Hindrances To Acceptable Worship

Intro: God expects us to worship Him in an acceptable way. Jesus taught we are to worship the Father in spirit and in truth; John 4:23-24 “23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” Let us consider some things that might hinder acceptable worship.

I. NOT IN SPIRIT
A. We must worship with the proper attitude.
   1. This is what the “in spirit” has reference to; John 4:23-24 “23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
   2. Mat. 15:8 “8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.”
B. Where is our mind centered?
   1. If it is not centered upon God but other things.
   2. Some might be there as a spectator, critic, etc.
   3. We might allow our minds to wander.

II. NOT ACCORDING TO TRUTH
A. Our worship is to be according to truth.
   1. John 4:23-24 “23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
   2. Truth is revealed in God’s Word; John 17:17 “17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
B. When we get away from Truth (God’s Word) regarding our worship.
   1. Mat. 15:9 “9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”
   2. Partial error is still error.
      a. Counterfeit bills
      b. Rat poison is said to be 98% good ingredients, but the 2% bad kills the rats.
C. God’s Word authorizes five (5) avenues through which we worship Him.
   1. Singing
      a. Eph. 5:19 “19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”
      b. Col. 3:16 “16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
   2. Lord’s Supper
      a. Acts 2:42 “42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
      b. Acts 20:7 “7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”
   3. Prayer
      a. Acts 2:42 “42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
b. 1 Cor. 14:15 “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

4. Contribution

a. 1 Cor. 16:1-2 “Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

b. 2 Cor. 9:6-7 “But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

5. Preaching

a. Acts 2:42 “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

b. Acts 20:7 “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

III. SERVING THE DEVIL

A. We are to worship and serve God.

1. John 4:23-24 “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeth such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

2. Mat. 4:8-10 “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

B. We cannot worship God acceptably when we are living like the devil.

1. Mat. 6:24 “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

2. Mat. 12:30 “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”

IV. LACK OF FAITH

A. Exo. 4:31 “And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.”

B. Do we have the faith to worship God regularly?

1. That faith will cause us to love God foremost; Mat. 22:37 “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”

2. Mat. 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

V. LACK OF HUMILITY

A. Luke 18:10-14 “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”
B. **Pro. 6:16-17** “These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

VI. **WRONG ATTITUDE TOWARD A BROTHER**

A. **Mat. 5:23-24** “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

B. **Mat. 18:15-17** “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

VII. **ROBBERY OF GOD**

A. **Mal. 3:8-9** “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.”

B. **No one can worship acceptably and rob God at the same time.**

1. **1 Cor. 16:1-2** “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

2. **2 Cor. 8:5** “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; 5 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. 6 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; 7 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 8 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.”

VIII. **LACK OF REVERENCE**

A. **1 Cor. 11:27, 29** “Wherefore whatsoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.”

B. **If it is in spirit, it will be in reverence.**

Conclusion: When Cain did not worship in an acceptable way, God rejected him. However, God promised that if Cain did well, he would be accepted. When we do well (worshipping acceptably), God will accept us. Let us make sure we do not allow anything to hinder our worship.