**Connect Through Worship**

 **23**But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship him. **24**God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth.” **John 4:23-24**

**Introduction:**

 Simply put, worship is our response to someone or something we deem of great value. Worship is about worth.

 You can worship anything or anyone, but worship is meant to be to God for who He is and for what He has done. We express it in the things we say and the way we live.

**I. Examples of Worship**

**In 21st Century**

 A group of teenagers and sponsors in a worship celebration at youth camp were jumping up and down as they sang. The music was loud, it was upbeat, it was enthusiastic.

 Across town at the very same moment a group of senior adults were meeting together to pray at their church. The room was totally quiet. When they did speak, they voiced prayers for friends and loved ones who didn’t have a personal relationship with Christ. Then they prayed for others they knew who had health concerns.

 On that same day in that same town a businessman knelt down in a hospital chapel and wept as he thanked God for bringing his wife through a serious surgical procedure. He wept as he realized how good God had been to him, but also how he had neglected God. As he knelt in that room, he repented of his sin, and recommitted himself to serving the Lord, to being a better husband and father.

 The situations were quite different from one another. The types of expressions also were different. But they had one thing in common...

In each case the person **“connected**” with God...and they experienced genuine worship.

**II. Why We Worship**

A. **We are made to worship**.

 You were made to worship. There is something inside of us that longs for and searches for something of meaning and significance to give ourselves to. You are going to worship someone or something with your life. **Bob Dylan** put it this way, **“You may serve the devil, or you may serve the Lord, but you gotta serve somebody.”**

B. **God is worthy of praise and worship**. He is the creator of the Universe. He created the fish in the sea and the birds in the air. He hung the stars of the sky and designed every strand of DNA in your body. He is the Savior of the World and provider of all your needs.

 He is worthy of all our praise for who He is, what He has done and continues to do in our lives and what He has promised to do.

C. **Worship reminds us who God is**. **Psalm 145** reminds us that worship is not about us. It’s about God and His greatness for He alone is worthy, the Creator and Redeemer of the heavens and all the earth.

D. **There is a battle over your worship**. Remember when Jesus went into the wilderness after His baptism. “Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. And then he said, ‘All this I will give to you if you bow down and worship me.’” Satan was competing for Jesus’ worship. And if there is a spiritual battle over Jesus’ worship, you better bet there is one over yours too.

E. **We become what we worship**. **Poet Ralph Waldo Emerson** said, And a man will worship something…( it) will determine his life and his character. Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for we are worshiping what we are becoming.” Whatever you value most eventually consumes you. When we worship God, it changes our character, our heart and our mind. You begin to value God more and as you do, He begins to consume more of you which then influences and eventually determine the path and destiny of your whole life. What you worship, you become.

F. **Worship is fuel for the soul**. Now remember, worship is not about us! But worship does something for us. Worship brings a new perspective. Worship helps us to see God’s sovereignty, to see that God is in control. Worship gives us physical, emotional, and spiritual rest. True worship brings peace to our troubled spirit and heart and gives us the rest we need from a world-weary heart.

**Closing:**

 At a conference at a Presbyterian church in Omaha some years back, people were given helium balloons and told to release them at some point in the service when they felt like expressing the joy in their hearts. Since they were Presbyterians, they didn’t feel free to say, “**Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!”** So, all through the service balloons randomly and spontaneously ascended. However, when it was over, **over 1/3 of the balloons were unreleased.**

 You see, God wants us to let our balloons go! Yes, worship is always to be reverent, but that doesn’t mean it isn’t to be joyful! When we understand the purpose of worship, we’re more likely to walk away saying, ”That was great! I hope God knows how much we appreciate Him!” Yes! Genuine worship is celebratory!