"Worship Needs Sanctuaries & Ceremonies"

The Ministry of the Spirit October 18, 2026

John 4:23-24 [23] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. [24] God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

... ***"Worship... in Spirit and Truth"!*** ...if the Father is seeking this—Shouldn't We??!!

The Great/Ultimate Expression of the Ministry of the Spirit through us is "WORSHIP"! ...The Spirit provides the "Beyond Us" Enablement that Correctly Orients Our Lives Around the Creator!
...Worship (Pt. 1) - "One & Done" (Placing God and no other in the unique category of 'worship'. ...Worship (pt. 2) - "Worship Needs Sanctuaries & Ceremonies" ...Worship (Pt. 3) - "Worship is an All of Life Thing"

...In the Next 2 weeks: I want to clarify **the phrase, "All of Life is Worship"** ...by examining how the Bible presents our worship in 2 significant categories-- (1) In the Everyday of Life (next week) and (2) in the Sanctuaries & Ceremonies of Scripture

...This week I want to start with another person we spent some time with at the beginning of our journey--a man named Asaph

Ps 73 [A Psalm of Asaph]

v. 1-2 ...Asaph has a real walk with God (God has used him! ...He's been in Ministry a Long Time! ...He was a leader on the Great Day that Solomon dedicated the Temple and the Presence of the Lord came and overwhelmed the place!)

v. 3-15, 21-22 ...But he enters a season that is confusing, disturbing, and disorienting! ...the vocabulary words that describe him in this season include: "envious of the ungodly" ... "in vain have I kept my heart clean" ... "all day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning" ... "my soul was embittered, I was pricked in heart; I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you."

...Can you relate to there being moments in our lives where our "Certainty About God" gets significantly disrupted by the Confusion and UNCERTAINTIES of This Life!??

"Mary sat in my office and said, "I'm discouraged, angry and envious." She talked of watching her life come unraveled as she lost her husband, her home, and even her children. Mary came from a good church and knew the Scriptures. But her situation made no sense to her. She said, "I have no reason to get up in the morning." She talked of her jealousy toward people who seemed to do "whatever they pleased," and yet all went well with their lives. ...Most of all she struggled with anger toward God. "How can He say that He loves me?," she cried. "Is this the abundant life He promised? I really thought that He would meet all my needs, and here I am—with nothing! I can't read my Bible, I can't pray, I can't make it through a church service without tears or anger. I look at my life, and I look at the promises of Scripture, and it doesn't seem to add up. I'm no better off than the average non-Christian." **Paul David Tripp**, "Keeping Destiny in View"

"...remember that Psalm 73 is a psalm, a poem about life's most significant relationship: relationship with God. In the Psalms, the wide range of the expressions of the soul is exposed—from joy and peace to confusion and anger—as writers respond to God in the midst of various life circumstances. ... Psalms such as this one bring balance to the way that we think about the blessing and prosperity promised us in other Scriptures. They expose ways in which "Rejoice always" or "God is in control" can become numbing platitudes rather than a hard-won, deep-seated confidence. The laments cause our relationship with God to be honest, and they confront us with our own struggle to understand the mysteries of His goodness. They bring a humble integrity to the way that we share His promises with those who suffer. The experience of the believer is not neat and easy blessing. Rather, the soul responds to redemptive turmoil lovingly administered by a God who is truly good." **Paul David Tripp**, "Keeping Destiny in View"

... **"redemptive turmoil"** - that's a rich & real theological phrase! (The "now-not-yet" still has corruption, hostility, suffering, and Satan at work in it! ...We shouldn't expect life's goodness to be "neat, easy, and automatic"!!)

The Mysterious Grip of the Fallen World—Needs to Be Met by another Mysterious Encounter!

Ps 73:16-17 [16] But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, [17] **until I went into the sanctuary of God**; then I discerned their end.

Worship Needs Sanctuaries & Ceremonie ("Settings & Stimulus")

...From Eden to Bethel to Mt. Sinai to the Tabernacle/Temple to the Incarnation to Church ...God designed into His World "Sanctuaries & Non-Sanctuaries"—and the Sovereign Creator is present in each of them ...but differently!

...For example: "The Presence of God" is a concept. What do you do, when you "see" in Scripture the "Omni-presence" of God (that truly God is present everywhere); or even the "Indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit" (God is always with us). ...Does this "principle/truth" negate or cancel the "principle/truth" of the MANIFEST PRESENCE of GOD??

...The Tabernacle is a Meaning-Laced Ceremony! ...I "need" everything that it is saying! (The ceremonies and the furnishings form a "liturgy" that helps us "perceive" the Nearness of God)

- A Unique Location & Event (the Tabernacle/Temple were their own 'special place'—not a common part of my regular routine.) ...**You had to 'disrupt' and 'adjust' your routine and 'intentionally' engage the Temple! ...It 'cost' you something**—It's MAIN GOAL was NOT Convenience, but SUBSTANCE!

  BEWARE: of How our "ease, convenience, and technological American Lifestyles" have minimized the "Adjusting/Disruptive Element of the Liturgy of Church"

  …Famous "fastest services" … "seeker sensitive" means minimum adjustments presented …On-line church" means you can stay in your pj's

  …We are Undermining the Very Unique Design God Knew We NEEDED! (a "Significant Disruption" that requires us to be "ALL-IN" and creates opportunities for Real EXCHANGE with the Presence of God!)

- Particular Ceremonial Stimulus/Meanings
  - **Corporate Reasons to Go to the Tabernacle** (3 Annual Festivals) Feast of Passover (the Exodus: freedom through judgment) ...Feast of Pentecost (Firstfruits; Giving of the Law) ...Feast of Booths (autumn harvest; wilderness wandering)
  - **Personal Reasons to Go** (Sin offerings ...Thank offerings ...Child born/dedicated ...Vows ...House of Prayer)
  - **Furnishings of the tabernacle** ...Bronze Altar (Atonement; sacrifice) ...Bronze Laver (cleansing; sanctification) ...Table of Showbread (God's provision & fellowship; bread of the presence) ...The Lampstand (Divine enlightenment) ...Altar of Incense (prayer, intercession). [The Holy of Holies - the Manifest Presence of God: ...The Ark of the Covenant (the footstool of God's Throne; Sovereign Lord of His people) ...The Mercy Seat (Judgment absorbed by sacrifice)

  BEWARE: of How our "busy minds" cannot slow down enough to be "all-in" that moment (we lack heart and mind in the engagement of "praise", "thanks", "confession/repentance", "affection/delight", "listening/learning", etc.)

Real Life NEEDS Real, Heart-Engaged, Life-Disrupting Liturgy

Ps 73:1-2 [1] Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. [2] But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped.

...There is a REALITY to who God is that is only perceived by a particular heart posture! ...Liturgy & Location, Settings & Ceremonies are designed to HELP Our Heart be Postured to Perceive!!

...Fallen World Conditions (FWC) are Real and they are Powerful—Even for the Asaph's Among us!

Ps 73:16-17 [16] But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, [17] **until I went into the sanctuary of God**; then I discerned their end.

...There is some much welcomed "MYSTERY" in this experience. ...What exactly happened? Yes, there was symbol & ceremony, there was recalling of things learned, there was thinking & reasoning ...But there was also the Mystery of the Manifest Presence of God (The Ministry of the Holy Spirit)!!

Ps 73:23-28 [23] Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. [24] You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. [25] Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. [26] My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. [27] For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. [28] But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord my God my refuge...

...Clearly, there is a "Setting" in this "Encounter"—but there is MORE than that!! ...There is a PRESENCE (a "nearness", a mysterious exchange) **...and This is By God's Design!!**

Ex 25:1, 8 [1] The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him... [8] And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst."

Ex 25:21-22

Ex 40:33-35, 38 [33] And he erected the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

[34] Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. [35] And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ...38 For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys."

Acts 2:1-3

...This Old Cov. at Mt. Sinai could have simply been about their "Being a Nation" (an established people identity on earth)**, about them behaving morally in agreement with the character of God's nature ...but God reveals THIS unique purpose—"That I May DWELL in their midst"** (ie, our Interaction with the Presence of God—with all the "Settings & Ceremonies" that help that to be engaged & experienced by us!)

"Our basic thesis is that the Triune God desires to have a personal, encountering relationship with his people and enters into creation in order to facilitate that relationship. Thus the Bible begins with God's presence relating to his people in the garden (Genesis) and ends with God's presence relating to his people in the garden (Revelation)." **Scott Duvall, Daniel Hays,** *God's Relational Presence: The Cohesive Center of Biblical Theology* – p. 1

... "a personal, encountering relationship with his people"—That's Different than "Religious Awareness" ...religious knowledge and routines were NOT Enough for the Woman at the Well or Asaph the Worship Leader!—The NEARNESS of God was Needed!

Worship's Sanctuaries & Ceremonies

- A Liturgy of Location (disrupt your routines and locations and be present)
- A Liturgy of Gathering (require yourself to 'join others'—w/ all the impact this brings)
- A Liturgy of Preparation ("pure in heart" - real, honest, responsiveness to the holiness of God)
- A Liturgy of Seeking (Ps 27:4 "One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I SEEK...")

  …Seek the Mysterious Presence of God (the filling & falling upon of the Holy Spirit; the impartation of faith, boldness, hope, courage; the piercing of conviction; the awakening of new insights)
- A Liturgy of Praise (see and celebrate the greatness and faithfulness of God)

  …STOP avoiding or marginalizing the SINGING Portion of Our Liturgy!!
- A Liturgy of Thanks (be mindful of what God is/has been doing in your life and don't miss opportunities to let God know you noticed!)
- A Liturgy of Prayer (come 'burn your incense' in the presence of God ...don't just attend ...intercede ...)
- A Liturgy of Serving (require yourself to engage the settings of God as a servant)
- A Liturgy of the TITHE (an intentional, inconvenient, costly act that INVITES the Activity of God… and protects the Soul from the darkness of Ps 73!)