

YEARN TO WORSHIP.

Is the answer to any of the following questions a 'yes' for you?

Do you have a hunger within you to devote yourself to something bigger than just your own daily wants or needs?

Have you been left unfulfilled and discontented from the things or people you have applied yourself to over the course of your life?

Does there seem to be an unquenchable thirst within your soul for something that brings your heart permanent and lasting contentment?

Has your work failed to provide you with 'job satisfaction'?

Do you still look for a sense of belonging to something or someone in life?

Have you a desire for a deeper sense of purpose to motivate you each day?

Do you long to feel your life means something to someone?

Do you wish for reasons to live your life beyond the daily routine of paying bills and putting food on your table?

Do you long for something or someone good to look up to in a way you will never be made to regret?

Would you like to feel someone is deeply interested in what you live for and how you live your life?

Do you want to feel your life is lived with an expression of love for someone or that the reason you do much of what you do in life is out of love rather than duty for someone or something?

If your answer is a yes or maybe to any of these questions then you could be yearning for worship.

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Please read on for more information which may help you discern if you are yearning for worship.

Separation from God will leave us also separated from our true identity and purpose in life.

It is only in relationship with our creator that we understand and come to a full knowledge of why we were created.

When a company builds a motor car and releases it for sale they include an operating manual for those drivers who hope to get the best out of their use of the car and for the driver to understand fully how the car works, what different components do and a troubleshooting guide to help get things back in working order if anything goes wrong.

When God built us he too released us with an operating manual with instructions on how to get the best use out of being who and what he created us to be.

It also had information to help us understand how everything about us functions and how our different components fit together to serve their collective purposes. The manual also includes a troubleshooting guide for when things go wrong as God knew inevitably they would and how to bring things back into repair.

The manufacturers manual God gave us is called the Bible. In it's pages can be found all the information we will ever need to get to the truest understanding of who and what we are and how we are designed to function.

Understanding the car manufacturer's manual can sometimes be very difficult if we are not mechanically minded or familiar with some of the language, terminology or vocabulary.

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So often things are made much easier to comprehend if we get on the phone for example and call to speak directly to the manufacturers.

Often in modern day arrangements people have a 'service plan' for their car which keeps them in regular contact and communication with the manufacturer.

Customers benefit from an ongoing relationship with the manufacturer in maintaining and getting the best from their car.

The same applies to God and the bible. In relationship and communication with Him we are better able to understand its information and guidance.

We bypass the manual and take our car to an unapproved dealer for service or repair. We get reconditioned or 'pattern' parts or in some cases even scrap parts to find whatever way we can to keep our car on the road.

The same is happening when our heart is disconnected from God we automatically and often subconsciously try to replace the proper parts with a substitute or alternative that God never intended. This is often physically demonstrated in the world of plastic surgery for example.

Deep within us though as we drive is the nagging feeling that we could be experiencing a better drive, that maybe if we had gone to Ford's or BMW direct we might be having a smoother ride. Perhaps we've only just bought ourselves some time and the car will soon be breaking down again? Have we really rectified the underlying problem or we've simply found a way to patch it up!

Bypassing the actual manufacturer is a way of understanding something the bible describes as 'idolatry'. Putting our faith or trust in someone or something other than our true maker is idolatry.

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So what does this breakdown look like on a daily basis or in other words how can we recognise when idolatry has or is taking place?

Every time we place what someone else says about how to drive, service and repair our car above what God says in and through His manufacturer's manual, idolatry is about to take place.

Once we then bypass God and act on whatever words or suggestions that have replaced what is in His manufacturer's manual the idolatry has taken place and is complete.

Recently while driving my mum's Toyota Auris Hybrid which is an automatic car, sometimes when I've stopped the car, put it into neutral, put the handbrake on and then opened the door to get out it will bleep at me to put the car into parked mode by pressing the button on the dash marked 'P'. Even though the car is stopped, in neutral with the hand brake on, clearly not going anywhere the manufacturer has built in a warning buzzer to remind the driver to press the 'parked' button before they exit the car. The manufacturer's have a reason why this is built in. Ultimately it is designed to protect the computerised mechanisms of the engine from malfunctioning and increase the longevity of the engine's performance. One day idolatry set into my heart and I thought I knew better than the manufacturer. I exited the car without pressing the parked button and shut the door. When I returned to the car it took me twenty minutes to figure out how to get the engine started because it wouldn't start the usual way I would get it to start! I paid the price for ignoring the manufacturer's guidelines!

When the Devil or 'Satan' was tempting Jesus whilst he was taken by the Spirit into the wilderness (Luke chapter 4) if we analyse his tactic

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with Jesus it was exactly what we are talking about here but Satan took things another notch further however!

He knew he was dealing with Jesus so he would have to use stronger tactics of deception by getting Jesus to act on misinterpretation of what was written in God's manufacturer's manual rather than make the obvious mistake of simply trying to get Jesus to follow advice that wasn't even in God's manual.

Jesus however being the living word himself was never going to be deceived and instead gave Satan a masterclass in understanding what God's manual really had to say about the various topics Satan threw at him.

There are three important points to note here about Satan, the Devil.

Firstly, he always tries to use deception tailored made for you. In other words he will use deceptions suited to whatever is relevant in your life. In this sense he is not to be underestimated, he does his homework on us!

Even after failing to deceive the King of Kings on this occasion he departed the bible says for an opportune time to try it on with Jesus again.

This point leads on to the second point to note about Satan.

He is the purveyor of Idolatry. In other words he has become skilled at packaging idolatry to the point you may not even realise that's what he's pushing. Even with Jesus he never gave up trying to tempt Him towards idolatrous thinking. Satan's job, his existence is now fuelled by trying to turn hearts and minds away from God and towards himself for worship. He craves worship but unlike God does not deserve it. Like any good salesman trying to push what they want

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it's often about how you market and dress up what you have on offer!

Thirdly Satan knows scripture but waits to see if you know it better than him. It's not just about knowing verses, it's about having revelation that comes from the Holy Spirit about what those verses mean.

He tests to see if you know who you are, like a true snake tasting the air as he goes with his tongue. When he gets a sense of susceptibility or where the level of truth is weak that's when he unleashes the venom of deception and leads a life astray.

Satan means 'astray' in ancient Arabic. To stray there must be something to stray from! So what is Satan trying to get people to stray from? The answer is the truth about themselves. God's heart, His presence and His thoughts are revealed in His manufacturer's manual, the bible. Here we can recapture how things were intended by God to be! Satan can successfully lead mankind astray like he proved with Eve in the garden of Eden by twisting the truth about ourselves in the same way he became twisted in the truth about himself!

Satan himself is already eternally astray since he exercised his free will towards this damnable notion that he the creation could become like the creator. Himself permanently redefined by this lie he is astray and it's now his nature to lead others astray pointing them away from the manufacturer's manual, which is the only true source of information that can help us understand our existence.

Feeling empty or that there is a void within us is not a pleasant state of consciousness. Have you ever seen anyone rejoicing over hunger before a meal time for instance? I dare say not, in that the feeling of hunger we have for food is not a feeling anyone normally desires to prolong longer than necessary.

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It is the same in the '*stomach of our hearts*'! When our hearts are hungry, signals can be sent out in our physical body that our brains can misinterpret as a desire for food. This is often called 'comfort eating' as it often shows up even not long after we may have already had a meal. What our heart is actually hungry for is fellowship and ultimately the satisfaction which comes only from fellowship with God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Psalm:42:2

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

Psalm:42:1

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

Psalm:63:5-6

Most of what we all spend our days doing until we find fellowship with God is the perpetual pursuit of trying to satiate this inner hunger. In one way or another when we examine what drives most of our human activity it comes back to this! Each new day is a fresh reminder we have a vacuum to try and fill.

This is one of the things God promises us rest from when we come to Him,

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

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Matt 11.28

Heavy laden in part with all the things we try and amass to ourselves to help us feel less empty. Though we suppress this truth deep in our hearts we all know somehow and within our conscience feel that what we are trying, what we are doing isn't working. A fruitless search for that elusive high.

There's a greater more satisfying and longer lasting high to be had, called The Most High!

God has given us the inbuilt recognition from birth that ultimately nothing comes close to the experience of fellowship with Him. The experience of God's loving-kindness is even better than feeling alive.

Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

Psalm:63:3

God's invisible nature and qualities can be seen and understood from the visible natural world around us and his presence can be seen in places outside of the human heart.

Romans 1v20

God however is inimitable. The human heart can never successfully replace the ecstasy of fellowship with Him regardless of what we try to come up with to fill this 'God shaped' hole in the soul.

So what is stopping the average person from acknowledging these things and being honest with themselves about the emptiness within? What has blinded us all to this inner yearning? Why do people often spend a lifetime in the same fruitless daily pursuit of inner satisfaction without ever really stopping to question why they haven't achieved it?

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The answer to this is ..

Loss and Lack of Love !

The human heart attempts to unsuccessfully satisfy itself with everything else but God's Love for us and plug the God shaped hole in the soul with everything but the feeling of being loved by God.

Our sinful nature however requires a special, forgiving and gracious type of loving that comes only from God through Christ Jesus. To receive this type of love requires first acknowledging we have a sinful nature. Accepting this particular truth about ourselves all too often proves to be a hurdle far too high for most to jump and takes many often a lifetime to negotiate.

So it's no wonder we plough blindly on unless we come to the often painful acknowledgement of this and accept this is the truth about what is going on with us all.

For the progression of this study please go to page 3 of the Ministry Resources section of the website for the study download entitled '3. Private Worship'

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