

Intro: Begin a new series today titled “The Path” for next 6 weeks we will be looking at The Path Of Discipleship. Remember what Jesus said to most of His first 12 disciples? Follow Me!

So..what does it mean for you and I to follow Jesus...and WHY is it important?

- What it means: Means to live the way Jesus lived: At RTBC 6 specific actions
Worship Weekly, Gather in a Group, Serve On A Ministry Team, Give Generously, Share Near and Far
- Why Important: Because when we do those things we put ourselves in the place where spiritual growth most likely Now, Remember: No Guarantee. Do every single one of those...every week...NOT GROW Heart isn't right!
Illus: Can't make a plant grow and produce fruit: (*Plow ground, plant seed, fertilize, Weed, Water, Sun*)
But, if you are doing those things you are MUCH more likely to get tomatoes than if you DON'T!
So, today, let's start walking the Path of Discipleship together, And Lets Begin With Worshipping Week

The Purpose, People And Principles of Worship

1. Understand The Biblical Purposes Of Worship.

- Worship Helps us declare the WORTH of God (*Chief end and purpose of man*)

1 Chronicles 16:29 “Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name. Bring an offering and come before him; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.”

Worship: Lit = *to declare the worth of God; to prostrate oneself in honor and adoration, to exalt and uplift*

When we worship God, we are declaring His glory, His honor and His worth: For WHO He is: Not Just What He does

Illus: It is so very easy for us to forget that isn't it? We can get so caught up in what we are doing that we forget HIM When we worship weekly, and put God first in our life, before EVERYTHING else...all the rest falls in place!

You see, Worship is the Foundation of everything else! Foundation right...You can build life you desire

- Worship Helps us be more like Jesus.

Not just the byproduct of Worship changing our life...It makes us a TRUE disciple, walking in His footsteps

Luke 4:16 “Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.”

If you study the life of Jesus you find something that is very interesting. Jesus had 3 habits!

~Went off alone to pray

~Served the needs of the people by preaching and teaching

~He went up to the synagogue (temple/church) to worship

All 3 of these habits of Jesus are incorporated into the Path...Fundamental Parts of what we are aiming at!

Now, I don't know about you. But for me...as a Christian, if Jesus needed to do this...

Illus: Couple of years ago... “What would Jesus do?” What would he drive...New one...How would he vote?

I'm not smart enough to answer those questions...but I know this...*I know what He would do on Sunday!*

- Worship Puts Us In The Most Likely Place to Encounter God!

We hear all the time...I don't need to be in church to hear from God! True...Hear from Him anywhere...

But the MOST LIKELY place to hear from God is in Church!

Is 6:1-8 Greatest passage on worship in all the bible....Where was Is? In the temple!

We hear from God in at Church in many different ways.

~Sermon

Others

Quietness

~Music

Prayer

Bible Reading

Listen...You are certainly going to hear from God at other times, and in other places...

But...WW gives you a specific time, a specific place, provides the best environment possible.

When we allow that to slip...We begin the process of isolating ourselves from His voice...and it begins to fade

Illus: Where am I MOST likely to find a tomato? Ball field...or the Farmers Market (*might be there...more likely*)

Illus: New pattern: About twice a month...little more little less than 2 out of 4 (If we ATE that way...)

There are many different purposes for worship. But these help us gain the right perspective; Not OPTIONAL!!! ESSENTIAL

- Worship Helps Us Start Our Week Off With The Right Perspective. 1 Cor 16:2

One of the major differences between OT worship and NT worship is the day of week...Last Day vs First Day

There is something spiritually significant about starting your week in worship.

Here is what I think it does for us...It puts things in perspective! (God is with me, I'm not alone, He is present)

If we aren't careful, we fall into the trap of believing/living like what we see and experience at home, work, school is all there is

That's what Paul is talking to the Cor Christians about in the passage on the screen

1 Cor 16:2 “On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income...”

The Church in Jerusalem vs MY needs...

During worship...the gave...because they were reminded that their life was not the only one God was concerned about!

- Worship Keeps Us From Straying Too Far Spiritually. Is 6

Here is what I know. The times in my life when I have been furthest from God...Always when I was away from Church!

There has always been a direct connection in my life, & in 30 years of ministry, I know I'm not alone

Weekly Worship puts us back on track. It is possible to sit in the service, sing the songs, pray the prayers, give serve

But it is much harder! If I am only a little off track...and I come to worship. It pulls be back closer to God, calls me back to

My priorities, my perspective, my agenda, my plans...In worship, everything is on the table, and gets revisited

Isaiah went to worship, and everything was OK! But two things happened while he was there

~He saw God

~He saw Himself

And suddenly...the man that was perfectly fine, realized there were some changes that needed to be made. That's what worship does. It confronts us with God and our self!
Gives us His perspective, helps us see from his viewpoint...not just ours
ILLUS: Ever had that happen...Conflict, problem, in your mind, perfectly justified, Explain it, put it in words....fades

There are many purposes for going to worship regularly..What brought YOU this morning?

2. Be Aware of the PEOPLE That Are Involved in Worship, and Their Roles!

There are two statements that I hear about worship almost every week. I have to restrain myself...(I say it too BTW)

1. I didn't get anything out of that worship. Really NOT the point...What did you GIVE? Praise, Honor? Worth
2. I really loved the worship. Ummm...Who cares...It's NOT for you! Its for Him!

What we SHOULD be saying is: Today we exalted the name of God, Declared His glory and worth and honor!!!

Because, While there are 3 Essential People involved in worship...it really is about Him!

- God: God the Father the Focus of worship, God the Son is the enabler of Worship, God the Spirit empowers worship!
- Congregation: The Congregation are the Participants in worship: We are the "performers"
We don't come to GET something...we come to GIVE something! (there is a significant "overflow" not the point!)
- World: World is our witness in worship! 1 Cor 14:24 "*But if an unbeliever "inquirer" comes in while worshipping..."*
Listen to me carefully here: God is the focus of our worship...Not you and I... We are bringing Him our worship...But however we do that...we do it with an understanding that usually someone comes seeking...don't want to freak them out
Illus: Sometimes my sense of humor...isn't funny! Years ago...other building Young woman, date, brought church

3. Embrace Healthy, Biblical Practices Of Worship.

These are the specifics of worship that are both biblical...and healthy...Help you GROW...as you walk Path

- Worship Weekly unless providentially hindered

Heb 10:25 "*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching*" (command: Imperative in scripture)

In our culture we don't spend a lot of time talking about the issue of obedience with Adults. We just kind of assume that because we are adults we are always going to do the right thing. And while that may generally be true, it is also true that we need to be careful to do those things that God has explicitly directed us to do in His word. And, worshipping regularly is an important part of that.

~The pattern and command of the OT (Sabbath)

Sabbath vs Sunday (Last day of week commemorative vs First day Celebration)

~The pattern of all the NT Christians (Acts they were meeting daily..then settled down to weekly)

~The pattern of Jesus life

~The command of God in Hebrews

This is one of the most foundational elements of the Christian life...almost everything else is built on this bedrock

- Rehearse all that God has done for you! (Salvation of Course...but oh so much more!)

Acts 14:27 "*On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.*" (Illus: Desert Song) This is my song in the desert...

- Bring something personal and individual as an offering to God (Some of you hear finances...OK...So much more!)

1Co 14:26 "*What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction..."*

You bring what YOU have to offer. Maybe you don't have a single cent to offer...Illus: Praise is the offering

Maybe you bring encouragement, blessing, word of instruction to others...

Applic: What did YOU bring to the Lord today? What did you Offer?

CONCL:

- What was your Purpose today?
Who is YOUR worship for? (You...or God?) When you come...do you come to GIVE...or GET?
- Are you playing your part? Elevating God...Awareness of how what YOU do impacts Others?
- Are your HABITS healthy, biblical Habits? Regular, Connected, Coming for HIM...not Just YOU
Maybe you need to make some changes: With God's help you can.
Ask Him for that: More regular, More focus on Him, Remember His blessings