

I want to be a Christian because I want to worship God!

➤ Intro:

→ Series:

- ! **this is the seventh lesson**, one more to go
- ! **lessons thus far:** *I want to be a Christian because* -----
 - ! #1 I love God
 - ! #2 I want to go to heaven
 - ! #3 I don't want to suffer eternal punishment
 - ! #4 I want to be strong
 - ! #5 I want to win the race
 - ! #6 I love the truth (last week)

→ This lesson:

- ! **Title:** I want to be a Christian because I want to worship God.
- ! **Purpose:** encourage each of us to reflect on our worship, recommit ourselves to be a “true worshiper” of God

➤ #1 Paul's sermon in Athens (on Mar's Hill) — God created man to be a worshipful creature

→ Story - Acts 17:16-21 Paul in Athens (rf. Scripture reading)

- ! **vs. 16** Paul's spirit provoked, seeing them worship idols
- ! **vs. 17** reasoned with the Jews (synagogue) and Gentiles (market place) every day
- ! **vs. 18** philosophers ridiculing Paul for preaching the gospel, Jesus and the resurrection
- ! **vs. 19-20** take Paul to the Areopagus (i.e., Mar's Hill), wanting to know about his teachings

- ! **! pict: Acropolis**, view from the southwest, looking northeast at the acropolis of Athens. Clearly visible in the center of the image is the Parthenon and the supporting walls of the acropolis (HolyLandPhotos.org).
 - ! The acropolis (“upper city”) is the major feature of ancient and modern Athens. It rises 300 ft. above the lower city. It is 1,050 ft. long and 420 ft. wide at its widest point.
- 2 ! **! pict: Areopagus (i.e., Mars Hill)**, looking down (west northwest) on the hill of the Areopagus from the acropolis of Athens. The barren rock hill in the center of the image is the “Areopagus” (HolyLandPhotos.org).
 - ! Mars' Hill is located 140 ft below the Acropolis. In Paul's day was the meeting place of the main governing body of the city (BiblePlaces.com).

→ Acts 17:22-31 Paul's sermon on Mar's Hill — small pict of the Areopagus on slide with Scripture

➤ → Lessons about man and worship, from Paul's sermon:

- ! #1 Paul gives us the reasons, God is worthy of our worship.
 - ! **vs. 24a** His is our Creator and Lord
 - ! **vs. 28a** in Him we live and move and exist
 - ! **vs. 29a** we are all children of God — His creation

- ! #2 Man will worship something or someone — **if not God, something else.**
 - ! **vs. 26-27** common ancestry from Adam, created by God, predetermined times (seasons) and boundaries, so that we would seek God and find Him
 - ! therefore we are **without excuse** if we disobey God, not worship Him (Rom. 1:18-20)
 - ! **man is a worshipful creature, if we reject God we will worship the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:25)**

! **illus.: sacrificing children to Molech**



! **PP - Ezek. 16:21**

! **what:** pagan god worshiped by Ammonites, adopted by Israel, sacrificing children

! **read:** "The image of Moloch was a human figure with a bull's head and outstretched arms, ready to receive the children destined for sacrifice. The image of metal was heated red hot by a fire kindled within, and the children laid on its arms rolled off into the fiery pit below. In order to drown the cries of the victims, flutes were played, and drums were beaten; and mothers stood by without tears or sobs, to give the impression of the voluntary character of the offering" (rf. Ezek. 16:21) (ISBE).

! **application:** man is worshipful, if he does not worship God as He commands, man practices idolatry



! **PP - Phil. 3:19**



! **#3 Not all worship is acceptable to God.**

! **just being religious is not good enough**

! **vs. 22** they were **very religious in all respects**, but God rejected their worship

! **application:** **just being religious** is not acceptable to God — **our religion must be that which God prescribes**

! **worshiping in ignorance is not excusable**

! **vs. 23b, 30a** their ignorant worship was a sin, rejected, they had to repent

! **illus. Israel's idolatry: Mount Sinai, worship of the golden calf (Ex. 32)**

! Moses had gone upon the mountain to get the Ten Commandments from God

! delayed

! asked Aaron to make them a god, since not know what happened to Moses

! Aaron collected gold from the people and made a golden calf

! Aaron built an alter before the calf and declared, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to the Lord"

! the people had a feast to the Lord

! the sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play, were out of control — immorality mingled with idolatry, attempting to worship God

! God became angry, intended to destroy them all

! Moses prayed, God relented

! Moses came down from the mountain and saw their immoral idolatry, angry, threw tablets down and shattered them at the foot of the mountain

! Moses punished them: burned the calf and ground it into powder, scattered over the surface of their water, made them drink it, then had the Levites kill about 3,000 men

! **application:**

! not all worship is acceptable to God — God rejected Israel worship

! Israel, made a golden calf, had a feat mingled with immorality, to worship God - God very angry, rejected their worship

! we can't just go what we "think" is right - must obey God, word



! **#4 We will be judged for the way we worship, one day.**

! **vs. 30-31** must repent and worship God as commanded, will be judged by Jesus one day (2 Cor. 5:10)

! if we try to worship God according to our own desires, He is very angry with us (e.g., Israel, golden calf); we should not expect Him to have mercy upon us at judgment

➔ **What's this mean to you?**

! we have a **greater responsibility than just being religion or just worshiping**

! our responsibility is to **worship God, as He commands**

➤ #2 What does God want from us, in worship?

→ Lesson Jesus teaches a Samaritan woman:

! **Story - Jn. 4:1-23**

- ! when the Pharisees heard that Jesus was making more disciples than John, he left Judea, went to Galilee
- ! passed through Samaria on the way to Galilee
- ! stopped at Jacob's well, outside Sychar in Samaria, talked with a woman while the apostles went into town to get food
- ! taught the woman about the water He possessed, living water, eternal life
- ! she brings up the topic of worship, and Jesus says. . . .

! **Jn. 4:21-24** God seeks **true worshipers**, worship in **spirit and truth** — **Christians, the church**

! **application:**

- ! **vs. 23** God wants our worship
- ! **vs. 24** we must worship in spirit and truth

→ **To worship in spirit, we must have the right attitude toward God and worship, and seriously apply ourselves to worship as God prescribes** — **everything we do, including our assembly.**

! with the **right heart and mind**, that **truly seeks** to worship God, we will **diligent to worship** as God commands

! **God is spirit**, and our **worship must be offered up** to God with our spirits (**Jn. 4:24**)

→ **To worship in truth, we must worship as commanded in God's word** — **everything we do, including our assembly.**

➤ ! **PP - Jn. 17:17** (God's word = truth) Sanctify them in the truth; **Your word is truth.**

! **true spiritual worship** can only be **offered up to God when in accordance with the truth** of God's word

➤ → **illus.: four categories of worship** — **only 1 correct** — **Which category are you in?**

! people who **neither worship in spirit nor truth**

- ! i.e., these people don't care about God or His will — worship what they want, the way they want
- ! e.g., 450 prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (**1 Ki. 18**) - calling Baal from morning to noon to devour the ox, jumping around, cutting themselves and bleeding on themselves
- ! after God devoured the other ox with fire, Elijah slew the 450 prophets of Baal

! people who **worship in spirit only, but not truth**

- ! i.e., people who have a deeply spiritual life, but are not worshiping according to God's word
- ! e.g., Jews who talked the talk, but didn't walk the walk — taught as commandments the traditions of men (**Mk. 7:6-9**)

! people who **worship in truth only, but not spirit** — **which truly is not possible, but makes the point**

- ! i.e., these people outwardly do the things God commands, but just going through the motions - heart and mind not devoted in their worship

! people who **worship both in spirit and truth** — **only ones pleasing to God**

- ! e.g., people who are doing the things God commands, putting all their heart and mind into what they are doing in service and worship to God
- ! **what:** fulfill the command: love God all heart, soul, mind, strength (**Mk. 12:30**)
- ! **who:** **faithful Christians**, worshiping God in everything they do, and in their assembly
- ! **I want to be a Christian because I want to worship God.**

Conclusion:

➤ → Summary:

! **application: Which of the above categories are you in?**

! you are going to worship something or someone

! the only way you can worship God and go to heaven, is be a faithful Christian

! those who worship God in spirit and truth

! those who love God, worship Him, with all their heart, soul, mind, strength

➤ → I want to be a Christian because I want to worship God.

! if you're a faithful Christian today, your worship is acceptable and pleasing to God

! if you're not a faithful Christian today, you can begin worshipping God, in spirit and truth, and you too can be pleasing and acceptable to God

→ Inv.:

! God is seeking true worshipers to worship Him today

! if you're not a true worshiper today, you can become one

! **I want to be a Christian, because I want to worship God.**

! inv.

Audio sermon notes:

! ➤ denotes the place to proceed to the next PowerPoint slide.

! All Scriptures are NASB unless otherwise noted.

! Sermons recorded 11-20-05, Church of Christ, South Livingston Avenue in Lutz, FL, Allan McNabb, BibleGuide.org.