**TOPIC: OUR LIFE STYLE, OUR WORSHIP**

**KEY TEXT: JN 4:24**

**INTRODUCTION**

**MEANING OF THE WORD ‘LIFE STYLE’**

Our life style generally refers to the way we live our lives on daily basis. It covers our thoughts, words, habits, character and gestures, dressing patterns, social ethics (relationship with people) and consequently, our entire personality.

**MEANING OF WORSHIP**

When we talk about worship, we are referring to ‘that reverence, awe, honour, adoration complete and total surrender that stems from the heart (spirit of man) which is totally centered on God. It is not just an act, it is a mind disposition. As a matter of fact, it is a ***certain mind disposition we have towards God that makes us behave towards Him in a certain way that shows sincere and complete reverential fear, full of love***. This mindset eventually, over time affects how you think, what you think, say, wear, do with your body or personal possessions and even the way you see or relate with other people.

Man was created to give God pleasure, to worship God. Rev 4:11. This makes it very important that our worship of God must be total, 100%. There is no middle ground. He would not share His glory with anyone. Isa 42:8 Secondly, for it to be accepted, it has to be God’s way or no other way. And God’s ordained way of worship as revealed in the word is that it must be ***in spirit and in truth.*** Jn 4:24

**WORSHIP, OUR LIFE STYLE (**Jn 4:24, Rom 12:1-2)

From the definition of worship, you can see that worship is more than just bowing down to God with eyes full of tears in a church service or personal prayers. It is actually more than that. It is a life that completely glorifies, honours, reverences God with everything. This reflects in the thoughts, actions, habits, character, our dressing and even in the way an individual relates with other people. Gen 39:9. It is a life that has God at the centre of it.

**HOW TO WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUT**H

God is a Spirit so we must worship Him in the spirit. He is not in this physical realm with us. He cannot be found in the natural realm. So to reach Him in His realm, our spirit who can access the unseen realm would have to do it. Man is a spirit, he has a soul and lives in a body.We worship God with our spirit, the real us. Heb 4:12, 1 Thes 5:23.The following is how to worship God in the spirit.

1. To worship God in spirit and in truth, our entire being must be rooted in Christ, aligned with the word of God and the Spirit of God. (WE MUST BE BORN AGAIN) and in constant fellowship with the word and the Spirit of God.) Jn 4:24 tells us that God seeks such to worship Him.
2. Worshipping God in tongues. Phil 3:3
3. Worship that stems from knowledge of the word of God.Jn 4.21-24, Jn 6:63
4. Living a life of continuous study of God’s word. Jn 6:63, Jn 17:17
5. Worship in songs/prayer orchestrated and sustained by the Spirit of God not in the flesh. Phil 3:3, Gal 5:16-18
6. Total confidence in God. Phil 3:3, Gal 5:16-18
7. Presenting our body and every area of life. Rom 12:1-2
8. Making conscious and conscientious effort to renew your mind. Rom 12:2
9. Lifting up hands in worship. 1 Tim 2:8,1 Pet 2:5,Psm 141:2
10. It involves dancing in the spirit, rejoicing, shouting, laughing, and running that is inspired by the Spirit. Heb 13:15, Psm 126:1-3, Psm 2:4
11. The emphasy of New Testament worship is to be being filled with the spirit. It is to be continually filled with the Spirit. Eph 5:18-21, 3:20
12. It involves speaking in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Eph 5:19
13. Giving God thanks/praise continually. 1Thess 5:18
14. Living daily in the presence of God. Matt 28:20

Worship is not singing in low tunes, slow tempos or even singing some kind of special songs. **IT IS THE TOTALITY OF OUR SERVICE TO GOD.** If our daily lives is not in Christ, do not align with the word of God and is not being led by the Spirit of God, we have no basis to go before God as worshippers talk less of leading others in public worship even when we are born again. This means very clearly that no unbeliever can worship God in spirit and in truth. This is because their spirits are dead and are not in contact with God in the first place, (Spiritual death). **OUR EVERYDAY LIVES (24/7) MUST BE LIVED INTENTIONALLY AS A LIVING SACRFICE UNTO GOD AS OUR REASONABLE WORSHIP**. Rom 12:1. This already signals that it must be done in faith because many things would stand in the way.

The communication flow must be undistorted always, living not with sin consciousness but with that which portrays that we are the righteousness of God in Jesus, those who can always come boldly to the throne of grace anytime because their conscience is purged with pure water. Heb 10:22 The worshipper must be one who would be living every moment in constant fellowship knowing that God is inside of them to stay forever. Not waiting until church worship time before truly communicating with their father.

So with this, one can say that our public worship to a very large extent would betray or rather reveals how much relationship or ‘***koinonia’*** we have with the father in the secret. If we do not have that ‘***koinonia’*** with Him, then let us not wonder why our worship sections are dry, very dry, devoid of the manifest presence of the Spirit who is here to stay with us forever.

**TOPIC: MINISTERING TO THE LORD**

**KEY TEXT: ACTS 13:2**

**INTRODUCTION:**

**MEANING OF THE WORD MINISTER**

The word ministering is the present continuous form of the word minister. The word minister can either be a noun or a verb. As a noun among other things the word minster refers to,

* A person who serves Heb 1: 7,14 Exo 24:13,
* One officiating or assisting the spiritual head of a church service. Exo 24:13,
* A clergyman or clergy woman in charge of a church/ministry as a spiritual head. Heb 8:2, 1 Tim 4:6, Exo 29:44 (Aaron and his sons), Rom 15:8 (Jesus). 16 , Eph 3:7, Col 1:25 (Paul), Eph 6:21(Tychichus), Col 1:7 (Epaphras), 1 Thes 3:2 (Timothy)
* A high officer of state entrusted with the management of a division of government activities. Eg the minister of Petroleum.

As a verb, predominantly, the word minister means:

* Give service or aid, attend, as to wants or necessities of another. Exo 28:1, 3,4, Lev 7:35, Rom 15:25, 27, 11 Cor 8:4, Phil 2:25 11 Tim 1:18, Heb 6:10
* Acting as a servant who serves. 1 Cor 4:1, 11 Cor 3:6, 6:4
* The process of releasing/receiving grace through the word or spirit of God. Eph 4:29, 1 Pet 4:10-11

**MINISTERING TO THE LORD DEFINED** (Acts 13:2)

Ministering to the Lord is an action. It is a time we set apart to give God service like a waiter waits on those he is paid to serve. There are different ways we can minister to the lord. This includes through our thoughts, words in songs psalms, dance, life style and even in fasting and prayers. Our emphasis here now is on our thoughts and word through praise.

**WHAT IS PRAISE**

Praise means glorifying the actions or attributes of something or someone. It means to express thanks (gratitude) for what God has done, He is doing and will do. This is done in through our thoughts and words. Praise is an integral part of our worship and believers faith walk. It is a core part of our walk with God. Acts 16:25, 11 Chron 5:13, 1 Pet 1:6-9, 1 Thess 5:16-18, 1 Cor 15:5-7

We must praise God intentionally in spite of the present situation, mood swings or whatever. 1 Cor 2:14-15, Eph 1”3, Isa 100:1-5. Singing is one way we express praise in words. Praise has nothing to do with whether the songs you are singing is of fast tempo or slow. Rather, a kind of song you sing, portrayed by the words (lyrics) of the song, as one which actually is completely centred on God 100%. If the song does not glorify or lift God up or completely centred on God as a theme then it is not praise. Some of the songs encourage/edify, or stir us up to worship, but they are not praise songs. PRAISE SONGS MUST ALWAYS BE ABOUT CELEBRATING GOD’S FAITHFULNESS, LOVE, ABILITIES, ALL GOD 100%.

The following are few examples of songs that praise God.

* You are good and your mercies ‘re forever, allelujah (2x)
* You are God from beginning to the end, there is no place for argument, you are God all by yourself.
* You are the mighty God, the great I am, allelujah, allelujah.
* Who is greater than Jehovah, Lord divine?
* You are marvelous iye…..(5x)
* Thank You Jesus owner of my soul…

Our praise sections should focus more on these songs **AS THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS**.

Examples of songs that encourage and edify us include but not limited to:

* I know who I am (Sinach)
* The walls of Jericho fell down flat...
* I can see everything turning around for my good.
* I know that I can make it. … my life is in Your hand
* We are going higher and many others.

As we meditate on God’s words on personal level, we can say or sing these songs to ourselves as we release our faith. They are not praise songs per se but songs that spur our faith to praise God. Our praise sections should not contain more of these songs. We need to focus on the main deal not the aside because we were created to give God worship, pleasure. Rev 4:11 One reason we seem to need all the spur and encouragements is because we have missed it in our daily walk with God. We are not in constant fellowship with the word and the Spirit of God so our spirits are not always charged up. Jude 20. Our woods are not always on the altar so there is no fire. Lev 6:12, Rev 5:10. So we usually use those songs to ginger ourselves up.

**SONGS THAT INFUSE UNBELIEF (WITHOUT US KNOWING)**

There are songs that infuse unbelief or concretize it in us. There is need to change some of the lyrics to tally with the word of God particularly in this New Testament of better promises. Songs like;

* Let the Spirit of the LORD come down…. The Holy Spirit came down on the Day of Pentecost Acts. 2: 1-4 John 7: 37-39 1 Pet. 1: 12
* Today O… when trouble comes my way … We do not need to invite and invoke trouble in our lives, neither is “when success comes my way” to scriptural too because it means if you find yourself in a challenging sitaution you will not praise God; why not “*whatever comes my way…”*

The key is that we are sensitive to the lyrics of the songs we sing both in our privacy and publicly. This is one reason why those who sing should know God’s Word well.

As we lead in public worship, we must give the Holy Spirit place to lead so that we do not cut the flow. Spirit led songs are songs that the Holy Spirit is emphasizing at that moment. If we follow His leading as we engage in public worship, we would experience serious manifestations of God’s power in our services all the time.