us (not just part) bless His holy name. Bless the Lord with everything because He is holy.
 - ⇒ **Psalm 103:2** Bless the Lord by remembering what He has done for us.
 - ⇒ **Psalm 103:20** Bless the Lord by obeying “the voice of His word.”
 - ⇒ **Psalm 103:21** Bless the Lord by serving Him.
 - ⇒ **Psalm 103:22** We are his work so bless the Lord throughout creation.

Q. As a royal priesthood we are to bless the Lord at all times by praising Him continually. According to **Psalm 103**, in what ways is God blessed? Is God blessed by the utterings of the disobedient and rebellious person gives lip service to God during the worship service at church? (**Psalm 34:1-4**) _____

Q. James 3:9-12 According to the preceding scripture of what value is blessing the Lord when one’s mouth is filled with cursings towards others? Explain: _____

Q. Consider the things that you say and the attitudes that you have towards others. What things could you do to more consistently bless the Lord at all times? _____

LESSON ELEVEN: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 1

THE TABERNACLE AS AN EXAMPLE FOR WORSHIP

- ◆ **Heb 8:4-5** The worship in the tabernacle was a copy and shadow of heavenly things. It serves as an example of how God desires to be worshipped by His royal priesthood. (**Ex. 25:1-9**)

PAGAN WORSHIP CENTERS AS AN EXAMPLE OF UNGODLY WORSHIP

The Tower of Babel, located in Babylon, served as a model for future towers that have become the hallmark of pagan worship. Center in the mystical worship scheme is the notion that God can be found at high elevations. Hence the Egyptians and South American Indians constructed pyramids, and monasteries have been consistently built in mountains or high hills. Understanding how and why the tower of Babel was built will serve as an example of the worship that God insists His followers avoid.

- ◆ **Gen 11:2** The Tower of Babel was constructed in the Euphrates valley.
 - ⇒ Built in Babylon in a fruitful plain able to support the world's population.
 - ⇒ Built in the vicinity where the Garden of Eden was located. (**Gen 2:10-14**)
 - ⇒ Built in a place that is designated in the book of Revelation as being associated with demonic activity. (**Rev 16:12-14**) Hence, that place where God once dwelt with man in the Garden now became the center of demonic, apostate worship.
- ◆ **Gen 11:3** The Tower at Babel was made with brick and tar for there was no stone and mortar in that land. This demonstrates to what extent man will go to rebel against God and defile that which He has created. The brick covered with tar was waterproof demonstrating man's rebellion against God's promise that he would never flood the earth again. (**Gen 9:14-16**) The waterproof tower was an insurance policy against a future world-wide flood. Hence, Babylonian towers were called "Zigguratu" which referred to the highest point of Mount Arat where Noah offered sacrifice after the flood.

Q. Currently there is a national discussion in regards to an impending cataclysmic event that could wipe out humanity. Many are lobbying Washington in order to come up with a defense system that could ward off a comet or meteor. God has explained when and how the world will be destroyed. (**II Pet 3:10**) Compare the fear of annihilation today with the attitude of the ancient builders of Babel. _____

DESIGN OF THE TOWER OF BABEL

- ◆ The Tower was composed of six stages built upon a platform with a sanctuary on top. The height was 300 ft and was the same as its breath.
- ◆ The outer court was called the “Grand Court.” The wall surrounding the court had six gates to admit worshippers to the various temples that were located throughout the court. Six represents the number of man and it is the designation of the Antichrist. **(Rev 13:18)**
- ◆ Around the base of the tower were small temples or chapels dedicated to the gods of the Babylonians. The principle buildings were to the west. In these chambers the couch of God was located along with a golden throne.
- ◆ The tower itself was in the direct center of these buildings. It was six stages high with a 7th stage that was an upper temple or sanctuary of the god Bell-merodach. There was a statue of this god in the temple. Bell-merodach was the primary god of Babylonian worship. Man had to climb up the sides of the tower to ascend to this god as represented by the idol the sanctuary contained. Therefore, in the Babylonian system of worship, man had to climb to God through his own works.

Q. What is the biblical position in regards to attaining God through works? What is the attitude of those who think they gain God through their own works? Why can't mankind attain God this way? **(Eph 2:1-10)** _____

Q. To many today the act of worship is a struggle to enter into the presence of God or an attempt to provide a circumstance wherein God will appear. Generally this attempt involves making certain that everything is right so that this can occur. The surroundings, music and lyrical content, prayers and the demeanor of the worship leaders are such that will insure that there are no distractions that will inhibit this manifest presence of God. Worship leaders place themselves through a multitude of purifications I order to insure that they will not inhibit the manifestation of God. In light of Paul's admonishment regarding works and Babylonian worship practices, how does this approach fit with the instructions of Scripture? _____

LESSON TWELVE: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 2

GOD'S TABERNACLE: THE OUTER COURT Ex 27:9-19; 38:9-20

- ◆ The tabernacle was at the center of the camp to represent the presence of God in the midst of His people at all times. Unlike the Babylonian model which had many buildings in the court representing many gods, there was only one tabernacle in Jewish worship - representing the fact that they worshipped only one God. The tabernacle was set in the middle of an outer courtyard.
- ◆ The outer court was surrounded by a wall made out of tent material which served as a barrier to prevent unlawful approach to the tabernacle. This linen wall was white, which stood out against the black tents pitched around it. This was a picture of Christ's righteousness in the midst of sinful people.
 - ⇒ All could enter the courtyard because it was the place of sacrifice on the Brazen Altar. The sacrifice represented the blood of Jesus. Since there was no remission of sin without the blood, all people had access to the area where daily sacrifice occurred.
 - ⇒ Unlike the Babylonian wall that had six entrances to the court, the linen wall of the Tabernacle created only one way of approach to the courtyard. With the pagan mystics, there were many ways to God. In Christianity, there is only one way to God, and that is through the blood of Jesus Christ. All of God's Royal Priests must pass through the gate of Jesus before they can worship Him.
- ◆ The gate was the only gate, the only way to God. (**Jn 14:6**)
 - ⇒ The gate was wide enough to allow "whosoever will" to pass while still limiting the way. (**Matt 7:13-14**)
 - ⇒ The gate lead to the Brazen Altar.

Q. Our culture today insists that there are many ways to God. Those who disagree with this position are labeled as being intolerant, bigoted and mean-spirited. Based on the Scriptures, what must the Christian insist on in the face of these accusations? Do Christians lack for love because they preach a different Gospel than the world? (**Jn 14:1, 15:13; II Jn 3**) _____

Q. The Roman culture allowed religious tolerance for all religions except Christianity. Christian zealots were persecuted because they were politically inconvenient. Their exclusive message contradicted the "many ways to God" message of Rome. What obstacles and criticisms do Christians face today that mirror this trend? _____

LESSON THIRTEEN: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 3

GOD'S TABERNACLE: THE BRAZEN ALTAR Ex 27:1-8; 38:1-7; 20:24-26

- ◆ The altar was positioned just within the gate. It was an easily accessible, unavoidable and unmistakable piece of furniture where the daily sacrifices were consumed.
 - ⇒ In Hebrew it was called “Mizbeach” which means the slaughter place.
 - ⇒ Sacrifices were placed on the altar and they were burnt up in smoke.
 - ⇒ **Jn 12:32** The cross became the of the world’s great sacrifice as Jesus was lifted up for the sins of the world.
 - ⇒ The blood of the sacrifice was poured out at the bottom of the altar. Jesus gave us His blood and poured out His life for us. (**Rom 3:25; 5:9; II Cor 8:9**)
 - ⇒ The ashes were the last thing seen after the sacrifice. They were deposited in a clean place and used for the ceremonial cleaning of the unclean. In the same way the sacrifice of Jesus was completed by taking Him down from the cross. They place his body in a clean place (a new tomb where no man had laid.) He then rose to cleanse the sinner. (**Heb 9:13-14**)
 - ⇒ The Brazen Altar pictured the fact that none can worship God lest they first are washed in the blood of the lamb.

Q. The Brazen Altar was the most conspicuous piece of furniture in tabernacle worship. What theme, therefore, should play the most conspicuous role in Christian worship? _____

Q. The Brazen Altar was accessible to all. Both priest and layman could come before the altar. However, the priest administered the sacrifices as they pointed the people to the sacrifice for sin. As Royal Priests, how important is sharing the Gospel of Christ’s death of sin in our worship life? (**Mark 16:15-16**) Explain: _____

Q. **Rom 6:3; I Cor 12:13; Gal 3:26-27; Col 2:11-12; I Pet 3 :18-22** Baptism is an outward expression of the inward cleansing of the cross. It is a testimony to the world of God’s saving grace. How important is the sacrament of baptism in the worship life of the Church? **Matt 28:19; Mk 16:16; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16** _

LESSON FOURTEEN: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 4

GOD'S TABERNACLE: THE BRAZEN LAVER Ex 30:17-21, 40:7

- ◆ The Brazen Laver stood in the court between the Tabernacle and the Brazen Altar. It was made out of the looking glasses of women. The purpose of the piece was to wash the hands and feet of the priests before they ministered in the tabernacle or at the altar. If they didn't they would die.
- ◆ The Brazen Altar represents the Word of God.
 - It was made of looking glasses to reveal man's sin to him (**Rom 3:20**) as he sees himself for who he really is. (**James 1:23-25**)
 - ⇒ Though the Brazen Altar was accessible to all, the Brazen Laver was only accessible to the priests. The sacrifice at the Brazen altar was accomplished to deal with sin. Christ's sacrifice at the cross is accessible for everyone. The Brazen Laver was for cleansing before ministry in worship and intended for the Royal Priests. Only God's Royal Priests are His ministers of worship. Only they will benefit from the cleansing of the Word.
 - * **Psalms 119:9** The Word cleanses us from sin.
 - * **John 15:3** Christ cleanses His disciples through His word.
 - * These scriptures regarding spiritual cleansing apply to the believer. The unbeliever finds his cleansing in the blood of Christ.

Q. How necessary is the Word of God in relation to the believer's worship life. What role must it play in the Church service and in the believer's life? **Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-4:2** _____

- ◆ The Levitical priest was commanded to wash every time he ministered on the Brazen Altar or in the Tabernacle because all of those who ministered in worship must be clean. Therefore, when we, as God's Royal Priests, are going to minister in worship, we must be constantly in the Bible to be cleansed. (**Ps 51:14-19**).

Q. The command issued to the Levitical Priest was to wash and then minister in worship. Today God's Royal Priest's must go to the Word of God for cleansing and then do the work of worship. This is because as we are cleansed we are brought into conformity with the word of God. What relationship does living an obedient life have with worship? (**Rom 2:13; 6:16-18; 16:25-27; II Cor 9:12-15; I Jn 3:21-24**) _____

LESSON FIFTEEN: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 5

GOD'S TABERNACLE: THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK Ex 25:31-40; 37:17-24; 39:37

- ◆ The candlestick stood in the Holy Place, which was the first room the priest entered when he went into the tabernacle. Though all priests could enter the Holy Place, only the priests could enter. The Golden Candlestick stood on the left side as one entered into the tabernacle and was only accessible to the priests as only the priests could enter the Holy Place.
- ◆ The candlestick rested on a center shaft which, in the Hebrew, was called “yarek” meaning thigh.
 - ⇒ **Gen 46:26; Ex 1:5; Judges 8:30** These scriptures demonstrate that “yarek” is connected with birth or offspring. The shaft represents Jesus.
 - ⇒ **Acts 17:28-29** The body of Christ are the offspring of God, born of incorruptible seed.
- ◆ **Ex 25:37** There were seven branches holding seven lamps above the shaft.
 - ⇒ **Jer 23:5-6** The center branch was an extension of the shaft and, therefore represented Jesus.
 - ⇒ **Heb 2:14-18** The fact that the center branch was among the other branches represented Christ in his humanity who was made like unto His brethren. This branch, therefore, represented Christ and His work on the part of humanity. (**Phil 2:5-11**)
 - ⇒ **Rev 1:12-15** In this scripture we see the heavenly lampstand that the lampstand of the Tabernacle was modeled after. Jesus was in the midst of the lampstand, or the Church.
 - ⇒ The six branches coming out from the sides of the shaft represented the Church. Six is the number of man. The central 7th branch representing Christ took its predominant place above the rest representing the rule of God over His people.
 - ⇒ **Rev. 2:1-5** It is important that the worshippers of God keep Christ primary in their lives. Jesus must be the “first love” of God’s royal priests.

Q. Jesus, and His work for us, must be at the center of the worship of the Church. What theme, therefore, must permeate throughout church worship services? Why is this important? (**I Cor 1:20-25**) _____

- ◆ The lamps at the end of the sticks were not candles.
 - ⇒ There was nothing in Scripture warranting the use of candles in worship. Candles have always been utilized by pagan worshippers. Candles give out light by consuming themselves. However, the light of a Christian comes from God, which is an eternal source of light.
 - ⇒ Therefore, the lights on the end of the branches of the Golden Candlestick were lamps that gave out light because of the oil poured into them by the priests.
 - ⇒ **Matt 5:14-16** Oil represents the Holy Spirit. The light that is shed by the church is not from man (as a candle) but from God. The light of the church is that which will ever be replenished by God.

Q. Many churches major in programs. They attempt to shed light to the world through every device known by man. Programs are in vogue today that utilize multitude of techniques instituted by the Hollywood and the business world in order to grow the Church. Does God envision the Church's light to shine through the utilization of worldly techniques? In what manner is human effort to be applied in regards to seeing the Church built? (**Zech 4:1-7**) _____

Q. How might seeing our light shine to the world as an act of worship alter the way that we attempt to shine? _____

LESSON SIXTEEN: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 6

GOD'S TABERNACLE: The Table of Shewbread Ex 25:23-30; 31:8; 37:10-16; Lev 24:5-9

- ◆ The Table of Shewbread was located in the Holy place just opposite the Golden Candlestick. It was on the right side as the priest entered into the Tabernacle.
- ◆ The table spoke of fellowship. It was an emblem of friendship.

Q. How important is the fellowship of believers in the worship life of the Church? The Church habitually met on Sunday. What is the significance of this first day of the week? Why should the tradition of meeting on Sunday be maintained? What historical events should play a prominent role in the Sunday worship service? (**Ps 84:4; Hebrews 10:23-25; Acts 2:41-42; 20:7; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 4:13; Matt 28:1-10; Mark 14:12-26; 16:9; Luke 24:1, 13-15; Jn 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10-11**) _____

John 6:35-40 Jesus Christ is represented by the bread.

Q. Consider the above scripture. What did Christ mean in regards to the eternal future of Christians when He declared that He is the bread of life? _____

Psalm 23:5 God has prepared a table of fellowship for His own.

Matt 26:26-29 The sacrament of communion is a representation of our fellowship with Christ's broken body and shed blood.

Q. Pagan mystics attempt to fellowship with God on their own terms through a variety of worship techniques. God has laid out the terms by which fellowship with Him is to be rendered. What are they? What sacrament has Christ ordained through which the church gathered is to worship in fellowship with Christ? What should that worship of fellowship focus around? _____

LESSON SEVENTEEN: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 6

GOD'S TABERNACLE: The Altar of Incense Ex 30:1-10; 37:25-29; 30:34-38

- ◆ The Altar of Incense was located in the Holy Place in front of the veil that lead to the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies was the place in the tabernacle where the Ark of the Covenant rested and God dwelt with His people.
 - ⇒ **Rev 8:3-4** Its position was in the same location where the altar that it represented is in heaven. The Altar represented prayer. (**Rev 5:8**)
 - ⇒ **Matt 27:51** Because of the work of Jesus on the cross, the Veil that the Altar of Incense once stood before is now gone, representing the fact that, through the work of Jesus on the cross, Christians have direct access to God through their prayers.

Q. Because it stood right before the Veil, the Altar of Incense played a prominent role in the worship life of the Levitical priests. How important, therefore, is prayer in the worship life of God's Royal Priesthood? How much of the Christian's daily experience should be spent in prayer? (**Eph 6:17; I Thess 5:17; Jas 5:13-16; Jude 20**) _____

- ◆ There were horns on the altar which represented the power of prayer.
 - ⇒ **Gen 18:20-33** Abraham prevailed as long as he prayed for wicked Sodom.
 - ⇒ **Ex 17:8-13** As long as Moses held his arms up in prayer Israel prevailed against Amalek.
 - ⇒ **Luke 18:1-8** Persistence in prayer moves God's heart.
- ◆ A crown kept the fire from the burning incense from falling to the ground.
 - ⇒ **Acts 2:3-4** Fire describes the Holy Spirit.
 - ⇒ **Rom 8:26-27** The Holy Spirit prays for us when we don't know how.
 - ⇒ **I Cor 14:14** The most effective prayer is that which is done in the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - ⇒ **James 4:2-3** Effective prayer necessitates the proper motives. One cannot expect to pray in the power of the Holy Spirit with improper motives. The wrong use of prayer can actually bring a curse.
- ◆ The rings and staves adapted the altar to its trek around the wilderness where the Israelis wandered.

⇒ **I Thess 5:17** Prayer is not limited to a time or place. Prayer is something that should follow the worshipper wherever he goes in whatever he does.

◆ **James 5:16** Just as the Altar of Incense was right before the Veil, so effective prayer by God's servants changes things.

Q. Consider the meaning of worship and what it is for. Why is “Thy will be done” such an important part of the worship life of prayer?

(Matt 6:9-13) How might Christians pray differently if they considered prayer as a part of their worship life? _____

Q. How much more effective would worshipful prayer be in the believer's life than anxious or demanding prayer? _____

LESSON EIGHTEEN: Worshipping in the Tabernacle Part 7

GOD'S TABERNACLE: The Veil Ex 26:31-37

- ◆ The Veil separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The Veil was the only way into the Holy of Holies. There were angels on it as emblems of guardianship to keep out sinful man.
 - ⇒ **Ex 25:10-22; 37:1-9** The Ark of the Covenant rested in the Holy of Holies. The Ark was a chest that contained the Law, Aaron's rod that budded and the jar of manna.
 - * Two angels looked down on the ark representing God's judgment.
 - * The mercy seat stood between the judging angels and the Law that rested in the Ark. This meant that God's judgment would be according to His mercy rather than the law.
 - * **Ex 25** It was at the mercy seat where God met man. Therefore, God does not meet man on legal terms, but the terms of grace that He has laid out. The mercy seat was the only seat in the Tabernacle. Hence when Christ performed His work of grace on the cross He declared "It is finished" and sat down at the right hand of God. (**Jn 19:30; Heb 10:11-12**)

Q. Describe the dangers that the mystical worshipper faces who attempts to enter into the presence of God apart from accepting the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. _____

- ◆ **Heb 9:8** As long as the first Tabernacle was standing, the way to the Holy of Holies was not made manifest.
 - ⇒ **Heb 10:19-22** The veil was Christ's flesh.
 - ⇒ Therefore, as long as Christ lived, man could not have access to God.
 - ⇒ **Mark 15:38** When Christ died the Veil was wrent from top to bottom to represent that the act of redemption was out of man's reach.
- ◆ **Heb 9:7** It was not the duty of the Levitical Priests to enter into the Holy of Holies. Only the High Priest could pass through the Veil once a year to enter into the Holy of Holies to atone for the sins of Israel.
 - ⇒ **Heb 9:11-15** Jesus is the High Priest who went into the Holy of Holies in the heavenly tabernacle by His own blood for the redemption of sin.
- ◆ **Heb 10:19-25** Because of shedding of Christ's blood, believers have the confidence of entering into the Holy of Holies. This means that the fellowship with God that was lost at the Fall has been restored by Christ's death on the

cross. The following verses describe the ways in which this experiences is manifested in the believer's life.

- ⇒ **Verse 22** Drawing near to God through the blood of Jesus (**James 4:8**)
- ⇒ **Verse 23** Holding firm to the faith.
- ⇒ **Verse 24** Encouraging each other toward love and good deeds.
- ⇒ **Verse 25** Assembling together in Church on the Lord's day.

Q. Describe, according to the above scriptures, what is available to believers today as a result of the accessibility of Holy of Holies. _____

Q. Notice how, according to Hebrews, the supernatural experience of entering into the Holy of Holies is accomplished through very natural and conventional means. Nothing is mentioned here in regards to the worship techniques that are utilized by so many today in order to enter into the presence of God. People seek external things to excite them, and pray that they might witness the outward glory of God. Picture what this experience would have been like for Moses as he stood before the burning bush. (**Ex 3:2-6**) Think of what it would have been like when Moses came down from the mountain with his face shining so brightly that the Israelites had to cover it with a veil. (**Ex 34:29-33**) Now realize that this manifestation of God's glory was not permanent. It faded away into nothing more than a memory of times past. (**II Cor 3:7-15**) However, the manifestation of God's glory today is one that never fades. (**II Cor 3:16-8**) It is the manifestation of God's glory inside each believer. God's glory lives inside every one of His Royal Priests. "Christ in you" is the very hope of glory for the Christian. (**Eph 3:14-17; Col 1:27**) In what way is the manifestation of God' glory within the believer far greater than any external manifestation of His Glory? What is there about God in us that is the most miraculous manifestation of God's presence in the world? _____

- ◆ Since the Christian can now enter boldly in the Holy of Holies, have access to that which lies in the Ark of the Covenant.
 - ⇒ **Ex 16:11-31; Num 11:1-9** The Golden Pot of Manna. Manna sustained the children of Israel in their wilderness wanderings. (**Num 11:9; Ex 16:14**) It needed to be gathered every day. So too the worshipper must daily feed on the bread of life, Jesus. (**Jn 6:31-35**)
 - ⇒ **Num 17** Aaron's rod that budded. Life came out of a dead stick representing the new life that a Christian has found in Christ. The almonds that the buds produced represents the fruitfulness that comes out of the believer's life. (**Jn 15:16**)
 - ⇒ **II Pet 3:14-18** The Law. God has now written his Law on our hearts. (**Jer 31:33; Ps 37:31**) Christians are free to obey God's Law apart from the condemnation that it brings sinners.

Q. Each believer is the temple of God. (**I Cor 3:16-17; 6:18-20; II Cor 6:16**) The body of the believer is the worship center of all Christianity. Many live as if righteous living is something to be done at church before church members and pastors. This is because so many view worship as something that is reserved for church. However, since the Christian's body is his worship center, everyday is church. While considering that the glory of God lives within, how should we then live?

*Praise the Lord.
Praise God in His sanctuary;
Praise Him in His might heavens.
Praise Him for His acts of power;
Praise Him for His surpassing greatness.
Praise Him with the sounding of the trumpet,
Praise Him with the harp and the Lyre,
Praise Him with tambourine and dancing,
Praise Him with the strings and flute,
Praise Him with the clash of cymbals.
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.*

Psalm 150