

How to Worship God in Spirit and Truth I

Fred R. Coulter

How do you worship God in Spirit and in Truth? This is Jesus and the woman of Samaria at the well:

John 4:19: “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain... [which was Mt. Garazim] ...but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship...’” (vs 19-22). This is a very important key thing. *They thought* they were worshipping the *true* God at Samaria, but they weren’t.

He said, “...You do not know what you worship...” Very interesting. You could ask that of Protestants and of Catholics: What are you worshipping? *The same thing applies!*

“...We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.... [that doesn’t mean that it comes from Judaism] ...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the **true worshipers...**” (vs 22-23). This also tells us something else. If everyone who worshipped God was a worshipper of God, all He would say is, ‘those who worship God.’ So, there are *true* worshippers which also that implies there are *false* worshippers.

“...shall **worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth...**” (vs 23). Of course, that couldn’t be done until after Christ was resurrected because one of the main missions of Jesus Christ in coming was to reveal the Father.

“...for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. **God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth**” (vs 23-24). Today, we’re going to find out what it is: How do you worship God in Spirit and in Truth?

Let’s look at some other things that are important for us to realize. The reason that you have to worship God in Spirit and in Truth is because **God is Truth**. We’re going to see that **His Word is Truth**. **God cannot lie!** Therefore, in worshipping and serving God, when we come before God we also need to understand this is why God wants us not only to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, but our worship of God becomes a relationship between us, God the Father and Jesus Christ. It’s not something where one would:

- go to a cathedral on Sunday morning
- race through the beads
- do some genuflects

- take a round wafer from the priest
- then go out and live their lives any way they want to live

We’ll find out that *it’s a whole relationship, a whole way of life*, much beyond just an ordinary thing that people would consider as worship, or as the Protestants:

- you go to church
- they have the bouncing ball
- you sing songs for 40 minutes
- you have announcements
- you sing songs for another 20 minutes
- you have a 30 minute sermon
- you go home
- you feel good
- you’re all uplifted because of the singing

If you sing happy, happy songs you feel pretty good. Some people think that is spiritual. No, that has nothing to do with worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth. We’ll see what it is.

I. It Begins with Prayer

We’re going to see a lot of elements in the prayer of Matt. 6. Of course, a lot of people just memorize this by rote and think that this is the prayer that they ought to pray, whereas it is an outline of a model prayer.

If you would like something very interesting to discover, when you pray take two Bibles with you, get on your knees—you don’t have to pray with your eyes closed and your hands folded—and you’re in prayer. You can also pray while you’re reading the Word of God. You put one Bible on the right and one on the left. Open it up to Matt. 6 and open the other one up to some of the Psalms. You will see that the Psalms follow this outline that is given in Matt. 6, because it talks about prayer.

Matthew 6:5: “And **when you pray**, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, in order *that* they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward.”

I can’t help but think of this every time I see the pope doing something and he does his little thing. Everyone is seeing him and everyone is applauding. I say, ‘He just had his reward.’

Verse 6: “But you, **when you pray**, enter into a private room; and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret...” The connection is very simple: ‘Our Father,’ and you’re praying to Him. Remember what Jesus said, ‘Don’t pray to Me

and I will ask the Father for you. *You pray to the Father* for the Father Himself loves you.’ Always keep that in mind. God loves you. {note sermon; *Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You* (Love series #1)}, because everything else is going to fail. You’re going to think that your world is coming completely:

- undone
- unglued
- torn apart
- ripped asunder

Remember: ***God loves you in spite of all the physical circumstances around!*** When you get through the trial, when you get through the difficulty and come out the other side of it, you’re also going to understand the reason for it.

“...and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly” (v 6). How does He reward you? *He doesn’t send money from heaven!* There are many ways that He can reward you:

- He comforts you mentally and spiritually
- He can give you clear thinking
- He can help you understand your circumstances
- He can bless you in the eyes of other people, if it concerns dealing with other people
- He can bless you with a job, if you need a job
- He can bless you with whatever He needs to bless you with
- He can also bless you with a trial

Most of us don’t think of trials as blessings, but they are because of the spiritual character that they produce in us.

Verse 7: “And **when you pray**, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen *do...*” You want to know what that’s like, tune in to the *Catholic Hour* that is 15 minutes long. There are prayers you do have to repeat until you get an answer. That’s not a vain repetition. That’s praying without ceasing.

“...for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard. Now then, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him. Therefore, you are to **pray after this manner...**” (vs 7-9). That’s an interesting way to phrase it. He doesn’t say, ‘You are to pray this prayer,’ which a lot of people assume. This is the manner, the outline or the way that you are to pray.

“...Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name.” (v 9). First of all, you honor God, because He’s the Maker and Creator of everything there is.

Verse 10: “Your kingdom come...” We pray for the return of Christ, continually. Also, this has meaning and understanding that you—now having the Spirit of God—are under the authority of God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Kingdom being in heaven with the Holy Spirit coming to you, that part of it brings you under the jurisdiction of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

“...Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven” (v 10). Let’s understand that God’s will is always done, one way or the other. ***There is nothing that is going to be done in heaven or on earth that’s not going to be according to the will of God!***

Our prayers, because of our attitude and our relationship with God and praying to God, can appeal to the will of God for good and for intervention.

King Hezekiah: Remember what happened? Always remember that whenever there is repentance, God honors that, and He will change His will from one thought to another thought, because of repentance.

What happened? God said to Isaiah to go and tell King Hezekiah, ‘*Get your house in order you’re going to die.*’ What did Hezekiah do? *He turned to the wall and wept sore!* What happened? God changed His mind. It’s still the will of God one way or the other, but ***see how repentance makes a difference!*** This is a key important thing with our relationship with God. No sooner did Isaiah get out the door and down the road, God said, ‘Go back and tell Hezekiah that I’m going to add 15 years to his life because he wept sore and humbled himself before Me.’ So, he lived.

Likewise, remember the case of Ahab? God told Elijah to go down and tell Ahab that he is wicked, he is evil, he is going to die and the dogs are going to lick the blood of Jezebel and his blood off the wall because of what he did to Naboth in taking his property and killing him.

Elijah went down and told him, ‘You’re going to die, you’re evil, you’re miserable, you’re wretched and one of the most evil men that has ever been as a king of Israel.’ What did Ahab do? *He repented and walked in sackcloth and ashes!* Involved in all of this is *our choice*. Elijah is going down the road and God says, ‘Look at My servant, Ahab. You go back and tell him that I’ll honor his repentance and I’ll defer his destruction until later.’

That is a key thing in the will of God. ***God’s will is always adjusted to repentance!*** Repentance brings:

- mercy
- forgiveness
- grace

- kindness
- in our relationship with God. The longer that you have God’s Spirit:
- the more that you understand about God
 - the more you understand about human nature
 - the more you realize every day how much you need God

Notice what is missing in all of this: *No priest! No minister! No elder!* This is a direct relationship *between you and God*; you’re worshipping *God*. That’s why he says that you go into a quiet, private place. When you know the One we come before is God, He knows everything; you can’t fool God. So, when you worship God in Spirit and in Truth, part of that is acknowledging and repenting of your sins, your human nature and just the way that we are as human beings that are contrary to the will of God.

Verse 11: “Give us this day our daily bread.” Of course, that means everything. Not just the food, but God provides the air, the water and everything else.

We were eating the other night and I was having a salad and Delores was eating some chicken. I had a little chicken and I remembered the verse that says, ‘All flesh is grass.’ So, if you’re eating a cow, you’re eating grass; a little refined, but you’re eating grass. Basically, vegetables are what we eat, and fruits and nuts; it’s all a physical thing.

When we ask God to provide our daily needs that’s not only the bread, but it’s the things that we really need. Ask God to bless you and we’ll talk about attitude, obedience and things like this a little bit later. It all starts out with prayer.

Here’s a key, *key*, **key** thing: You cannot go to God and say, ‘Forgive me my sins, but get that guy over there.’ *or* ‘I can’t possibly forgive this person for doing thus and such.’

Verse 12: “And forgive us our **debts**, as we also forgive our **debtors**.” In Luke 11 it is ‘forgive us our **sins**, as we also forgive others their sins.’ We’ll see about praying for your enemy a little later on as we go.

Forgiveness is a very key, important thing, and the more you understand how much you need forgiveness, as an individual, the more that you’ll understand. Everyone wants to have their weaknesses and sins forgiven so they are in right standing with God. Well, pray for others that they might repent, too, that God may deal in their lives. *Don’t think that all hope is lost*, because it’s not! Remember that *as long as there’s life, there’s hope!*

That’s why God called Saul to be the Apostle Paul. Who would have ever thought that you could have changed Paul’s mind? God has a way of doing it—doesn’t He? *God can change people’s minds!*

- don’t just ask God to forgive you for your sins
- ask God to forgive the brethren for their sins
- pray for those who are sick
- pray for those who are in need of encouragement and help
- if there’s anything that you can do to help them, then God expects you to do that

Matthew 6:13: “And lead us not into temptation...”—not into trial and difficulty. Sometimes we need them. Sometimes that’s the best thing for us and when we are in a situation like that, then it gives an opportunity to see:

- how much we’re going to rely on God
- how much we are going to yield to Him
- how much we are going to trust Him

“...but **rescue** us from the evil one...” (v 13). That’s a very interesting phraseology there in the Greek. Only God can rescue us from Satan the devil; only *He* has the power. We can’t do it of ourselves, on our own or because we’re any great thing. Look at this way: How helpless was Job in the face of his conflict with Satan? *He thought he could do it on his own!* That’s one of the lessons of Job:

- *only God* can help you
- *only God* can intervene
- *only God* can rescue you from Satan the devil

Living in this world today and with so many things out there, so many tools of Satan the devil, we’ve really got to have God’s protection. We really have to continually ask God to rescue us from Satan the devil and to save us from ourselves. What was that prayer that one of the deacons prayed, ‘Know that your people are prone to sin. Lord, save them from the prone.’

Then you acknowledge God, again. “...For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.” (v 13). When you acknowledge that and acknowledge God in all your prayers, you can take this and expand it out. We’ll look at some other things, look at some prayers and how we can do this a little bit later.

So, #1 is prayer; not only daily, but prayer is many times a day. We’re also told by the Apostle Paul, ‘Cease not praying.’ That doesn’t mean that you around and you’re muttering prayers and you’re doing laps around beads. It means that your mind

and your attitude toward God is such that you're constantly seeking the help of God many, many times a day.

II. How We Approach God

Next, we're going to look at the manner in which we approach God. Here's our whole approach to God. As we're going to find out, to worship God in Spirit and Truth is far beyond just praying.

What do you do when you get up off your knees? *When you're praying to God, you're praying to God because you love Him!* When you get up off your knees, then you put that love into practice. This is what Christ is pointing out here. This is going to be the manner in which we approach God, the manner in which we worship Him in Spirit and Truth.

Matthew 22:35: "And one of them, a doctor of the law, questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying, 'Master, which commandment is *the* great commandment in the Law?'" (vs 35-36). Everyone is looking for a key. If you just do this one thing then you got it made; it's like:

- the magic word
- the rabbit's foot
- the good luck charm
- having a crucifix hanging from the mirror of your car to protect you from accidents

Verse 37: "And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love *the* Lord your God **with all your heart...**'" It's not just worship in prayer alone, but it is a complete relationship between you and God based upon the love of God.

"**...and with all your soul, and with all your mind.**" (v 37). It's not a part time thing; it's a full time thing, when we understand what God is doing. Let's look at it this way: God's Word and Sabbath services are a *continuing education* for us. He is teaching us to become like He is.

Let's understand something very important: this was also given by God in Deut. 6. This also tells you a very important key in loving God, and to do so with all the heart, mind, soul and being. ***You must have the Spirit of God in order to worship God in Spirit and Truth!*** What happens when people don't have the Spirit of God is, even if they try they fall short.

After God gave them the Ten Commandments and they said that they would do everything that He asked them to do, God said:

Deuteronomy 5:29: "Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!"

They failed because they didn't have the Spirit of God.

This is what was quoted by Jesus, Deuteronomy 6 4: "Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the* LORD, *the* LORD. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I command you this day **shall be in your heart.**" (vs 4-6). In order for it to get into the heart, there must first be conversion. Conversion comes with:

- repentance
- baptism
- laying on of hands
- receiving the Holy Spirit of God
- then growing spiritually

When God first calls us and we receive the Holy Spirit, and we're sealed with the spirit of promise, it's just exactly like the creation of a new human life. When the seed of the father begets the egg of the mother, the egg seals immediately. The same way when you receive the Holy Spirit of God, you're sealed immediately. But just like the beginning of human life:

- there are a few cells
 - then a few more
 - then it begins to develop and grow
- so, likewise*
- we grow in grace
 - we grow in knowledge
 - we grow in Spirit
 - we grow in the character of Christ

From the time that we are baptized until we are resurrected, we're growing and developing. So:

- God is teaching us His way
- God is giving us of His Spirit
- God is giving us of His way
- God is giving us of His heart
- God is giving us of His mind
- God is giving us of His attitude

That's why God wants us to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth and to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and being.

Matthew 22:38: "This is *the* first and greatest commandment... [everything else flows from this] ...and *the* second *one is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (vs 38-40). *Amazing!* Loving God *enhances* the commandments rather than eliminates them. That's all part of it, part of our relationship with God.

III. Love of Neighbor

With those who have the Spirit of God, Jesus gave a new commandment. We're to go above and beyond 'loving our neighbor as ourselves,' from the point of view that:

- yes, we should help them
- yes, if they are in need, we provide for them

That's fine; we need to do that, even in this world. You just have to watch out for 'rip-off' artists that stand at freeway turnoffs. If you see someone down and out, you help them; you give them something.

John 13:34: "**A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you...**" This requires a *spiritual* love that comes from God. In particular from the point of view that God has called us from many different backgrounds, many different situations and we're all different.

It's not like being in one physical family. We're in *one spiritual family* and we all have things and difficulties that we need to grow in and overcome. In loving one another in the way that Jesus loved us is the way that we are to love one another. That takes a special love, and that love comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ. That is in such a way that we overlook the difficulties, problems and physical circumstances that we may see or observe among the brethren. That's why God has called us from the different backgrounds so that we do learn to love each other a Christ loves us.

IV. **Love Your Enemies**

We have to go one step beyond in the manner that we approach God. This is the most difficult; this is the hardest one. It's easy to love friends and family. It's harder to love the neighbor, especially if they're cantankerous. You can pray and ask God to change their heart, mind and attitude. I've talked to people who've had many experiences where that has happened, and it can be done.

Matthew 5:43: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'" That's the easiest, most carnal thing to do: hate your enemy. You can hate what they do and if it's really a very difficult situation, always put them into God's hands for Him to deal with them. Why? *Because God can deal with them better than you!*

Verse 44: "But I say to you, **love your enemies, bless those who curse you...**" Jesus did every one of these things. Remember that one of the last things that He said was, 'Father forgive them, they know not what they are doing,' as they were mocking Him while He was hanging on the cross.

"...do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and

persecute you, so that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *on the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and *on the* unjust" (vs 44-45). *Quite a lesson!* In spite of the fact that God has to judge the wicked, He still loves them by:

- providing food
- providing air
- providing rain
- providing water
- providing the different things that are there

He doesn't love them in the way that He loves us, because He's called us into a special relationship, to be in a special love relationship with Him and Jesus Christ.

All of this becomes part of our worship of God in Spirit and in Truth. It's just not a matter of a five, ten or fifteen minute prayer in the morning and you're off on your own, or whatever you think, however your mind works, and so forth, that everything's okay. We go beyond!

Verse 46: "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?" What are political parties made of? *You're for those who are in your political party! You're against those who are not!* If that's not the basis of the hate campaign that's in American politics today, I don't know how else to describe it.

Verse 47: "And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, **you shall be perfect...**" (vs 47-48). That's what this is all about. To worship God in Spirit and Truth is *to perfect us in Spirit and in Truth.*

V. **Becoming Perfect**

This the whole mission statement. What are you to be as a Christian? Here it is, go to your life's experience:

Verse 48: "**Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect.**"

- that takes *a lot of spiritual work*
- that takes *time*
- that takes *circumstances*
- that takes *difficulties*
- that takes *trials* and things that we go through

Our approaching God is all about loving Him, which then affects our heart and our mind. So, if we love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being, then it's going to cause our actions to follow along those lines. Loving God helps you to trust Him. Trust in God in everything, because you know this:

- God is love!
- God is Truth!
- God cannot lie!
- God will not lie!

That's why we're to worship Him in Spirit and Truth. Therefore, we trust Him.

Psalm 31:1: "In You, O LORD, have I taken refuge, let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Your righteousness. Bow down Your ear to me..." (vs 1-2); In other words, answer my prayer. Notice how similar this is to what we read in Matt. 6.

"...deliver me quickly... [that's very similar to 'rescue us from the evil one'] ...be my strong Rock, a fortress of defense to save me; for You are my Rock and my fortress; therefore, for Your name's sake lead me and guide me. Pull me up out of the net that they have hidden for me, for You are my strength. Into Your hand I commit My spirit; You have redeemed Me, O LORD God of Truth" (vs 2-5).

Quite a Psalm! Actually, part of this, is some of the words of Christ. The last words He said before He died on the cross was: 'into Your hands I commend My spirit'—a prophecy of it right here.

VI. Trusting God

Let's come back and see some things that are also important to understand. How do we get to this point in attitude and heart? This is how we learn to trust God.

Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; ***it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.***" That's why we all make so many mistakes. That's why it's automatic to sin.

For example, let's just take one fantastic, modern convenience that we all have and use: the car or truck. It seems good. It seems right. Look at all the troubles they had developing highways, developing safety and all of this sort of thing.

I was driving on a freeway in Los Angeles and I couldn't help but think about all these cars jammed six lanes on each side of the highway and how long it takes them to get where they're going. Here's this wonderful thing that we all assume is a blessing and when you get on the freeway *it's a curse!* You look around at the cars and in 99% of the cars there is *one* driver. You go by many homes that are made for two cars and they have five. You can take any aspect of the way that men do things and it won't work:

- take the federal budget
- take the taxation
- take the money system
- take the prison system

They think the way to do it is: don't kill them; don't execute them! Put them in jail for life! What are you going to do when all the prisons are full? They won't do it God's way, which says there are either redeemable crimes or unredeemable crimes. ***Unredeemable:*** you execute them. ***Redeemable:*** you rehabilitate them and make them pay.

Like the great crusade that they have, 'We're going to put every sex predator in jail for life.' God says to execute them. We even dared to have one person on Fox News' Bill O'Reilly program, who said that they ought to execute them. 'Okay. Let's put them in prison for life.' You look at those prisons and the way they build them with concrete and steel and a concrete slab to sleep on; they're in there 23 hours a day and nothing to do, and you drive them absolutely batty. If they could ever get out, they would be worse criminals than they were when they went in.

Look what happened in Iraq. What did Saddam Hussein do? *He let every criminal out of jail!* Look at the havoc that it raised for months and months with warring, killing, looting, cheating, and things like that.

Verse 23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man who walks to direct his steps. O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing" (vs 23-24). Our whole relationship with God is one where God:

- directs us
- corrects us
- leads us
- helps us

in our relationship with Him, because we worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

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VII. Attitude In Approaching God

Now we've seen the manner that we are to approach God. Let's look at the attitude. There's an awful lot in the attitude in approaching God that's important.

Eph. 6 may seem like a strange place to begin talking about attitude toward God, but it really is a good place. As I read this, let's not apply this to those who are the physical slaves at that time. Let's apply it to ourselves being *the slaves of God*. That's what the Greek word 'doulos' for servant means, *slave*. We're a total servant to God.

Ephesians 6:5: "Servants, obey *your* masters according to *the* flesh..." So, we can say our Master is Jesus Christ and our Father is God the Father, in spirit rather than just the flesh.

“...with reverence and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not *merely* with eye service, as *do* pleasers of men...” (vs 5-6). In other words, don’t be a hypocrite and put on a good show when you’re around people that are brethren. “...not *merely* with eye service, as *do* pleasers of men...” because what happens then? *You get into politics!* Has not politics ruined and hurt the Church? *Yes, indeed! Sure!*

“...but as servants of Christ, **doing the will of God from the heart**” (v 7). There’s the key. *Not grudgingly!* Sometimes it’s difficult, but not grudgingly.

Let’s look at the heart, because the heart becomes a very, very important thing. Let’s come to Isa. 66. Let’s look at our attitude and see how this also applies to worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth.

Isaiah 66:1: “Thus says the LORD, ‘The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,’ says the LORD....” (vs 1-2).

When Jesus said, ‘You’re not going to worship in this mountain where they had a temple, and you’re not going to worship in Jerusalem where they had a temple,’ all of those physical things are not required. Men like to have them. Men like to build them and to have buildings to meet in and things like this. That’s perfectly well and fine, but the problem is that when that becomes the paramount thing, whether:

- the temple
- the cathedral
- the building
- the statue
- the idol

—which then gets into idolatry, which is what it’s all about—then, it takes away from the heart. God is interested in the heart. So, he says:

“...But to this one I will look, **to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit** and who trembles at My Word” (v 2).

- you worship God in Spirit and in Truth
- you love Him in Spirit and in Truth
- you obey Him in Spirit and in Truth

Your worship of God in Spirit and in Truth translates into:

- the way that you think
- the way that your attitude is
- the way that you live

I watched a lot of the funeral of John Paul II, and I couldn’t help but think of that over and over again, when I saw all the things that they did and all of the trappings of:

- the funeral
- the buildings
- the idols
- the ceremony

One thing that stuck in my mind was that if he was such a perfect man, why did they have to pray for his soul? I couldn’t understand that. It’s a contradiction in fact, with the Bible. What you saw was ***the whole, physical ritual that glorifies Satan’s perfection of religion!*** That’s what you saw.

When God looks down on something like that He shows what it is. Even if they came to His temple and offered a sacrifice—when the temple was there and when God did command the sacrifice—even then He wanted a contrite spirit and trembling at the Word of God. If you don’t, if you come with a hypocritical attitude, He says:

Verse 3: “He who kills an ox *is as if* he killed a man; he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog’s neck; he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine’s blood; he who burns incense *is as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations.” Think of that in relationship to religions of men. What do they do? *They choose what they want rather than God’s way!* Therefore, He says:

Verse 4: “I also will choose their delusions, and I will bring their fears upon them because when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not hear. But they did evil before My eyes and chose *that* in which I did not delight.”

Let’s look at some other Scriptures showing about being wholehearted to God and how we need to approach that. Psa. 130 also shows an attitude of repentance. ***The more you understand about God:***

- through prayer
- through study
- through living God’s way
- knowing right and wrong

the more that you understand how you need to be rescued by Christ.

Psalm 130:1: “Out of the depths I have cried unto You, O LORD. LORD, hearken unto my voice, and let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications” (vs 1-2). When you get yourself in real difficulty and trouble and you start crying out to God, this a good Psa. to turn to, to help you get your

mind focused on your attitude and what you need to be.

Verse 3: “If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand? **But** there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.... [feared, loved and, in this case, revered and awe] ...I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, and in His word do I hope” (vs 3-5).

- repentance brings forgiveness
- forgiveness brings hope
- hope brings love
- love brings reconciliation

All of those together!

Let’s see what this kind of repentance does. God is having to take that which is carnal and imperfect, which we are, and perfect it to become like He and God the Father are. Psalm 51 also shows forgiveness, repentance and a deep kind of repentance. This is particularly important when you understand that this Psa. is the Psa. that David prayed when he finally came to himself after the affair with Bathsheba. Remember, that went on for a number of months. Just like every one of us, when we come to a point that we sin and:

- we haven’t repented
- we avoid God
- we avoid prayer
- we avoid study

We sort of muddle along until something all of a sudden hits us., and then we repent. That’s what happened with David. God sent Nathan, the prophet and gave him the parable about the rich man who had everything and he stole a little ewe and had that for his sacrifice. David said, ‘That man will pay for it.’ Nathan pointed his finger right at David and said, ‘*You are the man!*’ even though he was ‘a man after God’s heart.’

Why is that recorded? *It’s recorded because all men sin, even those that God uses in profound ways, and that they have to repent!* That’s why! That’s another verification of the Truth and the inspiration of the Bible. How many history books do you read where it lays out the most egregious sin of a man, records his prayer of repentance and God’s restoration of him? *No other book but the Bible!* So, Psa. 51 is a very important one.

Psalm 51:1: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions.” When you come to that point and you’ve had sin and it’s been wretched, miserable and rotten, you just feel cruddy all the way through. So, David says:

Verse 2: “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me” (vs 2-3).

What happens is that if you have an on-going sin that you’re kind of pushing out of the way, just pushing off to the side, avoiding and not admitting, what’s going to happen is *God is going to bring that right smack to the middle of your mind!* It’s going to be before you day and night so that you may repent. Then you will understand as David did.

Verse 4: “Against You, You only, have I sinned...”

- God made him king
- God gave him the authority
- God blessed him

God told David, through Nathan: ‘Why did you do this? I’ve given you thus and such and thus and such, and furthermore, if you wanted this and that, I would have given it to you. Why did you do this thing?’

“...and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge” (v 4). Remember this, never forget—this is the lesson that Job had to learn, too—***God is always right!*** You can add on to that, God is also:

- always merciful
- always kind
- always forgiving upon repentance

Then David understood the depths of human nature.

Verse 5: “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity...” We’re born with sin. *It’s in us!* You can see it manifest in the little children when they do the things that they do. You can see it manifest in all areas of life, of people from babies to those who are very old.

“...and in sin did my mother conceive me” (v 5). That wasn’t because it was through adultery, of course. It just is that the ‘law of sin and death’ is inherent in every human being. Here’s what God desires:

Verse 6: “**Behold, You desire Truth in the inward parts...**” That is a key of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth—‘Truth in the inward parts.’

“...and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom.... [the whole purpose of it] ...Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (vs 6-7).

Verse 10: “**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**” When you sin as egregiously as David did in this situation, you’ve got to have yourself cleaned up;

you've got to have your heart cleaned up. So, God did! That's all part of it.

VIII. Wholeheartedness

Let's look at a couple of other Psa. to show our whole attitude toward God. In that is repentance, and as we saw in the model prayer, *every day*. Not just a matter of rote, but a matter of deep understanding, introspection, and so forth.

As you read through some of these Psalms, they can be the basis for many of your prayers. Have you ever had it where:

- you know you got to pray
- you don't know what to say
- you just go pray
- you get on your knees
- open the Psalms and start reading them
- apply them
- use those words as your words

I'll guarantee you your own words and your own thoughts will begin to flow as the Spirit of God leads you with it.

Psalm 111:1: "Praise the LORD!..." Part of our worship is praising God. We praise God in prayer. We can praise God also in song, which is a different form of worship. It's not on your knees, but you're singing.

"...I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart..." The whole key we want to focus on, here, in our attitude is *wholeheartedness*. Human nature, being deceitful as it is, always likes to reserve a little corner for itself. To become wholehearted is a process of growth, change and overcoming.

- you praise the Lord with your whole heart
- you serve the Lord with your whole heart
- you come to God in every way that way

Psa.119 is quite fantastic, when you understand it. I know in going through this you could take and gives scores of sermons from Psa. 119. Look at it this way: This, I believe, is how Jesus Christ—when He was in the flesh,—viewed the laws and commandments of God. Many of the things that David writes are some of his thoughts and then they are a prophecy of the thoughts of Jesus Christ..

To give you an example of how the Psa. are interspersed with the thoughts of David and then the prophecies of the Words of Christ, Psa. 22 is the prophecy of Christ being crucified. I've often wondered what David thought after he had written this Psalm down and then came back and read it again. Not very much of it applies to David. Most of it applies to the words of Christ, which were another 1200 years in the future.

Psalm 22:1: "**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me**, and *why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?*... [the very words of Christ while He was on the cross.] ...O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not answer; and in the night season, and am not silent. Yet, You are Holy, O You enthroned upon the praises of Israel" (vs 1-3).

Now, David is getting into his own words. The first verse is definitely about Christ. The second and third verses, and on down for a little bit, are the words of David.

Verse 4: "Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You and were delivered; they trusted in You and were not ashamed. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men and despised by the people" (vs 4-6).

Now it's getting into the words of Christ again, v 7: "All who see Me mock Me... [while they look at Christ hanging on the cross] ...they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted on the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!'" (vs 7-8). What did the scribes and Pharisees say in their mocking? *They said, 'Yes, if you're the Christ, come down off the cross and we will believe You are of God!*

Verse 9: "For You are He who took Me out of the womb, causing Me to trust while on My mother's breasts. I was cast upon You from birth; You are My God from My mother's womb. Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help.... [some of the thoughts of Christ while He was on the cross] ...Many bulls have encircled around Me..." (vs 9-12). Can you see David praying with 'bulls' running around him? *Of course not!* This is Christ on the cross and the 'bulls' are Satan and the principalities, powers and demons rejoicing that He's dying, thinking that if they can just get Christ killed that He will be dead forever.

"...strong bulls of Bashan have surrounded Me. They opened wide their mouths at Me, like a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels" (vs 12-14).

These are the words of Christ. These are not the words of David, though he wrote them. I've often wondered what David thought. I wonder what the experience of his mind and emotion was when he was praying this prayer and writing down these words.

That's quite a thing where David was 'a man after God's heart' and even inspired him to write

down, for prophecy, the very words that Christ would utter. Of course, Christ is going to assume the throne of David. This is quite a thing! This shows us the *wholeheartedness* that we need to have. That:

- in spite of everything
- in spite of every difficulty
- in spite of every problem

God is there!

- He will help
- He will hear
- He will give us hope and raise us up

Verse 16: “Dogs have surrounded Me; a band of evildoers have encircled Me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; and You have brought Me into the dust of death. I can count all My bones; they look and gloat over Me. They divide My garments among them and cast lots upon My vesture” (vs 16-18). All words of Christ, or prophecies of what would happen.

This helps us to be able to understand the kind of attitude we need to have. A *wholehearted attitude* toward God. This is very similar to the very first Psa.

Psalms 1:1: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the Law of the LORD; and in His Law does he meditate day and night” (vs 1-2).

That’s all part of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth. When you get on your knees to pray, you don’t reach for some modern technical equipment and go, ‘Pray mode, Okay.’ *No!* Prayer is an extension of your relationship with God and an extension of your life.

Psalms 119:1 “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.” That’s a good one.

A church member and I were talking and he’s got a guy whose trying to evangelize him to Protestantism. We thought up a few good answers. Here’s a good one for Sunday-keepers. ‘I keep Sunday.’ He says, ‘No, I keep every day holy.’ Answers:

- When do you work?
- Oh, really. God didn’t
- Are you greater than God?
- Jesus didn’t keep Sunday
- Are you better than Jesus?

Just keep one-liners. That’s what we talked about, one-liners.

It says you’re blessed, v 2: “Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who **seek Him with the whole heart.**” That’s what God wants more than

anything else, *wholeheartedness to God!* That’s what He wants in everything that you do.

Verse 3: “They also do no iniquity...” Why? *Because if you’re keeping the commandments of God, walking in His way, you’re not sinning!* You’re here on the Sabbath Day, you’re studying the Word of God. You’re not sinning—are you? *No!* Not even if you’re hungry and hoping that food comes pretty quick, you’re just hungry, that’s all.

“...they walk in His ways. You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently” (vs 3-4). We’ll talk about that a little bit later on, too. That has an awful lot to do with it.

Verse 5: “O that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes!... [all the Holy Days are statutes] ...Then I shall not be ashamed when I have respect unto all Your commandments. I will praise You with **uprightness of heart** when I have learned Your righteous judgments. I will keep Your statutes; O forsake me not utterly” (vs 5-8). Very good. It’s helps us a lot with a lot of things that we need to do.

Verse 10: “**With all my heart I have sought You; O let me not wander from Your commandments. Your Word I have laid up in my heart, so that I might not sin against You**” (vs 10-11). This is New Testament doctrine. The whole purpose of what God is doing with us is developing:

- the mind
- the heart
- the character
- the love

All the attributes of the Spirit! All of this is part of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth.

Hebrews 10:16: ““This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days’... [the covenant that we have, been established with it] ...says the Lord: **‘I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.’”** *That’s the very reason that God created us!*

If God is Lawgiver, which He is and He is the only Lawgiver, isn’t that what James says, ‘There is one Lawgiver,’ and if we’re to become like God, which we are, then He’s showing us here, one of the ways that we do it. If it’s in our ‘heart and inscribed in our mind,’ then what is this? *This is how we think!* What does it say? *As a man thinks in his heart, so he is!*

If we have the Spirit of God, which is Truth, in your heart and mind, and you have the Word of God, which is Truth, in your heart and mind, *then you’re going to be thinking like God!* If you’re thinking like God—of course, in a very diminutive scale, because character comes first—then you’re

developing the mind of Christ. That's part of our *wholeheartedness* to God.

Phil. 2—here's a very interesting way that God inspired it to be written. This is something that you have to *let happen* by active participation in:

- learning the Word of God
- praying to God
- worshipping God
- keeping His commandments
- having them written in you heart and mind

Philippians 2:5: “**Let** this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus.” You have to *let* it be there. It's something you have to *choose* to do. You choose that and God will respond and fill that. *It's quite a thing!* Isn't it amazing?

Psalms 119:34: “Give me understanding... [David crying out to God] ...**that I may keep Your Law and observe it with all my heart.**” God wants us *wholehearted* in everything that we do. If we're going to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, we have to have the Spirit of God in us, we have to have the Truth in us, and the laws and commandments of God are also Truth. *Wholeheartedness* is what we need here.

Verse 58: “**I entreated Your favor...**” That means grace. We all need the grace of God. Of course, as you know, the grace of God is not contrary to the commandments of God. The grace of God is *your standing before Him!*

“...**with all my heart...**” (v 58).

Verse 69: “The proud have forged a lie against me, **but I will keep Your precepts with all my heart.**” *If* we're *wholehearted* toward God and *wholehearted* in everything that God wants us to do, *then* He's going to look upon us with mercy, kindness, grace, favor, and so forth. Now that we've seen that we need:

- the Truth
- God's Spirit
- repentance
- wholeheartedness

Let's look and see what's going to happen to the world *because they don't want it.*

IX. **Truth Rejected by the World**

It's very important because this happens every time that there is a court trial or a hearing. I couldn't help but think of this when you see congressional hearings. They all stand up and they raise their right hand. ‘Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?’ I think:

- I wonder what raising the hand does?
- What does that do?
- If it's not going to be truth *from the heart*, what good does it do to raise the hand or place one on the Bible?

What is going to be coming on the world pretty quickly? When this happens, the world is going to be swept off it's feet and it's going to look like the real thing. The only ones who are going to truly know the difference are those who have the Spirit of God. They did something that these people, who'll follow this, did not do.

2-Thessalonians 2:8: “And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming)... [Rev. 19] ...*even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing **because...** [God doesn't do anything without cause] ...**they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved**” (vs 8-10).

That has an awful lot. If you want to know the full depths of what this is talking about, then you get out a good concordance and do a concordance study about ‘true’ and ‘truth’ all the way through the Bible. You will see what it's talking about. This also means that they don't love God's way, so, they're going to be deceived.

We'll close with some verses concerning the Truth of God back in the book of Psa. Let's understand about Truth: Truth never changes! Truth never gets old!

Psalms 117:1: “O praise the LORD, all you nations; praise Him, all people, for His merciful kindness is great toward us; and **the Truth of the LORD endures forever.** Praise the LORD!” (v 1-2) Never forget that.

Psalms 119:30: “**I have chosen the way of Truth...** [all part of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth] ...I have laid Your judgments before me.”

Verse 142: “Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and **Your Law is the Truth.**”

What did Jesus say? John 17:17: “...**Your Word is the Truth.**”

Psalms 119:151: “You are near, O LORD, and **all Your commandments are Truth.**” Very important to understand.

- *if* they endure forever
- *if* they're done in Truth and righteousness
- *if* they are Truth

- **if** Jesus said, ‘Don’t think that I have come to abolish the Law,’
- **if** Jesus said, ‘Man shall live by every Word of God,’
- **then** know for sure that they stand forever

If anyone says that they don’t, then you know who is a liar and what the Truth is.

We’ll finish by coming to Psa. 145:17: “**The LORD is righteous in all His ways and loving in all His works.** The LORD is near unto all who call upon Him, unto all **who call upon Him in Truth**.... [worship God in Spirit and in Truth] ...He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them.” (vs 17-19). Remember we started out also, with the love of God.

Verse 20: “The LORD watches over **all who love Him**... [also implies a resurrection] ...but all the wicked He will destroy.... [the second death] ...My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD, and let all flesh bless His Holy name forever and ever.’ (vs 20-21)].

That’s part of the how you worship God in Spirit and in Truth!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

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- 1) John 4:19-24
- 2) Matthew 6:5-13
- 3) Matthew 22:35-37
- 4) Deuteronomy 5:29
- 5) Deuteronomy 6:4-6
- 6) Matthew 22:38-40
- 7) John 13:34
- 8) Matthew 5:43-48
- 9) Psalm 31:1-5
- 10) Jeremiah 10:23-24
- 11) Ephesians 6:5-7
- 12) Isaiah 66:1-4
- 13) Psalm 130:1-5
- 14) Psalm 51:1-7, 10
- 15) Psalm 111:1
- 16) Psalm 22:1-14, 16-18
- 17) Psalm 1:1-2
- 18) Psalm 119:1-8, 10-11
- 19) Hebrews 10:16
- 20) Philippians 2:5
- 21) Psalm 119:34, 58, 69
- 22) 2-Thessalonians 2:8-10
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- 24) Psalm 119:30, 142
- 25) John 17:17
- 26) Psalm 119:151
- 27) Psalm 145:17-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 11
- Revelation 19

Also referenced: Sermon:

Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You

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