

# Real Worship

**Introduction:** Here's what Jesus once said regarding the kind of worship He found among religious people:

**Mark 7:6<sup>b</sup>-7** - *'This people honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. <sup>7</sup>And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'*

This was not real worship. The lips said all the right things, but it had no connection with the heart. It was not heartfelt. It was lip service. It was not authentic worship. *'in vain they worship Me'*, Jesus said.

When asked about **the true nature of real worship**, Jesus told a woman that the Father was seeking those *who worshipped Him in Spirit and in truth* (John 4:24).

What the Father is seeking is real worship.

**Opening text: Acts 18:1-7 ESV**

## 1. Who is this man?

This is a text primarily about Paul, and it is full of names, details, and events of his ministry when he was preaching the Gospel in Corinth. Among all the information included in this chapter, a man called Titius Justus is briefly mentioned.

*<sup>7</sup>And he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue.*

Titius Justus. But who is this man? How did he end up in the Bible? What were his great deeds or notable achievements that justified being included in the book of God?

- a) We don't know anything about his occupation, his family, his background or even the outcome of his life – unlike someone like Aquila (verses 1-3).

We have a lot of information about Aquila: he was a Jew, we are told where he was born, where he came from, who his wife was, her name, and what occupation he had.

However, who is this man, Justus? – his Latin name means 'righteous' but that was quite a common name in those days. At least 3 other people in the New Testament also shared that same name.

- b) The only thing we know is that he was a worshiper of God.
- c) He probably was not someone who ever played any major strategic role in the early church, he probably did not make it to the top ten preachers of Corinth or something of the kind, **but what is amazing is that he made it to the Bible!**

Why? Why did he make it to the Bible? Because **worship will never go unnoticed!**

**He was a worshiper of God.** The second thing we know about him is that **his house was next to the synagogue.** One translation says that his house was *joined hard with the Synagogue.* The original language seems to indicate that he shared a wall with the Synagogue. He basically lived positioned to never miss the action, to never miss a service and to worship God.

**Psalm 84:10** - *For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.*

It is good to live lives attached to the presence of God – not being casual visitors or living ‘semi-detached’ from Him but strongly joined to Him. It is crucial to be real, passionate, worshipers.

## **2. Worship will never go unnoticed**

Most of us would not even notice this man’s name or even stop 10 seconds to think about Titius Justus, yet God put his name in the Bible. Heaven took notice of his devotion and recorded his worship before God.

- a) What’s heaven recording regarding your life or mine? How much of what we do is worship? How much of what I do is even worth recording?

When we come the end of our lives on earth and we finally stand before God, many of our earthly achievements will matter little. Worship, however, will never go unnoticed.

Here are David’s last words before he died, as recorded in **2 Samuel 23:1**:

*Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; Thus says the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and **the sweet psalmist of Israel***

In his last words, David didn’t mention the applause of man, his achievements in battle, the greatness of the kingdom he built. No. He knows he is about to meet his Maker and he says of himself, I am ‘*the sweet psalmist of Israel*’ – I am a worshiper!

- b) Worship will never go unnoticed!

- **Lydia**

**Acts 16:14** – “*Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God [NIV: a worshiper of God]. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.*”

Heaven recorded her worship!

- **Mary of Bethany**

**Matthew 26:13** – *“Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”*

God never forgets worship. In this case He made sure that her act of worship would end up in the Bible.

- **Cornelius**

**Acts 10:1-2 - Message translation** *“There was a man named Cornelius who lived in Caesarea, captain of the Italian guard stationed there. He was a thoroughly good man. He had led everyone in his house to live worshipfully before God”.*

- **Anna**

**Luke 2:36-38** - *Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; **37** and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. **38** And coming in that instant **she gave thanks to the Lord**, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”*

**V.38 AMP** – *‘responded in praise’*

That kind of response will never go unnoticed.

- **Jacob**

**Hebrews 11:21** - *“By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.”*

God recorded not just his faith but also his last posture of worship.

God records faith. Without it, it is impossible to please God. God reserved one chapter in the Bible to remind us of men and women of great faith. However, God also recorded their worship

In the miracles of Jesus, the faith of many who were touched was mentioned, and also their worship:

- The ruler of the Synagogue in **Mat. 9:18** – *“While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.”*
- The leper in **Mat. 8:2** – *“and behold, a leper came and worshipped Him saying, Lord if you are willing you can make me clean”*

- The woman with a demon-possessed daughter in **Mt. 15:25** – *“Then she came and worshipped Him saying, Lord help me”*

### **Food for thought**

#### **There are 5 things heaven records:**

- 1. Our faith** – Hebrews 11:1
- 2. Our tears and trials** – **Psalms 56:8** (NIV) – *O God... record my lament; list my tears on your scroll – are they not in your record?”*
- 3. Our conversations** – **Malachi 3:16** – *“Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name .*
- 4. Our names** (Luke 10:20, Hebrews 12:23)
- 5. Our worship**

What has heaven recorded about our lives?

How much of what we do is worship? How are we known in heaven before God, angels and the great cloud of witnesses?

How attached are we to the house of God and His presence?