

WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP?
2 KINGS 17:24-41

INTRODUCTION

Review last week—“*When Is Worship Unacceptable To God?*”

1. When It Is Based On The Wrong Kind Of Fear. (Fear only in the face of trouble)
2. When It Is Based More On Form Than On Substance. (Body instead of Spirit...The head involved, but not the heart)
3. When It Is Based On Futile Efforts. (Trying to fear God and serve other gods)

Today we want to move to the second question I posed, “*When Is Our Worship Acceptable To God?*” or we will ask it this way, “*What Is Acceptable Worship?*”

I. PROPER WORSHIP INVOLVES KNOWING GOD PERSONALLY! (Vs 26)

A. Knowing God Personally Is More Than Just Knowing The Manner Of God! (Matthew 7:21-23)

Knowing the *manner* of God is just knowing **ABOUT** Him! Now understand that **CAN** be a good start. If someone begins to know the truth **ABOUT Him**, the Holy Spirit of God can use that to lead them to **actually KNOWING Him!**

However, that is not always the case. Some folks are like Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:7—“*Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*”

Lost Folks Can Come To Know That God Wants Them To Get Saved Without Ever Getting Saved!

But listen, believers can know the manner of God in some areas without applying what they know too!

1. **Bible Reading!**
2. **Prayer!**
3. **Church Attendance!**
4. **Witnessing!**
5. **Tithing and Giving!**

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Those who **have applied** what they know of God in those areas and more **have come to know God experientially!**

So, It Is Possible To Know The Manner Of God Without Ever Really Knowing Him!

B. Knowing God Personally Is A Two Way Relationship—You Knowing God In A Personal Way And God Knowing You In A Personal Way!

How does this happen? How is it possible for someone to come to know the God of the Universe?

It is not through religion! It is not through meditation or reciting mantras!

1. Understand That God Wants Folks To Know Him!
Jeremiah 29:13—“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Hosea 6:3—“Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD:”

2. To Know God, One Must Hear From Him!
Romans 10:13-14—“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”

John 8:47—“He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”

John 10:27—“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

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3. **To Know God, One Must Be Born Again!**
John 3:3—“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
4. **To Know God, One Has To Know Him By Faith!**
Hebrews 11:6—“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

II. **PROPER WORSHIP INVOLVES A PROPER KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S WAYS! (Vs 28)**

*John 4:24—“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit **and in truth.**”*

God’s way stands in stark contrast to the way of the wicked!

A. **THE WAY OF THE WICKED.**

Proverbs 4:19—“The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.”

Proverbs 12:26—“. . .the way of the wicked seduceth them.”

Proverbs 15:9—“The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.”

Psalms 146:9—“The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.”

B. **THE WAY OF THE LORD. (Jeremiah 6:16-17)**

*1 John 1:4—“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.**”*

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*Proverbs 10:29—“**The way of the LORD is strength** to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.”*

*Hosea 14:9—“Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? **for the ways of the LORD are right**, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.”*

*PROPER WORSHIP INVOLVES KNOWING GOD PERSONALLY!
PROPER WORSHIP INVOLVES A PROPER KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S WAYS!*

III. **PROPER WORSHIP INVOLVES TOTAL DEDICATION WITH THE WHOLE HEART! (Vs 29-33)**

God is not pleased with **half-hearted** or **divided-heart** worship of Him — Some come to His services already filled with their “*other gods*” that they just can’t wait to run back to!
(Look at Deuteronomy 13:1-4)

*Jeremiah 3:10—“And yet for all this her treacherous sister **Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart**, but feignedly, saith the LORD.”*

*Psalms 119:2—“Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, **and that seek him with the whole heart.**”*

*Jeremiah 29:13—“And ye shall seek me, and find me, **when ye shall search for me with all your heart.**”*

*Deuteronomy 6:5—“**And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.**”*

IV. **PROPER WORSHIP INVOLVES LISTENING TO AND OBEYING GOD! (Vs 36-41)**

A. **We Need To Hear With Our Ears!**

Mark 4:23—“If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.”

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B. We Need To Hear With Our Minds!

We need to have our minds engaged while we are listening!

*Mark 4:24—"And he said unto them, **Take heed what ye hear:** with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given."*

Luke 9:44—"Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men."

C. We Need To Hear With Our Hearts!

Luke 8:18—"Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."

*Hebrews 2:1—"Therefore **we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard,** lest at any time we should let them slip."*

James 1:19-25

CONCLUSION

Be honest...What kind of worship do you worship the Lord with? Examine your worship for a moment...Is your worship acceptable to the Lord?

Is it just a routine? Is it just an outward form? Or is it truly from the heart?

1. **DO YOU KNOW HIM PERSONALLY?**
2. **ARE YOU ACQUAINTED WITH HIS WAYS? (WALKING IN)**
3. **ARE YOU WORSHIPING HIM WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART?**
4. **ARE YOU TAKING THE TIME TO LISTEN TO HIM AND OBEY HIM?**