

The Wonder of Worship – part 2

Opening text: Acts 18:1-13

Verse 7: - “And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who **worshiped God** [a worshiper of God – English Standard Version], whose house was next door to the Synagogue [joined hard to the synagogue].”

1. A certain man named Justus

Who is this man? We don't know anything about his occupation, his family, his background, or even the outcome of his life – unlike for instance, Aquila (verses 1-3). We have a lot of information about Aquila: He was a Jew, we know where he was born, where he had come from, who his wife was and what was his occupation.

However, who is this man Justus? – His name means ‘Righteous’ in Latin but that was a very common name (there are 2 other people in the NT with that name).

The only thing we know is that he was a worshiper of God (not of ‘gods’ like other Gentile Corinthians but of Jehovah God). That much we can now. And that is a big deal for God. He was a worshiper!

He probably was not someone who played a 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 he made it to the Bible!** Why? Because worship will never go unnoticed!

So, the **first** thing we know about this man is that he was a worshiper of God.

The **second** thing we know about him was that His house was next to the Synagogue.

The Bible doesn't contain accidental or irrelevant information. Perhaps this bit of information is here so we understand how central God and God's house was in his life. He lived right next to the synagogue. He basically positioned his life to serve God 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”.

The **third** thing we know about him, comes from the original Greek text that describe his house as being literally *attached* to the synagogue – probably sharing the same wall. That is why one translation says that his house was ‘*joined hard with the synagogue.*’ It is good to live lives ‘attached’ to His presence.

2. Worship will never go unnoticed.

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

As I was thinking about Justus I thought to myself: “*what has heaven recorded about me?*” “*How much of what I do is worship? How much of what I do is worth heaven recording?*”?

Worship will never go unnoticed!

There was a woman we read about in the book of Genesis who was unloved. Her name was Leah. The Bible says that God saw that she was unloved and opened her womb (Gen.29:31): she ended up having 4 sons. When she bore her 4th son, she said “*now I will praise the Lord*” and she called him **Judah**, which means **praise!**

Genesis 29:35a - *And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Now I will praise the Lord.” Therefore, she called his name Judah.*

Interestingly,

- The man named ‘Praise’ (Judah) received a greater blessing than his brothers when his father Jacob died (Genesis 49:8-12). Jacob prophesied that his brothers would praise him and that he would overcome all his enemies. It was also the tribe of Judah who led Israel through the wilderness and then in the conquest of the promised land.
- It was out of the lineage of Judah that came David and then the Messiah, Jesus!

All of that because of the praise of a woman named Leah!

Praise and worship will never go unnoticed. There are many others in the Scriptures that were mentioned in relation to their worship:

a) Lydia

Acts 16:14a – “*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].*”

Heaven recorded her worship!

b) 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 Jesus made sure that her act of worship would end up in the Bible and He made worship part of the Gospel proclamation.

c) Cornelius

Acts 10:2 - 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”.

V.4 says that his devotion went up to God as a memorial.

d) Simeon and Anna

Luke 2:25, 36-38 - 25 *And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.*

36 *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; [...] 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.

e) 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 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, but 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”)*

3. There are 5 things that 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**

Questions for personal reflection:

...A certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God...

- What has heaven recorded about my life?
- How much of what I do is worship? How am I known in heaven, before God, the angels and the ‘great cloud of witnesses?’
- How attached am I to the house of God and to the presence of God? (Do I live detached, independent, and an occasional visitor in the courts of God)?