

Sermon Series: Choosing Life by Living It God's Way

Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN - 6/20/2004 - Father's Day

Title: "Get Real!"

Text: Luke 2: 41-52

Intro: (Opening video of children asked the question: "What do you like about your dad?")

Theme: When worship becomes for us more than a ritual but rather becomes a regular encounter with our God and Savior, then church attending will be seen as something not demanded but desired.

Ills.: Tradition Happens

Worship in Jesus' life

- It was a regular habit (**Print and read vs. 41-42**)
 1. Luke records that it was a "yearly custom" (**repeated habit**)
 2. Jesus grew up in a home where church life was part of the very fiber of the family
- It was a place where he loved to linger (**Print and read vs. 43-46**)
 3. "After 3 days they found him . . ." – you wonder where else they looked first and why? (Different focus/priority)
 4. "I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord." Psalm 122: 1
- Jesus came to meet God, His Father (**Print and read vs. 46-49**)
 5. Jesus, the Son of God, was not too proud to sit at the feet of teachers to grow in his knowledge of God
 6. "He who is of God hears the Word of God; the reason you do not hear them, is that you are not of God." John 8:47
- 7. **Print out Third commandment and meaning**
- 8. "You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." Psalm 16:11
- Jesus' worship was more than event but was a life-style (**Print and read vs. 50-52**)
 9. Jesus' parents could not understand because they had see the Passover celebration as a duty to perform
 10. Jesus not only worshiped the Father through learning and praise but also through his obedient and radiant life-style
 1. *upotasso*— to intentionally put oneself under another
 2. Progressed favor (*grace*) with God and man

Worship in our lives — (three principals for God-worthy worship)

- Worship must move from being on our schedule to coming from our hearts
 1. Jesus' worship came from being totally tuned-in with the Father's will
 1. **Ills.: My Utmost for His Highest—July 13**
 2. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1-2
 2. When our God and Savior, Jesus, becomes our total focus, worship does not become a mandate but a desire
 1. "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart." Psalm 37:4
- Our worship will be motivated when we come with a holy expectation of meeting our God and Savior
 3. **Ills.: Looking to worship Jesus**
 4. Worship is not for entertainment or to continue a monolithic tradition or to fulfill a social duty
 5. Worship is coming into God's presence, hearing of His mighty deeds, witnessing his miracle of grace and forgiveness at work again to make people alive and going back out in your world to invite someone else to come with you next week
 1. **Ills. A Contemporary Christian band's branding: We are not the grateful dead but the grateful living**
- A true gauge of the effect of our worship-time in God's house is its impact in our lives— do you live it

6. Print and read James 1: 22-27

Tradition happens

The outsider watched with fascination as the Danish village people filed into the Lutheran church building for worship. Each one walked up the center aisle to the place where there was a break between the pews and a plain white wall. Every worshiper paused, turned, and genuflected with bowed head and knee facing the blank wall, and then went to sit in their usual pews. Since the observer couldn't figure out the meaning of this ritual, he asked both the clergy and the laity for an explanation, but no one knew. "We've always done it that way" was the sincere but uninformed answer. Further research revealed that there was an elaborate painting of the virgin Mary behind the white paint on the blank wall. The painting dated back hundreds of years, before the Protestant Reformation when the church was Roman Catholic. The village people had bowed to the Virgin for generations as Catholics. When the church became Protestant and the Virgin was painted over, the worshipers just kept on bowing. Generations later the bows continued, even though the reason had long since been forgotten. It was tradition." (*A Church for the 21st Century*" by Leith Anderson, Bethany House, 1992. Page 145)

Third Commandment and meaning

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. *What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

The Price of the Vision (Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, July 13th)

"Your priority must be God first, God second, and God third, until your life is continually face to face with God and no one else is taken into account whatsoever. Your prayer will then be, 'in all the world there is no one but You, dear God; there is no one but You.' Keep paying the price. Let God see that you are willing to live up the vision."

Looking unto Jesus

Lyman Beecher Stowe, in his book *Saints, Sinners, and Beechers* told that on one occasion Thomas K. Beecher substituted for his famous brother Henry Ward Beecher at the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, New York. Many curiosity seekers had come to hear the renowned Henry Beecher speak. Therefore when Thomas Beecher appeared in the pulpit instead, some of the people got up and started for the doors. Sensing that they were disappointed because he was substituting for his brother, Thomas raised his hand for silence and announce, "All those who came here this morning to worship Henry Ward Beecher may withdraw from the church; all who came to worship God may remain."

Luke 2:41-52

41Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast; 43and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But His parents were unaware of it, 44but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day's journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. 45When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem looking for Him. 46Then, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. 48When they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You." 49And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" 50But they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. 51And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

James 1:22-27

22But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. 26If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. 27Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.