

“Genuine Worship”
Matthew 15:1-20
Sermon Series: “This Is Us”

Introduction: As we continue to examine our core values in this series, let’s evaluate whether or not our worship is genuine or hypocritical. Two of our core values relate to worship. They say:

Core Value #1: We strive to be biblically accurate and culturally relevant: The church should be biblically accurate in its preaching, teaching, and doctrine and culturally relevant through the use of current mediums such as a contemporary style of music, the arts, and multimedia.

Core Value #2: Worship is about Jesus, not externals: Worship is not a style or a ritual but a real encounter with Jesus Christ, who is worthy of our worship.

So, worship is about glorifying Jesus. It occurs in our daily lives and when we gather together corporately on Sundays. However, it is certainly possible to claim to worship Jesus and be a hypocrite instead of genuinely worshipping Him. In the passage before us today, we see Jesus confronting the Pharisees for their hypocritical worship and using it as an opportunity to teach about genuine worship. Let’s seek to understand this passage and then apply it to our lives. Hopefully, we will understand the true nature of worship and examine the genuineness of our own worship.

1. Genuine worship of Jesus is according to the Word of God and not religious tradition (v. 1-9). The Pharisees were questioning Jesus about why his disciples did not follow “the tradition of the elders” and follow the ceremonial law before eating. Jesus responded by telling them that they were breaking the Law of God. **In other words, God’s Word has to trump man-made, religious traditions.** Religions still add to or take away from the

Word of God today. One of the distinguishing marks of an evangelical Christian is the conviction that God’s Word alone is authoritative and sufficient. As applied to worship, are we genuinely worshipping according to God’s Word or has our worship become hypocritical because we have added in our own unbiblical traditions?

2. Genuine worship of Jesus is an obedient lifestyle and not religious lip service (v. 3-9). These Pharisees were mistreating their parents and using “worship” as an excuse for it. Jesus called them “hypocrites.” A genuine worshipper is obedient to God and treats other people in the right way. The root of genuine worship is loving God and others. New Testament worship is offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1).

3. Genuine worship of Jesus is from a pure heart and not through religious ceremonies (v. 8-20). The Jews thought that what they ate or did not eat, ceremonial washing, and other religious ceremonies made them right with God. However, Jesus is saying that it is not the external but the internal that is the primary issue. Worship is about the heart. Of course, the only way to have a pure heart is through Jesus forgiving us of our sins by the blood He shed on the cross. Then, as Christians, we prepare to worship by confessing our sins so we can genuinely worship.

Conclusion: Are you a genuine worshipper of Jesus? Do you have a relationship with Him? Have you repented of sin and placed your trust in Him as your Lord and Savior? Do you worship Him in your day to day life and corporately with the gathered church? Is there hypocritical worship you need to repent of? Jesus is worthy of worship, and we are created and saved to worship Him. Jesus wants to set us free from our hypocrisy and give us a genuine experience of Himself in worship.