

Upcoming Events...

1 Corinthians Class: Every Tuesday at 12:00 p.m.

Barnabas Group Meeting: April 25

Worship is a Verb

"...let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Hebrews 10:25

Editor comment: **where** might we have the greatest opportunity to "consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds"?

Hint: the answer may be in the verse.

April Birthdays

1 Daniel McKnight 11 Dolly Cashion 23 Shannon Hudson
3 Amanda Hoffman 16 Alana Hudson 26 Stori Rose Hoffman
6 Susan Hudson 17 Belva Meanor

April Anniversaries

19 Bill & Kena Brown

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
Mike McKnight

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Lord, Open Our Eyes!

By Joe Chesser

One of the most challenging things for humans to do is to try to get a glimpse of God. Even though we are the highest of God's creation and are the only thing He made in His image (Genesis 1:26), we still have severe limitations in understanding God. We're just not capable of it. God put it this way: "*As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts*" (Isaiah 55:9). How much higher are the heavens than the earth? No one knows, for the ends of the heavens have yet to be discovered. But we do get the point. There is just no comparison of humans with God.

Even so, there are many ways God has allowed us to get a tiny glimpse of His nature and character. "*The heavens declare the glory of God*" (Psalm 19:1). Creation tells of His eternal power and divine nature (Romans 1:20). He has revealed certain things through his prophets and spokesmen (Deuteronomy 29:29). Our clearest vision of God is found in Jesus: "*If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well*" (John 14:7).

The trouble is that even people who lived at the same time as Jesus and saw and heard Him every day still didn't seem to connect the dots any better that we do. It's just tough for humans to see God. And a big part of that is because we allow our human limitations to constrict our thinking. It's much easier to create God in our image than it is to allow Him to transform us into His.

Let me illustrate what I am saying by using the miracles Jesus did. Most people then and now saw the miracles as an end in themselves. There were people who were blind, so Jesus gave them sight. There were people who were deaf or lame or sick, so Jesus healed them. He fed thousands of people with one boy's lunch. He walked on water and calmed storms. So people began to follow Him wherever He went so that they could be healed or get something to eat (Mark 3:7-10; John 6:26).

But for most of them, that's about as far as their feeble minds would allow them to go. They didn't connect the power of healing the physical afflictions with the power of doing far greater things. They were satisfied with sight, hearing and food. But Jesus wasn't. He wanted them to use his power of healing as a springboard of faith to see who He really was, the One who could give them food that would feed their souls (John 6:27). He wanted those healed of physical blindness to see more than trees. He wanted them to see God! He wanted the raising of the dead to show that He can give new life to the soul. Jesus clearly used the healing of the paralytic to help the spiritually sick crowd to open their eyes and be saved: *"But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins ..." he said to the paralytic, 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.'*" (Mark 2:10-11).

Lord, open our eyes to see what You see, so we can become what You are!

Participant or Observer?

By Kevin Williams

"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Several principles can be gleaned from the above passage. God is not human, He is Spirit. God is to be the object (or audience, if you will) of our worship. Worship has requirements, there are some things we "must" do. One requirement is to worship God in spirit, having the right attitude, motivation, etc. Another requirement is to worship God in truth, patterned after what He has told us in His Word. All these are noble truths taught by this passage.

There is also another truth taught here that needs some emphasis. It concerns the command to "worship." Worship is defined as "(fall down and) worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to, welcome respectfully" (Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich 1958, p716). Note that worship is a verb! It is something that is done.

Several passages of Scripture illustrate this point well...

- *"And Abraham said to his young men, Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and **worship**, and we will come back to you"* (Genesis 22.5)
- *"For you shall **worship** no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God"* (Exodus 34.14).

- *"Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; **Worship** the LORD in the beauty of holiness"* (Psalms 29.2).
- *"Oh come, let us **worship** and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker"* (Psalms 95.6).
- *"And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to **worship**"* (Acts 8.27).
- *"And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will **worship** God and report that God is truly among you"* (1 Corinthians 14.25).
- *"Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to **worship** before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. **Worship** God"* (Revelation 22.8,9).

I know that the Bible teaches that we are to attend worship. I also know that it is our duty as faithful members of the Lord's church to contact those who are not "attending" to let them know that we miss them and to encourage them to be present in the assembly of the saints. Hebrews 10:25 has been part of the New Testament of Christ for nearly 2,000 years and it is not going anywhere. We do have responsibilities to fulfill as Christians.

Now consider this. As seen in the passages listed above, to worship God is more than mere attendance. It is an action aimed toward God that is done by the faithful child of God. It is fulfilling God's desire for us to pray to Him, sing praises to Him, preach His Word, remember His Son at His Supper, and give to Him as we have prospered through the week. It is praising Him, revering Him, bowing to Him, symbolically prostrating ourselves before Him. It is giving God what He wants in His way. It is participatory in nature. I have to do it in order for it to be done. No one else can do it for me. No one else can do it in my place. If I am not a participant in worship then I am not worshipping! Dwell on that statement for a moment. Consider the implication of what is being said. Then, ask ourselves the following question: "When I come to worship, do I worship?" Sounds simple doesn't it. It really is! And at the same time it is a major factor that determines if God accepts what I am doing in the assembly. No worship is done by observing! Resolve, therefore, to be a participant and not an observer! Think about it!