

October 17th and 18th
DISCIPLINE OF WORSHIP

“Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

JOHN 4:21-24

The importance of Sunday worship was ingrained in my mind from a young age. You see, it wasn't just Sunday morning worship. It was the Sunday evening service with usually some sort of social activity before or after the Sunday evening worship service. Of course, I can't forget my mother's capacity for the gift of gab...especially on Sunday mornings. Those late elementary aged years could see us leaving the church building around 1PM! I also distinctly remember faking sick so I wouldn't have to attend worship that Sunday. Of course, it never worked. Mom was able to see through that lie quickly! Even as my mother made worship a priority, I never recall having any conversation about why it was so important. Sundays seemed to be a date on the calendar that couldn't be missed, but I failed to grasp why it's so important. I'm not alone in this. Paul David Tripp says the same thing in his book “Sunday Matters”. So, we begin this weekend devotional asking you the question: what makes Sunday worship essential to believers? How would you answer that question? How can we prepare our hearts for Sunday worship?

Have you ever considered what Jesus says to the Samaritan woman in John 4? He states that the Father is seeking such people to worship him. Robert G. Rayburn in his book “O Come, Let Us Worship wisely points out that “nowhere else in all Scripture of God's seeking anything else from a child of God.” Honestly, I had never seen this before. It's an astounding statement. God seeks true worshipers, those that worship in spirit and truth. But how do we get there?

Men, what does Saturday night look like in your home? If we are going to be true worshipers, we must prepare for our encounter with our King. Think about it this way: if you need to work at 6AM (or earlier) during the week, your aim is to go to bed before 10PM. Sleep is essential so your workday isn't sluggish. Well, in the same way, what do we expect to offer God if we stayed up too late Saturday night? We can't be at our best to offer God our worship if we are struggling to stay awake because we didn't make sleep a priority the night before. But that's not all. When's the last time that you prayed for your heart to be prepared for worship? Do you take Saturday evening as a chance to spend time confessing to your God so your heart is clean before Him? Men, I'll be honest here in asking you to do something...will you pray for me on Saturday evening? Spiritual warfare is evident on Saturdays as I prepare to deliver God's Word to His people. Pray that we all would have hearts ready to respond to God's Word.

What do you expect God to do as people worship together on Sundays? This is another key. Kent Hughes in “Disciplines of a Godly Man” makes comments about expecting God to work in our hearts: “We must come with great expectation—for we will experience just what we expect.” Hughes uses an example of enjoying a music concert with other fans, compared with listening to the same music in your car. There's nothing that compares to a quality live music event. Indeed, if those events are so significant, how much more when believers gather to worship! Jesus has promised that He is in the room when two or more are gathered together. Do we expect God to do great things in our hearts and minds?

Men, we set the tone in our families here. We must be disciplined to prepare our hearts for worshiping with other believers. It truly is a grand moment when God's people from different ages groups, different talents, and different preferences gather to offer their King their worship. Will your heart be prepared this Sunday? Never underestimate those holy moments where God calls us together.

Spend some time praising God for the privilege of Sunday worship. Ask Him to help you see how grand those moments truly are and to prepare your heart for this Sunday.

For Further Reading: Hebrews 10:19-39