

John 4:19-30, 39-42
(Psalm 96; Acts 2:42-47)
“The Worship God Is Seeking”

Introduction

There is no greater expression of being fully human and spiritually mature than learning to give oneself fully – heart, mind and strength – in worship of the one true God who alone is worthy to receive adoration and praise. In a surprising conversation with a Samaritan woman of questionable reputation, Jesus tells her things he had not yet told his disciples, and at the heart of their conversation he speaks perhaps the most important words about the nature of worship to be found anywhere in the Scriptures: “The hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:23-24). But what does Jesus mean by those familiar words?

Body

1. True worship awakens the heart to love God (“in spirit” 4:23).

Every element of worship should be warm and uplifting in order to help us experience and express God’s love for us and ours for him. And it should awaken us to our connection to the Body of Christ and our love for one another.

2. True worship awakens the mind to know God (“in truth” 4:23).

Every element of worship must be saturated in biblical truth that makes clear who God is and what is our place in the great story of salvation.

3. True worship awakens the will to the mission of God (“many believed” 4:39).

Every element of our worship should prepare us to be sent back into the life of the world around us with a longing to give ourselves in loving service, as did our Lord Jesus, for the sake of the world.

Conclusion

Our worship flows from God’s love for us and so should awaken our heart to his love flowing through us to one another and back to him; it should awaken our mind to God’s truth, especially as revealed in his Word; and it should awaken our will to glad obedience as God sends us back into the world to give ourselves in loving service, even as Jesus gave himself for us. He is here, seeking such worshipers even now.

© John M. Wood, all rights reserved