

Co-equal and Co-eternal

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[0:00] We're still looking at the passage in John chapter 4 on worship, how to worship the Lord.

! We see in John chapter 4, verse 24, that the Father seeks worshipers.

He's seeking worshipers, and God is spirit. And those who worship Him must worship in spirit truth.

These are great truths in the Bible, very instructional.

It teaches that God seeks true worshipers. He is in the business of seeking those who will worship Him in an acceptable manner.

And worship, of course, is the great theme that runs from Genesis to Revelation. I used to say Genesis to right before the maps began.

[1:07] The purpose of God's redemptive plan is to produce true worshipers who will worship for eternity.

They'll worship the Godhead for eternity. We defined worship in our very first lesson, and we said that it is giving honor to God, or to a superior being.

That's a simple definition, but it captures the true meaning of true worship. It is giving honor to a superior being, and God is the most superior being in the universe.

It doesn't get any more superior than that. And there are some key points contained in the definition. And first of all, worship is a giving.

We've had people leave this church, and I'm sure they leave other churches, so I just didn't get anything out of worship. I'm not getting anything out of church. You're not here to get anything out of church. You're here to give.

[2:03] And when we give, we receive back a hundredfold or a thousandfold. But worship is giving, and that is a difficult concept for a lot of people, particularly in the West.

I don't mean West Mississippi. I mean America and Canada. Because we live in a very selfish and consumptive culture, and we've really been conditioned, not we in this class, but Americans, to believe it's more blessed to receive than to give.

It makes it difficult for some people to accept the notion that God wants something from us as a gift to Him. When we come together as the fellowship of saints to worship, you all did that yesterday.

I did it down at the little country church where I preached yesterday in Texas. We're doing that right now. And it's not to receive. We're here to give. We're not here to get a blessing or to gain something, as strange as that may sound.

We're here to give worship to the triune God. And we're here to give back to God for all the things He's done for us. When the Jew, under the Old Covenant, came together to worship, he came to give.

[3:24] And their gifts would include things like a lamb or a goat or a dove. They would give money. The worship of the Old Testament revolved around giving to God.

And, of course, it became very legalistic. But giving and not getting is the essence of worship. And so in that regard, there is a difference between ministry and worship.

Ministry is what flows down from God to us, but worship is what flows from us upward to God. And when those two things are in balance, it is a very beautiful thing.

In the Old Testament, they were prophets and they were priests. The prophet spoke down to the people from God, and the priest spoke up to God from the people.

And those two things should always be in balance. Now, we can speak in terms of balance, but always remember this. Priority of worship is number one.

[4:27] Worship is actually the ultimate priority in the universe. Worship is the superior member of this balance.

That we're talking about. And that's why Paul came along in the 12th chapter of Romans, and he said we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. So worship, brothers, precedes everything. We are called to be a worshiping people. We're eager to receive from God. We should be even more eager to give back to God. Now, we've been talking about the importance of worship.

It is important because God is seeking people to be true worshipers of his. And if God is in the business of seeking true worshipers, then obviously it's something very important.

As Christians, worship is the very reason we're alive. It is the primary reason we are alive in this world today and in the world to come. Worship is not just what we do.

[5:52] It is who we are. It is who we are. We are to be true worshipers. That is the purpose for the existence of a redeemed person. And one may ask, well, aren't we called to serve God?

And, of course, the answer is yes. But true service is one of the highest forms of worship. You know, we think of worship when we're sitting in church and I'm nodding off a little bit or I'm counting how many zeros or Os there are in the bulletin.

You know, we've all done that stuff. Some of you haven't done that. You'll do it Sunday. But, yes, we are to serve God. That is a form of worship.

We honor and worship Him by obeying His command related to service. An exercise of our spiritual gifts is worship. We look at one point in the study at the source of worship and obviously the source of worship is the seeking of the Father.

When the Father seeks a true worshiper, I would submit that is irresistible. If He wants you, He can get you. And that is a point that the churches argue about during the Reformation and since.

[7:05] But God is both able and willing to draw into His kingdom true worshipers. When a person is drawn to the cross and redeemed, that makes him or her a true worshiper.

They know how to worship the Lord. In the New Testament, we are taught that we are to be true worshipers. In Philippians 3.3, we are told that we, and that's the redeemed, are those who worship by the Spirit of God and by the glory of Christ Jesus.

That is, by the way, a classic definition of a Christian. It is one who worships by the Spirit of God and in the glory of Christ Jesus.

Hebrews says that since we have been redeemed, we are to draw near to God. By the way, you can't do that unless you've been redeemed.

It's impossible. The response to redemption is worship. I remember saying this on one of the TV ministries 30 years ago. This woman got saved and she said to somebody, what do I do now?

[8:12] They said, well, you worship God. She didn't know what that meant, so she went back to her apartment and she was running around the apartment going, worship, worship, worship, worship. Well, she was worshipping.

As best as she knew how. When a person is drawn to the cross and redeemed, we become a true worshiper. The response to redemption is worship.

And we come near to the Lord. So we looked at the importance of worship, the source of worship. We also looked at another point, and that was the object of worship.

And we are told to worship the Father as He is described as a spirit. We are to worship God in spirit and in truth. He's defined in those two terms.

He is spirit. He is our Father. Father. And God, first of all, is spirit. God cannot be confined to a building. We did not come here tonight hoping to find God.

[9:16] We'll go room to room until we find Him somewhere. In fact, in the classic reform sense, true followers said, you know, we bring God with us to church through the indwelling spirit.

Since He is spirit, He is in this building, but He's also out on the parking lot, and He's on Mars right now, because He's everywhere.

The Spirit of God cannot be confined or restricted. He is everywhere. Now, there's one thing that tries to confine God over the centuries, and it's religion.

Organized religion tries to confine God. Organized religion wants to place Him exclusively on a particular mountain. Remember the woman at the well. We worship on this mountain.

You Jews say you're supposed to worship in Jerusalem, and it's on a mountain. Over the eons of time, people have created objects of wood, something made out of human hands, maybe out of stone or gold or brass or silver.

[10:24] That still goes on, by the way. God cannot and will not be confined in temples made with human hands. The true God is beyond all of this.

He is ever-present. He is an eternal being who happens to be spirit. God does not have flesh and bones as we do. He is a spirit who fills the universe and into eternity with His presence.

He is everywhere because He is the eternal living spirit. And we can worship Him anytime. And we can worship Him anywhere because He is everywhere at all times.

I did some worshiping in the back of that ambulance. It's a good time to start doing that, fellas. You know, I was trying to think, if I've got any baggage here, I need to get rid of it. You know, I was talking to the Lord.

You know, we live in the conscious presence of God. I've told you before, when you wake up at 3 in the morning and the world's caving in, voice of prayer. He's on duty.

[11:33] He's on duty. He never sleeps. He never slumbers. There is never a time when He is not with the believer. As a side note, the Puritans had a real problem with this because they would get married and go on, I guess, what we would call today a little honeymoon.

And they were a little embarrassed about that. So they had this theory that the Holy Spirit was outside and, you know, would rejoin you later.

Well, it doesn't work that way. The Bible says that we are in Him, we live in Him, we move in Him, and we have our being in Him.

And we can worship God anytime, anywhere because we live in His eternal presence. I've had people say over the years, you know, boy, I'll be glad when Sunday gets here so we can worship. Well, you've missed the boat. But if we haven't worshiped the previous six days, there's a pretty good chance we're not going to worship on Sunday. I mean, just the way it is.

[12:42] The only thing that sets Sunday apart from the other days of the week is that on Sunday, we do come together as the corporate body, to corporately worship as the body of Christ, and we meet for that purpose.

And we don't wait until Sunday morning, though, to come back into the presence of God. Again, He is everywhere at all times. He's to be worshipped at all times.

And we are to live our lives in the conscious presence of God. The redeemed are permitted and required by the grace given to be worshipping people at all times and everywhere.

We're commanded and we're privileged to do that. So we are to worship God as the eternal, omnipresent Spirit. But it doesn't stop there.

Three times in the fourth chapter of John, it says that we're to worship the Father. And that's repeated over and over.

[13:49] That is a further qualification of our requirements as worshippers. Most people misunderstand this concept more than anything else.

Most people think that we love God as a loving Father. He's our loving Father, and He is. We understand that. Our view, we're not supposed to have a mental image, but a lot of people say, well, He's this little doting old grandfather, you know, with a long white beard sitting in a chair and slumbers a lot.

We are His children. He is our Father, and we worship Him as our intimate, loving Father. And we can make a case for all that, but when we talk about John's Gospel, and particularly chapter 4, he's not talking about the Father as in the Father of believers.

Or even the unbelievers talk about the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. We're not talking in that sense. John is emphasizing here that He is Father in the Trinitarian sense.

God is Father. God is also Son. God is also Holy Spirit. Describe that in 25 words earlier. He is three in one.

[15:04] We do not fully understand that. We accept it as true because it is taught in Scripture.

That is the Trinity that we speak of. The Father is spoken of here in the Trinitarian sense, but in our passage in John 4, the Trinity is in view.

That's what's in view. And it may sound strange or even controversial, but the emphasis here is not related to us as His children.

It is the essential relationship within the Trinity. We have three persons in the Trinity that make up the one true God. That is what is in view here.

And that's a very important concept. And a lot of people have stumbled here and they miss out on how vitally important this is. Remember this always.

The Father is presented as the Father of the Son. The Son spoken of obviously is the Lord Jesus Christ.

[16:14] So what are we saying here? When you worship God as Spirit, you worship Him as Father but not in some vague sense that He's the Father of all the living.

That's what the liberals want to believe and say. He is Mark this down. He is in your mind. He is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's how we worship the Father. And you've heard me pray often in church and often I will start that prayer. Our Father and our God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acknowledging that He is Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. We cannot worship God apart from that designation. Remember Jesus told us no one comes to the Father except through me. John 14. So first and foremost when God the Father is mentioned in Scripture is in His essential relationship to His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

[17:21] And in the Bible Jesus always refers to God as Father. Father. This is one of the things that offended the Jews. They didn't like people calling God as their Father.

The Muslims don't do that to this day. But the Jews didn't like it either. There was only one time when Jesus did not refer to the Father as Father.

And that's when He hung on the cross and He cried out My God, My God why have you forsaken me? Quoting an Old Testament song. Now this is unique to the Holy Spirit.

God is Father and Jesus is the Son and the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit. Now where did all this come from? It is the inner Trinitarian designation.

The emphasis of Jesus referring to God as Father was not in submission although on earth He was. He did submit to the Father. He is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father.

[18:22] But here we see this unique standing of the same essence with the Father is in view. Jesus is the Son and God is the Father but they are of the same essence.

That is the very soul of the relationship between the Father and Son. Because this is true Father and Son cannot be separated out of our worship.

We do not worship the Father for a while and say okay today I am going to concentrate on the Son tomorrow get to the Holy Spirit. They are one. Jesus told us that the only way to approach God was through Him.

We cannot worship God apart from Christ Jesus. We worship God as the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now remember they are one.

And that statement of deity and equality Jesus said this in John 5.17 My Father is working until now and I myself am working.

[19:26] And what He was doing there is drawing equality between Himself and the Father. And He said later in John I and the Father are one. That's when they wanted to kill Him. Jesus and the Father are never pulling in opposite directions.

They are united in all things. When Jesus said He was one with the Father the Scriptures tell us the Jews sought all the more to kill Him because He was making Himself equal with God.

And ultimately of course they turned Jesus over to the Romans because the Jews had no authority to execute and they turned over to the Romans and they said well He's claiming equality with God the Father which they saw as blasphemy.

Of course the Romans didn't care about that so then they said well He says He's a king. That got the Romans attention. Because there's only one king right? Caesar. Caesar. Caesar.

And that got the Romans attention. It would have been blasphemous had it not been true. Jesus claimed to be God. He tells a woman at the well she said I know the Messiah is coming.

[20:38] And Jesus said I who speak to you and me. I love that because the liberal church says never once did Jesus claim to be the Messiah. I've read that. Are you kidding me?

I who speak to you am He? That's pretty plain language isn't it? Jesus is God of very God. He is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and with the Spirit.

And again in John 10 29 and 30 we appeal to John's Gospel. the Spirit wrote this to John my Father who has given them to me and that's believers is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

That's good news. And then he says I and the Father are one. And that was revolutionary. This is the basis of the crucifixion.

The Jews said he is claiming equality with God. That is blasphemy punishable by death. So again we see the Father and the Son on the same level.

[21:53] The Jews knew that he was declaring what he was saying. They knew what he was declaring. And on that occasion they picked up stones to kill him. Because he's declaring himself equal with God.

Now one of the greatest portions of scripture we've actually studied it I think it was in here it could have been Sunday morning but years ago I think it was in here is John chapter 17.

That's the great inter Trinitarian prayer. Read that. It's marvelous. We get to be the fly on the wall listening to the Father and the Son converse.

And a portion of that conversation deals with us in the 21st century. it's a wonderful section of scripture. And we're allowed to listen in on this conversation between the Son and the Father. It's amazing. And Jesus starts that section and he says Father the hour has come. What hour is that? Hour of his crucifixion.

[22:59] The atonement. Dying for the sins of his people. The hour has come. glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.

Even as you gave him authority over all flesh that to all whom you have given him that's believers he may give eternal life. This is eternal life that they may know you the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

What a way to start that prayer. And it goes on for several verses. And we get to listen in. It's an amazing section of scripture. Eternal life comes from the Father through faith in the Son.

What's faith? Faith is believing. Faith is believing. And we're commanded to believe, right? We have to believe. We believe the truth about the Son. The Father and the Son are one.

There is an intimacy between the Father and the Son that is far beyond the human ability to perceive, to understand or to explain.

[24:15] There's an intimacy there. Remember, the Trinity has always existed. So they had a lot of time together, didn't they? They've always existed.

And you go back into the early stages of Genesis and it talks about the Father, the Son, and the Spirit using the word Elohim. We, the one true God. It's just phenomenal.

Where did love come from? Where did love come from the Trinity? The Trinity loved each other forever. Where did these great promises? It talks about the promises to who?

There was no angels, there were no humans. Who was promising what? The Trinity was making promises. I'm going to give you some believers and of those I give you, Jesus says, I'll accept them and I'll lose none.

This was done in eternity past. Our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life from eternity past. Well, that's hard to get your hands around, guys. We had a dear saint in this church.

[25:17] He's in glory now. I love him. Lloyd Schnitzer. He could never get his hands around that. He always told me he would come forward to church every Sunday. Remember that, Mike? And he would say, I know Jesus died for my sins, but what about for my future sins, the sins I committed after I became a believer?

I said, Lloyd, when Jesus died, all your sins were future. You know, 2,000 years in the future. In John chapter 4, when Jesus referred to God as Father, it was not our Father.

He's referring to His Father. He's referring to His Father. Very unique relationship worthy of study, although it's limited because there's not full revelation in it.

People say, well, when I get to heaven, boy, I'm going to understand the Trinity. Maybe not. No guarantees, guys. Well, I've got a lot of questions I'm going to ask the Lord. No, we're not going to have any questions.

We're probably going to be like John and fall at His feet as if dead. We'll be in the presence of His glorified body. He is speaking of His Father. Now, this portion of Scripture where Jesus is revealing Himself to the woman at the well is an open and very clear statement of His deity.

[26:35] No Jew that wasn't God would have anything to do with a Samaritan woman anyway. He wasn't even supposed to be in Samaria if you go by the Jewish rules and regulations. How interesting, he told the disciples, I must go to Samaria.

He had a divine appointment in Samaria. And then they go to town in search of food and she comes out there and he asks for a drink of water. She can't believe you're talking to a Samaritan woman? A righteous Jewish rabbi, which Jesus wasn't, wouldn't talk to anyone. He probably wasn't a member, Jesus wasn't a member of the black and blue Pharisees.

There was a group called the black and blue Pharisees. They wore like you put on a mule, blinders. But they did it so they wouldn't look at a woman in lust after her. Trouble was, they kept running into posts and walls and tripping and they were black and blue, they had bruises.

Josephus talked about them walking around with these bruises because they kept walking into things because they had these blinders on and they didn't want to commit the sin or break the commandment on lust.

[27 : 45] Looking at a woman with a with adultery. So here he is talking to a Samaritan woman of all things and let's face it, a woman with not the greatest reputation in town and he's declaring to her that he is the Messiah and he has equality with his father and that's why he would later declare that anyone who has seen the father, who has seen him has seen the father.

The disciples asked him he said show us the father. He said you guys have been hanging around this long you haven't figured it out? When you've seen me you've seen the father and you know Hebrews talks about the fact that he is the exact representation of God.

He's the exact representation of God. And he told them he said you've seen me you've seen the father. Now why are we stressing all this? Because millions and perhaps billions of people I'm certain it's billions who claim some type of worship of God as father but they deny Jesus Christ as anyone special.

And they may go as far as saying well he was a man of love and he was a great teacher. Don't think you have to go to India or Saudi Arabia for that. Fellas you can get that in churches in this town. You can get that here. Go to the Universalist Church. You can get that. Jesus was no one special other than he had a pretty good philosophy of love.

[29 : 25] He was kind of like Mahatma Gandhi. Maybe eight more. That worship is unacceptable. That worship is totally unacceptable.

They are worshipping a figment of their imagination. And let's face it all human religions are worshipping a figment of their imagination.

It's God of their own mind. And you can always tell that because the God little g of religion and you can name any religion you want to is always standoffish.

He doesn't communicate directly with his people and he's always angry. He's a frightening person to come into the presence.

I've got a very dear friend of mine that's Muslim and we've talked about this. He would never refer to God as Father. But they're gods of religion or imagination are angry and they are standoffish.

[30 : 37] you know the Bible is divinely inspired because if we were going to write a novel about God coming down to earth we wouldn't have him born in a stable laid in a manger would we?

A food trough. We'd have him in a palace gold servants you know. Humans didn't write that book. Every page cries out that that's not human authorship.

Ultimately it was the spirit of God. Well here we have human religion which as you know is man's efforts to reach God. They always fail.

It's a return to bondage. That was the original definition of religion from a Latin word. And people are worshipping shadows.

They're worshipping a candle with smoke and it goes out and the smoke goes away. That's the God of the imagination. No one has ever successfully worshipped God as spirit who has not worshipped God the father as father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[31 : 50] No one. And we cannot come to him but through the Lord Jesus Christ. God cannot be defined in any other way. He can only be worshipped through the Lord Jesus Christ his anointed one.

I had a guy come to him. Well I don't think I like that. I'm labor. Take that up with management. I'm labor. Take it up with management when you get to heaven.

If you get there. But we are to worship the Lord Jesus Christ through him to the father. I picture the Lord taking our prayers and presenting them to the father.

And I think Revelation even says as a sweet smelling savor. It also says He stores our prayers up in a jar. He takes them out every now and then like incense.