

“Sister Act”

(Luke 10:38-42)

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I. Introduction

A. My toughest Sunday

1. The story of friends
 - a. The problem
 - b. Eastern Orthodoxy
 1. Claim they are the unbroken link to the first church
 2. A “mystic feeling” of worship
 3. At the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem
 - a. Incense
 - b. Robes
 - c. Icons
 - d. Chants
2. Why did they drift away?
 - a. Well schooled
 1. They knew the Bible
 2. My frustrating conversations with them
 - b. What led to their craving for something else?
 - c. Had we fallen short?

- d. Always search for the kernel of truth
- 3. Was there something wrong with our style of worship?
- 4. My quest for authentic worship
 - a. It changed our church
 - b. Encouragement from Lionel Seger....nearly 90 years old
 - 1. Retired missionary from the Sudan
 - 2. His encouragement to me

B. Last week....The Good Samaritan

- 1. We saw the need to *Speak the truth in love*
- 2. When truth is presented without love...it becomes:
 - a. *Harsh*
 - b. *Hypocritical*
 - c. *Holier than thou*
- 3. Response from people

“My daughter has been affected by the 3 H’s you mentioned in your sermon. So much so, that she is turning to other religions right now, mainly Buddhism. She still believes in Jesus, but really hesitates to say so because of the negative feelings she has about Christianity. I appreciated your message yesterday, because I could go home and talk to her about the 3 H’s. I found a copy of “True Spirituality” by Schaeffer and ordered it. True spirituality is really what her seeking is about right now.”

“My son has a negative taste in his mouth about Christianity, but does believe in Jesus. He has also experienced all the three H’s you mentioned yesterday, mainly from his Christian friends.”

- 4. Get your kids out of such churches
 - a. Lest they walk away from Christ, or
 - b. Lest they become like the people they saw

5. The damage done is a form of spiritual child abuse
 - a. Apology to kids needed
 - b. One man to his grandson
6. My vision for Chapel Pointe
7. Today...let's talk about worship

C. But first, a little of my background

1. I was taught a lot of good things growing up in the church:
 - a. The Bible
 - b. Serving
 - c. Giving
 - d. Evangelism
2. But worship was seldom emphasized
3. *"It's not what you teach that people remember, but what you emphasize"*
 - a. Worship wasn't explained or emphasized
4. A.W. Tozer

"Worship is the missing jewel in modern evangelicalism. We're organized, we work, we have our agencies. We have almost everything, but there's one thing that the churches, even the gospel churches, do not have: that is the ability to worship. We are not cultivating the art of worship. It's the one shining gem that is lost to the modern church, and I believe that we ought to search for this until we find it."

5. There are consequences when worship is incomplete
 - a. People start searching for something more
 - b. And often stumble into error

D. Pastors looking for the secret to church growth

1. Copy what others are doing...but 10 years too late
 - a. Adding a praise band
 - b. Coffee in the gathering area
 - c. Preacher in jeans
 - d. Power point and video
 - e. Chairs instead of pews
2. All of those can be helpful
3. But there's something much more profound

E. Jesus explained it to three women

1. The first woman was considered an outcast
 - a. She was one of those dreaded Samaritans
2. The “*woman at the well*” and discussion about worship
3. John 4:20....She said to Jesus:

(20) Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.

- a. Jesus responded (John 4:21-22)

(21) Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. (22) You Samaritans worship what you do not know: we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

- b. Then this blockbuster (John 4:23)

(23) Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Fathers seeks.

4. “Spirit” doesn't refer to the Holy Spirit but to the human spirit.
 - a. Jesus' point here is that a person must worship not simply by external conformity to religious rituals but inwardly with the proper heart attitude.

- b. When worship is just going through the motions
- 5. “Truth” refers to worship of God consistent with the revealed Scripture.
 - a. Be careful lest you be deceived by emotions
- 6. True worship must have both spirit and truth

II. Text...Luke 10:38-42

A. Let’s meet two sisters with a problem

1. The Devoted Sister (Luke 10:38-39)

(38) As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. (39) She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said.

- a. Had a brother named Lazarus
- b *“sat at the Lord’s feet”*
 - 1. A position of love
 - 2. An acknowledgement of his superior position
 - 3. A position of worship
- c. *“listening to what he said”*
 - 1. Mary was riveted to his words
 - 2. Soaking up all she could
 - 3. Didn’t want to miss a thing
- d. She worshiped Jesus in spirit and in truth

2. The Distracted Sister (Luke 10:40)

(40) But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself?” Tell her to help me!”

- a. Think “Martha Stewart”
 - 1. Gift of hospitality
 - 2. There’s nothing wrong with hospitality and serving
- b. Two totally different temperaments
- c. Her problems
 - 1. **“distracted with much serving”**
 - a. Literally means, **“to be dragged away”**
 - 2. Jesus said, **“you’re worried and upset about many things”**
 - 3. She grumbled about doing all the work
 - a. I Peter 4:9
 - “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.”**
 - b. Martha lost the joy of serving
 - 4. She accused Jesus of not caring that she was stuck doing all the work
 - 5. She was pushy enough to tell Jesus what to do
 - a. **“Tell her to help me!”**
- d. Jesus rebuked Martha instead of Mary

3. The Disappointed Savior (Luke 10:41-42)

(41) “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, (42) but the one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better and it will not be taken away from her.”

- a. Choosing what is better
 - 1. Time with Jesus
 - 2. The “one thing”

- a. Loving worship
- b. A 24/7 opportunity
- 3. The importance of the “worship service”
 - a. The “one thing”
 - b. More than teaching
- b. Worship can be more difficult than serving
 - 1. Oswald Chambers
 - “*The severest discipline of a Christian’s life is to learn how to keep ‘beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.’*”
- c. What I...as a father...want from my children...
 - 1. Service without love is slavery
- d. What’s distracting you this morning?

B. We’ll see Mary and Martha again next week

- 1. *Palm Sunday*
- 2. The night before
 - b. Wait till you see what happened then

III. Understanding Worship

A. What is Worship?

- 1. Greek.... “*proskuneo*”
 - a. “to prostrate oneself in homage”
- 2. Zondervan’s Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible
 - a. “The English word ‘worship’ comes from the old English ‘worthship’”
 - b. “Worthy” to be loved

3. Worship is:

a. Acknowledgment

1. The truth about who Jesus is
 - a. And what he did for you
2. Mary acknowledged Jesus deserved her love
 - a. Kneeling at his feet
3. In Revelation 5 the angelic hosts sing:

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain”
4. The orphan and the fireman’s hands

b. Appreciation

1. Mary was thanking Jesus for who he was
2. To express our appreciation that he loves us
3. Loved us enough to die for us

c. Adoration

1. Mary adored Jesus
 - a. She wanted to be near the one she loved
2. Remember the greatest commandment?
 - a. *Mark 12:30.... “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”*
3. The Masters.....Jack Nicholas at age 46
 - a. His book on golf
 - b. Chapter one....keep your eye on the ball

1. If this is missing....go back to chapter one
4. Our worship must include “adoration”
5. If you are not head over heels in love with God....forget about the next chapter
6. His words to Peter... “but do you love me???”
7. How much do you love Jesus?

d. Authority

1. Worship and submitting to the will of God
2. Unconditional surrender
 - a. Japan and WWII
 - b. On the deck of the USS Missouri
3. Raising your hands in surrender
4. Giving God operational authority over your daily life
5. He paid for that right

B. Why Worship?

1. Worship isn't optional

- a. Note the first five commandments (Ex. 20:1-11)

“And God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God

- b. The greatest commandment...Matt. 22:36-38

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment”

c. Worship is not optional in the Christian life

2. *Service devoid of worship is tedious*

a. Remember when you first fell in love....

1. With her every hour
2. Gave gifts
3. Talked endlessly on the phone
4. Would do anything to help her
5. Bragged about her to your friends
6. Waiting for a “love letter”

*my summer in Florida

b. But if you don’t love somebody.....breaking up with Ruth Ann

1. How do I get out of this?
2. Don’t want to be around them
3. Don’t want to give them gifts
4. Don’t want to call them
5. Don’t want to help them
6. Don’t brag about them
7. Love letters..... “Return to sender!”

c. If you love God with all your heart, you’ll gladly:

1. Spend time with him
2. Give gifts
3. Want to talk to Him
4. Will do anything for Him

5. Will want to tell others about Him

6. Devour his love letters

d. But if you don't.....

e. When a man is cheating on his wife...

1. She knows

2. He may be there at home:

a. But his love is gone

b. He loves somebody else

3. Words to Debby....there is always another woman!

f. Are you cheating on God??

1. Sitting in church today:

a. Expect God to be thrilled

b. Yet you've been loving somebody else all week

c. Like an unfaithful husband returning home

2. God knows if you love another

3. *Worship is our primary responsibility in life*

a. Are you "fit for service?"

1. Not if you don't love Him!

2. Worship must precede service

b. Oswald Chambers

"Worshipping God is the great essential of fitness. If you have not been worshipping....., when you get into work you will not only be useless yourself, but a tremendous hindrance to those who are associated with you."

d. Alexander McLaren

“There must be the inward worship within the shrine if there is to be outward service.”

e. True worshipers are willing to sacrifice all

f. It is our primary responsibility

4. Jesus deserves to be worshiped

a. He alone is “worthy”

b. Let me introduce you to Jesus in Revelation 5:1-14 (NKJV)

(1) And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. (2) Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” (3) And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

(4) So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. (5) But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

(6) And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. (7) Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

(8) Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. (9) And they sang a new song saying:

“You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, (10) and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”

(11) Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousands of thousands, (12) saying with a loud voice:

*“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain
To receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength
And honor and glory and blessing!”*

(13) And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

(14) Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.