

INSIGHT

When Jacob was fleeing to Haran because he was afraid of Esau, (Gen. 27:41-45) he stopped to rest in a certain place because it was sundown. Before the dream, the place had only been a stopping place reached by sunset, but when he awoke it had become a holy place.

“Surely the Lord is in this place--and I did not know it! ... How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” (Gen. 28:16-17 NRSV).

The holy presence of God had penetrated into ordinary (profane) space in a way which had aroused the awareness Jacob. This experience transformed Jacob into a God-fearing man, concerned with pleasing God and not himself.

“The sacred (holy) and profane are united in the experience of **worship**. The English word *worship* was originally spelled "worthship" and means to acknowledge the worth of the person or object worshipped. We should acknowledge God's worth in spirit (in contrast to material ways) and in truth (in contrast to falsehood).”

—*Holman Bible Dictionary*

There are several Greek words that are translated as *worship* in English. The one that captures the kind of worship God seeks in *John 4:23* is *proskuneo*. The word is derived from two Greek words that depict the image of a dog licking its Master's hand. This imagery reveals the attitude necessary to worship God. He seeks those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

Worship-centered living is the conviction of knowing Who is Lord of your life. You show this by your dealings with people, responsibilities and relationships. Stewardship, timeliness and accountability are qualities that are also affected when you live a transformed life-----> your spiritual act of worship! *Rom 12:1-2*

The Life in Christ

Worship-Centered Living

Key Text: Romans 12:1-2

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.

Theme:

In order for you to be able to worship God in a manner that is pleasing to Him you **must** allow for transformation to happen by the renewing of your mind through the Holy Spirit. Conformity to the world does not allow you to judge what God's will is. In order to live a worship-centered life your mind and thoughts must be yielding to God's Word. Your life and actions must be pliable to God's will. Your goals, wishes and dreams must be in accordance with God's will. Without being deeply rooted in the word and without a strong conviction and commitment to be transformed by the Spirit in order to please your Lord, there is no worship taking place in your life!

Application:

Here are some practical suggestions:

1. **Pray daily to God!** Be open about the areas in your life that need to change. Ask for wisdom and willingness on your part to allow God to change you.
2. **Let God communicate with you!** Read the Word often, as if God is speaking directly with you because He is! Take what you read as His advice, personally applicable to your life!
3. **Seek and Take Advice!** When your brothers/sisters advise you take it as a godly thing. The Lord is answering your sincere prayers! Don't treat with contempt their advice!

May the Lord richly bless you!

SERMON OUTLINE

Worship-Centered Living

I. The Transforming Mind—Living Sacrifices

Romans 12:1-2

1. Your Spiritual act of worship
 - a. The offering of your body.
 - b. Needs to be a holy body, pleasing to God.
2. How you offer your body as a living sacrifice?
 - a. Be effective & productive
 - e. Put to work the abilities God has given you
3. To offer your body your mind must be transformed

II. The Upward call—Spiritual Maturity

Hebrews 5:12-14; 6:1-13

1. What milk accomplishes
2. What solid food accomplishes
3. The Lord expects productivity and usefulness
 - a. Worship-centered living allows for a transformation that expresses itself as productivity
 - b. Maturity is the attitude that allows that transformation to take place and glorify God

III. The Elements of Fruitful Growth

2 Peter 1:3-11

1. These elements are given to us by divine power
2. We can choose to put them to use or bury them
3. In increasing measure, they make you useful and productive!
4. Your knowledge of the Bible is to be put into action!

IV. Conclusion: The example of Josiah

2 Chronicles 34, 35

1. Josiah did not conform to evil practices
2. Josiah reformed and transformed
3. His life was worship-centered
4. He regarded with reverence the Laws of God
5. He was a man of action
6. He turned to the Lord with all his heart, soul and strength—2 Kings 23:25

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Warm-up:

Look at the people in your class. Focus on the person to your left. If you know them well list the talents you see God has given them.

See To It

Matthew 25:14-30

1. Who is the Master (the man who went on a journey)? Who are the slaves?
2. What did he entrust to the slaves? How did he distribute his wealth? Why wasn't the wealth evenly distributed? v.15
3. When did the slave who received the five talents put the talents to work? What did the third slave do?
4. From verse 21, why the Master call his slave good and faithful? What did he mean by *faithful*? Why do you suppose that he treated the second slave the same way?
5. The third slave had a certain attitude about the Master. What attitude do you suppose this was, in light of what he told his Master? Did the first two slaves need to come up with some excuse when they presented their talents to their Master?
6. How did the Master respond to each of the three slaves? What was the justification given in the parable for each response?

Seeing It Closer:

1. Are you eager to multiply the gifts God has given to you?
2. Do you battle with any negative attitudes that have at times prevented your fruitfulness in the Lord? (I.e. not trusting, lack of faith, worrying, negativity, etc.)
3. Are you eager to enter into the joy of your Master?

Getting To It:

Reflect on how you are preparing yourself for the daily challenges that you face. Do you seek to live a worship-centered life? Are you awaiting your Master's return?