

Title: The True Spirit of Christmas

Passage: Luke 1:46-50

Introduction

Question:

What is the right response to Christmas?

What is the true "Christmas spirit"?

- Worship!

Context of Passage: Luke 1:26-45

Luke 1:26

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,

- sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy of John the Baptist.

Luke 1:41

And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit,

Luke 1:43

And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Luke 1:44-45

For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

Passage: Luke 1:46-50

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

Introduction

What is the true "Christmas spirit"?

- Worship.

EXPOSITION

Overview

I. Origin of True Worship

II. Object of True Worship

III. Otherness of True Worship

IV. Overflow of True Worship

I. Origin of True Worship

- The Heart

Luke 1:46-47

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

- soul / spirit = whole inner being = heart
 - True worship begins from within (not external)

Superficial worship is not acceptable by God

Matthew 15:7-9

You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

Isaiah 29:13

And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men,

2 Chronicles 25:2

And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not with a whole heart.

God looks at the heart

1 Samuel 16:7

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

2 Chronicles 16:9

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars."

Heart is of utmost importance

Deuteronomy 6:4-6 (first: internal)

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

Deuteronomy 6:7-9 (second: external)

You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- True worship comes from a heart that is so consumed by the wonder of God that wells up into external/outside.

John 4:21-24

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 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. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

Where does a heart of worship comes from?

Ezekiel 36:25-27

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

- A true heart of worship comes from God's work within

John 1:12-13

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

How do we have a true heart of worship?

- through the Holy Spirit.

John 3:3-8

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Psalms 51:10, 12

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me... Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

II. Object of True Worship

- Focuses on who God is and Who He has revealed Himself to be.

Luke 1:46-47

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

Who is the Lord?

Psalms 86:5

For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.

Quote (A.W. Tower):

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.

The history of mankind will probably show that no people has ever risen above its religion, and man's spiritual history will positively demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God. Worship is pure or base as the worshiper entertains high or low thoughts of God.

For this reason the gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like.

We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God."

John 12:32

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

In God my Savior

- Worshipping God as personal savior
- Song: "Amazing Grace"

III. Otherness of True Worship

- Humility

Luke 1:48a

for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

- True worship is from a heart that is marked by a true understanding of who we are

Matthew 5:3

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

James 4:6

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Luke 1:48b

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

- Only by God's grace and mercy are we found!

Romans 12:3

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

Luke 1:49

for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

- Our humility is from a right understanding of who we are in light of the greatness of God.

Questions of Reflection: Are you a humble person?

- Are you critical of others?
- Are you sensitive to criticism of others?
- Are you ungrateful?
- Are you unthankful?

Matthew 11:29

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Book: Humility - True Greatness (C.J. Mahaney)

IV. Overflow of True Worship

- Having God's heart for others

Luke 1:50

And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

- Quotes from Psalm 103

Psalms 103:17

But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children,

- What God is doing in us and around us is not just for us alone but for others ("for those...")

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

"People Need the Lord"

Everyday they pass me by I can see it in their eyes
Empty people filled with care
Headed who knows where

On they go through private pain
Living fear to fear
Laughter hides their silent cries
Only Jesus hears

People need the Lord, people need the Lord
At the end of broken dreams, He's the open door
People need the Lord,
people need the Lord
When will we realize people need the Lord?

We are called to take His light
To a world where wrong seems right
What could be too great a cost
For sharing life
with one who's lost?

Through His love our hearts can feel
All the grief they bear
They must hear the words of life
Only we can share

Application

Are you a true worshipper of God?

Does your worship proceed from your heart?

Is your worship for God for who He is and who He has revealed Himself to be?

Is your worship marked by true humility / a humble heart (recognize your desperate unworthiness and desperate need for God's mercy)?

Is your worship marked by passion for salvation for the lost / God's heart for the lost?

Romans 10:13-15

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"