

---Sermon Series: Intentional Disciples–Purposeful Worship–Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN–1//8/2006

Title: "True Worshipers"

Text: John 4: 16-26

Intro.: *Ills.: Worship that God wants*

Theme: **Authentic Worship is not something which we manufacture for God but something which God's Spirit creates within and through us.**

**Worship is stripping off the masks and being `honest to God' (vs. 16-22)**

- When you come to worship God, be prepared for something you did not expect
  1. When we come face to face with Jesus in worship we are confronted by his holiness and our sinfulness
  2. The women became defensive when Jesus confronted a portion of her life/heart she not ready to lay at God's feet
  3. Worship in the presence of God will confront areas of my life which are still my little "Buddhas," causing discomfort
- With that discomfort we can react in one or more ways with our worship
  1. **Reaction**—getting distracted on side issues of church and worship—style, shortcomings, imperfection
    - a. Samaritan/Jewish started first **worship wars** with feud over who was the "real descendants of Abraham" (vs. 20)
    - b. **Ills. Whose worship is it anyway**
  2. **Rejection**—stop coming altogether
  3. **Resistance**—denial/false facades which only raises the discomfort in our participation and our eventual fall out (v19)
  4. **Repentance**—which leads to godly sorrow, confession, release, and powerful living and worship
    - a. *Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 2 Cor7:10*
- Worship is about coming into the light of God's truth, hearing the truth, and being set free to respond to God
  1. Unlike the woman, being justified because of Jesus rather than self-justification
  2. **Ills.: Isaiah's vision of God** *"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty." Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6: 5-8*

**Worship is being Spirit-led to be authentic (vs. 23-24)**

- Focusing the `authenticity' on the right object (*truth*)
  1. **Illus.: True Worship Experience**
  2. God-pleasing worship responds to God's gracious leading to His truths for our lives which frees us to respond more
  3. **ILLUS.:** The Latin root of "authority" and "authentic" means "that which allows growth and life."
  4. Giving each other the right to worship in the manner the Spirit leads us as long as it celebrates God for Christ's sake
    - a. True discussion of worship led the woman to discover Jesus as the appointed way of God (vs. 25-26)
    - b. Come to worship to meet Jesus — his forgiveness, his tough love, his challenge to stretch comfort zones
    - c. Come to worship to help each other see Jesus (**not about rules, not about my right to do as please**)
- Authentic worship generates from the Truth
  1. **ILLUS.:** *"Our emotions become worship when, in response to a truth about God, we give something back to God."*
  2. It starts with being Christ-centered and Word empowered in our worship
    - a. *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. John 14: 6*
    - b. *"If you abide in My word...you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8: 31-32*
  3. It involves being led by the Spirit to offer a humble spirit before the Lord, our God.

a. *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. James 4: 8, 10*

### **Worship that God wants**

Early in our marriage I gave my wife a terrific anniversary gift: a rain gauge. At least *I* thought it was a great gift. Susan, after all, is a farmer's daughter and keeps close watch on the weather. I envisioned her delight and nostalgia while tracking our back yard precipitation. I congratulated myself on my creativity. Guess what? Susan was not impressed: "A rain gauge—for our anniversary?!" The rain gauge is now a family joke, a classic example of a gift enjoyed by the giver but not the receiver. One word I hear a lot these days is *authentic*, as in "we seek authentic worship." Usually this means we're trying to create an experience that helps worshipers feel something. Nothing wrong with that, but if our focus is only on our experience, we may be giving God a rain gauge. Are we offering in worship a gift we enjoy and figuring God will like it? A real gift, real worship, means knowing what's important to The Receiver. **Citation:**

**Marshall Shelley**

### **Whose Worship Is it, Anyway?**

During a readiness exercise, my friend Jim and I, Air Force security policemen, were guarding entry to a bunker-like structure where aircraft were kept. When a pilot about to do a preflight check approached without his identification in plain view, Jim asked him for it. "I don't see why I have to show you my ID," the pilot snapped. "After all, it is my plane." "Sir, with all due respect, it may be your plane," replied Jim, "but it's sitting in my garage!" --Contributed to "Humor In Uniform" by Sgt. David J. Cox, Readers' Digest

### **True Worship Experience**

I am dismayed by the popular phrase "worship experience" and "authentic worship" to describe the church's corporate worship. Worship has the capacity to transform us, because it focuses our hearts and minds on God--God seen in one another, in ourselves and in the world around us. However, the phrases "worship experience" and "authentic worship" suggests that worship is important because it induces feelings or personal response. In this context worship is focused more on the worshiper than on the One worshiped....We need to ask ourselves what a true worship experience is so that if we had one, we could recognize it. *Citation: Mark Horst*

### **John 4:16-26**

<sup>16</sup>Jesus told her, "Go to your husband, and bring him here." <sup>17</sup>The woman replied, "I don't have a husband." Jesus told her, "You're right when you say that you don't have a husband. <sup>18</sup>You've had five husbands, and the man you have now isn't your husband. You've told the truth." <sup>19</sup>The woman said to Jesus, "I see that you're a prophet! <sup>20</sup>Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain. But you Jews say that people must worship in Jerusalem." <sup>21</sup>Jesus told her, "Believe me. A time is coming when you Samaritans won't be worshipping the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup>You don't know what you're worshipping. We Jews know what we're worshipping, because salvation comes from the Jews.

<sup>23</sup>Indeed, the time is coming, and it is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. The Father is looking for people like that to worship him. <sup>24</sup>God is a spirit. Those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

<sup>25</sup>The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming. When he comes, he will tell us everything." (*Messiah* is the one called *Christ*.) <sup>26</sup>Jesus told her, "I am he, and I am speaking to you now." [GW]