



Week 1 - Getting to the Heart of Worship

May 22, 2011 Speaker - Ron Ohst

Worship is universal to all human cultures.

Nature itself cries out the Glory of God.

**Luke 19:36-40 NLT**

**36** As he rode along, the crowds spread out their garments on the road ahead of him. **37** When they reached the place where the road started down the Mount of Olives, all of his followers began to shout and sing as they walked along, praising God for all the wonderful miracles they had seen.

**38** "Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord !  
Peace in heaven, and glory in highest heaven!"

**39** But some of the Pharisees among the crowd said, "Teacher, rebuke your followers for saying things like that!"

**40** He replied, "**If they kept quiet, the stones along the road would burst into cheers!**"

**We were made to worship.**

*"As we discover and experience the majesty of God, the reality of His presence in our lives, and His availability to us in our times of need, we will be unable to keep from worshipping Him. It is a natural response."*

*--John Wimber*

## THE FIRST WORSHIP STORY

### **Genesis 4:3-8**

**3** In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. **4** But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. **The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor.** So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

**6** Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? **7** If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

**8** Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

- ℣ **Amazingly, the first story of worship inaugurates a question that is debated to this day: "what is the best way to worship?"**
- ℣ **Worship that pleases God begins with a heart of humility that looks to God in faith for His grace.**
  - ◆ **Abel's worship won God's favor because it was an act of humble faith from the heart**

### **Hebrews 11:4**

**4** By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

- ◆ **Cain's offering was rejected because his heart was not right**

### **1 John 3:11-14**

**11** This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. **12** Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. **13** Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.

"...to make good, signifies here not good action, the performance of good in work and deed, but making the disposition good, i.e., **directing the heart to what is good.**"

--Keil&Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament,  
Commenting on God's words to Cain: "if you do what is right"

- ◆ **To this day, people who worship from the heart are attacked (even killed) by those who don't. The stakes for true worship are high!**
- ℣ **Jesus' teaching on worship that pleases God**

### **Matthew 5:3**

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God"

◆ **Jesus' story of 2 "worshippers"**

**Luke 18:9-14 NLT**

9 Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: 10 "Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don't cheat, I don't sin, and I don't commit adultery. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! 12 I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.'

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.' 14 I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

- ❖ The Pharisee thinks he is an expert worshipper, yet God rejects his offering
- ❖ The tax collector has a humble heart that looks in faith for God's Grace, and his offering is pleasing to God

**John 4:23-24**

3 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

℞ **What this all means for us:**

- ◆ Everyone has the potential excel in worship; to be the kind of worshipper on whose offering God looks with favor, regardless of talent, social status, past failure, or past success. God looks to the heart.
- ◆ We cannot judge another person's expression of worship, neither positively or negatively. Only God knows another person's heart.
- ◆ We can examine our own hearts. If we find there the cry that says, "O God, be merciful to me", we've found the heart of a worshipper. The outer expressions that overflow from such a heart might be as varied as creation itself!

**Hebrews 12:28-29**

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our "God is a consuming fire."



By Him ... Through us ... For Him