

ADVENT CONSPIRACY #5: "WORSHIP FULLY"

Review

- "Worship Fully" - "Spend Less" - "Give More" - "Love All".
- Giving suggestions to love those in need: York Rescue Mission; New Hope Ministries; missionaries. Also: Messiah College's Collaboratory - providing economical clean water in Honduras. (Make checks out to "CVC", memo "Clean Water"; Cash – in a envelope "Clean Water")

The Foundation of our Giving and Loving - Worship

- More than loving another – it's loving God. God is being worshiped.
 - ▶ *Ephesians 1:4-5* "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will."
- Worship never begins with us. It always begins with God. God always makes the first move – as Creator, Revealer, Redeemer, Friend. He loves first . . . he speaks first . . . he acts first.
 - ▶ *1 John 4:19* "We love because he first loved us."
- God's initiating love to us reaches a climax in the coming of Jesus.

First Christmas Examples of Worship

- 1. Joseph** – The angel tells him that Mary's child "is from the Holy Spirit. . . and he will save his people from their sins" Mat. 1:20-21.
 - ➔ Joseph responded: (vs. 24) "He did what the Lord commanded him" – which was to not divorce Mary but to take her as his wife.
 - ➔ **The pattern is Revelation > Need/Longing > Worship**
- 2. Mary** – Angel: She will bear a son who "will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end" (Luke 1:32-33). ➔ Her submissive response is (vs. 38): "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said." ➔ Song: Luke 1:46-49 "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior . . ."
- 3. Zechariah** - God had taken away his speech because he doubted God's ability to give his wife a child. (*Sometimes God's revelation is given with tough love, and it can be quite sober and painful to hear. But the goal is always his glory and his love to us.*) God's revelation met with his need to exalt the God whom he had doubted, and he longed to surrender to the miracle-working God who took away and then restored his voice. ➔ Luke 1:67 - Zechariah was "filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied". He proclaimed that Jesus was coming "to give his people the

knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins . . . to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." Luke 1:77-79 ➔ This was the worship of being willing to be used as God's voice to others.

- 4. Angels** – Jesus was going to be "good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:10-11 ➔ They, too, have waited for this day to come, and they respond with shouts of great joy: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:14)
- 5. Jewish Shepherds** – They hear the angels' message. ➔ "Let's go and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." ➔ Luke 2:17 "When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them." This was the worship response of joy and witness.
- 6. Non-Jewish Astrologers** - Saw something unusual in the sky. (God uses all kinds of ways to speak to people just as they are – even astrologers!) ➔ Matthew 2:11 ". . . they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh." Worship of physical posture (bowed down) and gifts - gold for currency; frankincense for perfume, and myrrh for an anointing oil.

➔ *Each heard or experienced something true about Jesus – and it touched a need, a longing, in their soul. And they didn't just think it was interesting – it moved their hearts – and they worshipped.*

- *They worshipped through their posture, through their words, through giving gifts, through song, through submission and obedience, through their witness to the world, through believing in the revelation – and that vanquished their fears.*

Personal Application

- What is your response to seeing Jesus?
- We have so much more revelation than these people had! We have his teachings, his life, his death, his resurrection, his Holy Spirit, the witness of his resurrected life in the early church, and the power of his gospel to the lost and the hurting and the confused.
- He, alone, of all religious leaders, is to be worshiped! Mat.14:33; 28:9.
- To be a worshiper, three things must happen.
 1. *You must encounter truth about Jesus* – Bible, Spirit, a Christian
 2. *You must be aware of your need and longing for God.* Don't hide your pain, needs or hopes. Allow yourself to feel - and seek him.
 3. *You must respond to God* – What worship response is God calling you to today? What longing does he want to satisfy? What does he want to save you from? . . . or rule in you?