

980412PM DTS # 4 THE MINISTRY OF JESUS
**WHAT IS THE MINISTRY OF JESUS ?
DISCOVER JESUS REVEALING GOD
TO HIS SERVANTS
REVELATION 1:1-3**

**WHEREVER JOHN WENT
HE COULD SEE JESUS!**

SOMETIME in the later part of the first century AD,
SOMEWHERE out in the azure green of the Aegean Sea, off the coast of Turkey was a barren island...a Roman penal colony - a rock quarry that cut stones for imperial temples and buildings.

To that colony island a boat carrying John the last apostle made its way. John was the last of the empire's greatest enemies. John was known as the final living member of Christ's inner circle. Rumor rolled across the empire about Jesus. It was said that His powers were unspeakable. John meditated on what Jesus had done wherever he went. Jesus had demonstrated His:

- Power over Nature
- Power to still storms
- Power to cause trees to wither
- Power to touch dead bodies and cause them to spring to life.
- Power to put eyes into empty sockets,
- Power to put ears on mutilated heads,
- Power to put hands on decayed lepers,
- Power to put tongues into silent and speechless lips... and power to be wherever John was taken

And now to Patmos - wizened and stooping, grey and halting, perhaps 80, and scarred by the fight....but no matter where he was, he was never far from his beloved Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was never out of sight for him. Jesus will never be out of sight for us. Like a landmark

(on my dad's camping expeditions, we sighted a landmark along the shores of those massive Canadian lakes. Then we always stayed insight of it so we could find our way back to camp). When you were little and didn't want to get lost remember the big tree or the barn you always kept in sight? If we keep Jesus always in sight, and never out of sight, we never need to feel alone, abandoned, desolate and useless.

WHAT LESSONS IN SERVING CAN WE LEARN FROM JOHN?

How are we to serve Jesus? John teaches four principles to maintain daily spiritual ministry. They are:

1. We can serve Christ ANYPLACE (John was isolated on Patmos, far from home in Galilee, far from the church, far from anyone but God. And yet what was he? In the Spirit. Galatians 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.).
2. We can serve Christ ANYTIME (John was old and near death. There are no limits to what God can do through us no matter what our age.).
3. We can serve Christ ANYWAY (John was only able to worship, no witnessing, no church work, no preaching, etc.).
4. We can serve Christ ANYHOW (John was suffering loneliness, pain, discouragement, spiritual oppression, etc.).
5. Lets repeat them: We can serve Christ ANYPLACE, ANYTIME, ANYWAY and ANYHOW!

NOW, HOW DO WE SERVE GOD?

Let's take the Scriptures mandate on this. Listen to Jesus Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall WORSHIP the Lord your God, and Him only you shall SERVE.' " NKJV.

What is God's order for service? Service is to flow out of worship. No worship, no service.

Does ministry ever get dull, tedious and wearying? That is a warning sign that the oil of worship is running low.

Worship always comes before service. Now what is worship?

WORSHIPING GOD BY THE WORD

Look with me at Philippians 3:3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, NASB

Worship¹ is the SUBMISSION of all our nature to God. How?

- ⇒ QUICKENING of our conscience by His holiness;
- ⇒ NOURISHMENT of mind by His truth;
- ⇒ PURIFYING of imagination by His beauty;
- ⇒ OPENING of our hearts by His love;
- ⇒ SUBMISSION of our wills to His purpose
- ⇒ All of this gathered up in adoration is the greatest of all expressions of which we are capable.

One clear way that God uses to invites our worship is by revealing Himself through Divine Names. The Lord unveils His deity through more than 67 names and titles used in 404 verses over these 22 chapters. They are real treasures to find as you read. In chapter one we can find there are no less than 8 magnificent titles of Christ:

- He is the Faithful Witness,
- First Begotten of the Dead,
- Prince of the kings of the earth,
- the Alpha and Omega,
- the Beginning and Ending,
- the Almighty,
- the Son of Man,
- the Living One.

First, Revelation is a revelation of Jesus and His Person. This is through His many names. Many we know - "He is the Lord, the Word, Jesus, Christ, Master, King, Lamb, Lion, Morning Star, Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End, First and Last ." But the truth is He has no less than 67 names and titles used in 22 chapters.

IS YOUR BIBLE A WORSHIP GUIDE FOR YOU?

¹ Adapted from the William Temple quote by Ravi Zacharias, Can Man live without God, p. 151.

Could I challenge you? Find all the names and titles of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in this book. When you do you will be well on the way to growing in your ability to worship.

Titles
In Chapter 1 He is the Faithful Witness v.5, First Begotten of the Dead, Prince of the kings of the earth, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and Ending, the Almighty, the Son of Man, the Living One.
In Chapter 2 He is the Administrator of the Church (v.1), Who hath the sharp two-edged sword (v.12), Who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire and His feet like fine brass (v.18).
In Chapter 3 He is the One Who hath the Seven Spirits of God and the seven stars (v.1), Who is holy and true and Who hath the Key of David (v.7), the Amen, the Beginning of the Creation of God (v.14).
In Chapter 4 <i>He is on the Throne in Heaven</i> v.2 and nothing comes into your life, health, job or mind - that He didn't know about long before it hit. Are you in touch with Him to prepare for whats ahead?
In Chapter 5 He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah; the Root of David (v.5); the Lamb that was slain (v.12)
In Chapter 6 He is the Angry Lamb (v.16).
In Chapter 7 He is the redeeming Lamb (v.14) and the providing Lamb (v.16-17)
In Chapter 8
In Chapter 9
In Chapter 10 <i>He is the Creator of Heaven and Earth and Sea</i> (v.6). He made you as you are, he picked your family, limitations and all. Are you going to the manufacturer and owner of your life in grateful awe that He knows you and cares for you?
In Chapter 11 He is Christ (v.15), the Lord God Almighty (v.17).
In Chapter 12 He is the Christ (v.10), the Lamb (v.11), and Jesus (v.17).
In Chapter 13 <i>He is the Lamb, Whose is the Book of Life</i> (v.8). He is the only One who has the reservation book and keys to get in. Have you called ahead and made your reservation? Is yourname written there?
In Chapter 14 He is the Lamb on Mount Zion (v.1,4), Jesus (v.12), the Lord (v.13), the Son of Man (v.14).
In Chapter 15 He is again the Lamb (v.3); the Lord God Almighty (v.3), the King of Saints (v.3), the Lord (v.4).
In Chapter 16 He is the One Who was and is and is to be (v.5), the Lord God Almighty (v.7,14).
In Chapter 17 He is Jesus (v.6), the Lamb (v.14), Lord of lords and King of kings (v.14).

In Chapter 18 He is the Lord God (v.8).
In Chapter 19 He is the Lord our God (v.1), the Lord God (v.6), the Lamb (v.7,9), Jesus (v.10), the Faithful and True (v.11), the Word of God (v.13), Almighty God (v.15), King of kings and Lord of lords (v.16).
In Chapter 20 He is Jesus (v.4), Christ (v.4,6).
In Chapter 21 He is Alpha and Omega (v.6), the Lamb (v.9,14,22,27), the Lord God Almighty (v.22).
In Chapter 22 He is, finally, the Lamb (v.1,3), the Lord God (v.5,6), the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the first and the last (v.13), Jesus (v.16), the Root and Offspring of David (v.16), the Bright and Morning Star (v.16), the Lord Jesus (v.20), our Lord Jesus (v.21).

Now lets take a worship break. Open to # 72-75

STEPS TO GROW INTO WORSHIPING JESUS ALL THE TIME

Listen to what one man² who spent years meditating on worship has written: Worship is something we do. Studying the theology of worship and debating the forms of worship are all good, but by themselves they are inadequate. In the final analysis we learn to worship by worshipping. Let me give a few simple steps that I hope will help in the experience of worship.

First worship must become a daily habit. LEARN TO PRACTICE NOTICING GOD'S PRESENCE SOMETIME EACH DAY.

- ⇒ Really try to follow Paul's words, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5: 17,kjv).
- ⇒ Punctuate every moment with inward whisperings of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving. Psalm 55: 17 Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, And He will hear my voice. NASB
- ⇒ Have personal times of inner worship and confession and Bible study and attentiveness to Christ, your present Teacher. Colossians 3: 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. NASB Joshua 1: 8 "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you

² Richard Foster, Celebration of Discipline, p. 171-73.

will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. NKJV

- ⇒ All this will heighten your expectancy in public worship because the gathered experience of worship just becomes a continuation and an intensification of what you have been trying to do all week long. Psalm 42:1-2 As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God.2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? NKJV

Second, TRY TO LEARN HOW TO WORSHIP GOD IN MANY DIFFERENT SETTINGS OF WORSHIP.

- ⇒ Worship God when you are alone.
- ⇒ Have home groups not just for Bible study, but for the very experience of worship itself.
- ⇒ Gather little groups of two and three and learn to offer up a sacrifice of praise. Many things can happen in smaller gatherings that, just by sheer size, cannot happen in the larger experience. All of these little experiences of worship will empower and impact the larger Sunday gatherings.

Third, DETERMINE TO PREPARE FOR THE GATHERING OF THE CHURCH FOR WORSHIP.

- ⇒ Prepare on Saturday night by going to bed early,
- ⇒ by having an inward experience of examination and confession,
- ⇒ by going over the hymns and Scripture passages that will be used on Sunday,
- ⇒ by gathering early before the actual worship service and filling the room with the presence of God. Here is how you can have one of the most vital ministries at Tulsa Bible Church - Try coming ten to fifteen minutes early and sit with your Bible open in a seat here in the worship center. Start by praying for the instrumentalists that they will be aided by the Lord in ministering the worship music, then the orchestra pray around each person, then for the choir to be full of the Holy Spirit, then the soloists, ensemble and others, then for our worship leaders, then for the ministry of the Word to be Spirit empowered.
- ⇒ by letting go of inner distractions so that you can really participate.

Fourth, WILLINGLY OFFER YOURSELF TO THE LORD AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR WORSHIP.

- ⇒ That is, as an individual I must learn to let go of my agenda, of my concern, of my being blessed, of my hearing the word of God.
- ⇒ The language of the gathered fellowship is not "I," but "we."

- ⇒ There is a submission to the ways of God. There is a submission to one another in the Christian fellowship.
- ⇒ There is a desire for God's life to rise up in the group, not just within the individual. Become of one mind, of one accord.
- ⇒ cultivate a life of complete spiritual dependency. Dependency means we completely dependent upon God for anything significant to happen. The work is God's and not yours.

Fifth, GUARD YOURSELF FROM EXPOSURE TO HARMFUL VIRUSES AND RADIATION THAT KILLS WORSHIP.

- ⇒ there is no better way to erase worship than to turn on the TV when you walk in the house after church. Sunday afternoon football, and sports in general, with the incessant beer commercials and inane chatter, is a sure-fire way to flatten out-one's spiritual brain waves.
- ⇒ And the whole family will suffer - "You want daddy to look at your Sunday school paper? In a moment, son. . . at half-time maybe."
- ⇒ Men, if you're the kind who sits in church fretting because you've already missed the 1st quarter of the game and wonder when the preacher is going to end, you will rarely get anything out of the service!
- ⇒ Have you ever tried dieting your spirit? Stay away from any "Junk food" of the soul, cancer causing agents, high spiritual cholesterol than hardens your arteries?
- ⇒ Some of us are in the high skin cancer risk category. So what do we do? We stay away from exposure to those deadly UV rays. Well, all of us are prone to soul cancer that eats away at our worship so we should avoid very much exposure to TV rays. They distract, deaden and deflate the welling up of our souls in worship to God!
- ⇒ If you can't fast from TV, newspapers and magazines for a week then you are very weak and at risk spiritually.

Sixth, DROWN ALL DISTRACTIONS WITH OVERFLOWING PRAYERS OF GRATEFULNESS TO GOD .

- ⇒ If there is noise or distraction, rather than fussing and fuming about it, learn to take it in and conquer it.
- ⇒ If little children are running about, bless them. Thank God that they are alive and that they have energy.
- ⇒ Become willing to relax with distractions-they may be a message from the Lord. When I am preaching, I love to have babies and little children in the congregation because sometimes they are the only ones that I can be sure are alive! Learn simply to receive whatever happens in a gathered worship experience, rather than feeling that distractions somehow deter you from worshipping God.

Seventh, PRACTICE OFFERING ACTUAL SACRIFICES OF WORSHIP TO GOD .

⇒ Many times you will not "feel" like worship. Perhaps you have had so many disappointing experiences in the past that you think it is hardly worth it. There is such a low sense of the power of God, few people are adequately prepared. But you need to go anyway. You need to offer a sacrifice of worship. You need to be with the people of God and say, "These are my people. As stiffnecked and hard-hearted and sinful as we may be, together we *come* to God." Many times I do not feel like worshiping and I have to kneel down and say, "Lord, I don't feel like worshiping, but I desire to give you this time. It belongs to you. I will waste this time for you."

Isaac Pennington says that when people are gathered for genuine worship, "They are like a heap of fresh and burning coals warming one another as a great strength and freshness and vigor of life flows into all." One log by itself cannot burn for very long, but when many logs are put together, even if they are poor logs, they can make quite a fire. Remember the *counsel* of Proverbs 27:17 that "Iron sharpens iron," and even rather dull lives can help each other if they are willing to try.

So go, even if you don't feel like it.

Go, even if worship has been discouraging and dry before. Go, praying.

Go, expecting.

Go, looking for God to do a new and living work among you.

WHAT ARE THE FRUITS OF WORSHIP?

1. OBEDIENCE: Just as worship begins in holy expectancy, it ends in holy obedience. If worship does not propel us into greater *obedience*, it has not been worship. To stand before the Holy One of eternity is to change. Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, NKJV
2. REPENTENCE: Resentments cannot be held with the same tenacity when we enter his gracious light. As Jesus says, we need to leave our gift at the altar and go set the matter straight (Matt. 5:23, 24). In worship an increased power steals its way into the heart sanctuary, an increased compassion grows in the soul. To worship is to change. Matthew 5:23-24 "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 "leave your gift there

before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. NKJV

3. MINISTRY: Holy obedience saves worship from becoming an opiate, an escape from the pressing needs of modern life. Worship enables us to hear the call to service clearly so that we respond, "Here am I! Send me". Isaiah 6:1-8 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.³ And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.⁵ So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts."⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar.⁷ And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged."⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." NKJV