

Series: Worship

Sermon: Worship—It's Aligning with God's Heart

Bible Passage: Isaiah 1:11-17 & Matthew 5:23-24

1. God was unimpressed with the “so-called” worship of His people (1:11b)

2. God was not pleased with their large number of sacrifices (1:11)

(a) Contrast: The multitude of **your** sacrifices—what are they to **me?**” says the LORD

(b) Though sacrifices were supposed to be “an aroma pleasing to God” (cf. Leviticus 1:9, 13, 17), God was not “pleased” with what they were offering

(c) God calls their coming to the Temple disrespectful “trampling” of His courts (1:12)

(d) God calls “meaningless offerings” “detestable incense” “evil assemblies” (1:13)

3. God was simply unhappy with a ritualistic religion that does not please Him (1:14-15)

4. A worshipper must first understand what pleases God (1:11-15)

(a) In verses 16-17, nine imperatives describe what pleases God—“wash yourselves,” “make yourselves clean,” “take your evil deeds out,” “stop doing wrong,” “learn to do right,” “seek justice,” “defend the oppressed,” “take up the cause of the fatherless,” and “plead the case of the widow”

(b) All nine of them are not related to the Temple, but they happen outside in daily life—what happens outside from Monday to Saturday

(c) The people must go through an internal change—“wash yourselves” and “make yourselves clean” (1:16)

(d) Those who are in power must treat justly the weak and vulnerable and take up the cause of the widows and fatherless (1:17)

(e) Proper worship and social ethics go hand in hand for those who desire to please God (1:17)

5. God is not saying “multitude of offerings” and “singing” are not worship, but in the absence of right-treatment of weak and vulnerable they are meaningless

6. How one treats his/her spouse, domestic helpers, in-laws, co-workers, not caring for ailing mother or father, etc., have direct effect on their worship (treatment of animals)

7. Absence of God-centered ethics will leave one's worship “meaningless” religious practice, which God does not regard with favor—they will remain “trampling” the courts of God (Matthew 5:23-24)

8. For Jesus, worship is not just coming to the place of worship with an offering

9. But, right relationship with a brother/sister precedes true worship

10. Jesus announces what pleases Him in Luke 4:18-19

11. Take Away

Treat those vulnerable and weak in your care; it is the right preparation for worship of God