

# Conversation Starter

FOR the week of January 20 to 26, 2008

This Week's Theme: Worship And The Spirit

Reading #1: Mark 12:30  
Reading #2: John 4:23-24  
Reading #3: Matthew 4:10  
Reading #4: Philippians 3:3  
Reading #5: Psalm 29:2

Meaningful, life-changing, and dynamic worship takes place when no one or nothing is placed ahead of God in our lives. As Jesus said: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."* (Mark 12:30) Part of loving God completely is to obey His command to worship Him and His Son Jesus. Notice the words **must** in these words of Jesus: *"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 Father seeks. God is Spirit, and His worshipers must worship in Spirit and in truth."* (John 4:23-24) Because we were created to worship, if God isn't the focus of our worship, then someone or something else will be. This is why Jesus speaking to the devil who was tempting Him in matters of worship declared: *"Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.' "* (Matthew 4:10) And these words are true for us too, but our worship of Him must be "in Spirit and in truth." What this means is that worship and the Spirit – that is God's Spirit/the Holy Spirit -- is entwined. Our worship of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in the midst of our worship cannot be separated. In order for our worship to be true, it needs to be Holy Spirit-led. Our understanding and practice of worship comes from God's word, from God's standard of righteousness, and from a God who is loving, holy and just. This is why the apostle Paul was able to write to the Philippians: *For it is...we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh.* (Philippians 3:3) So, then, people of the living God ... the God who created you ... the One who loves you so much that He gave Jesus to redeem you, make a new commitment to worship Him always "in Spirit and in truth." *Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name; worship the Lord in the splendour of His holiness.* (Psalm 29:2) Amen!!!

1. Describe a time when you felt God's presence in the midst of worshipping Him.
2. What are some things we can do to make our worship of the Lord more meaningful?
3. How do we grow in our understanding and ability to worship "in Spirit and in truth"?
4. How do we know when we have worshipped the Lord "in Spirit and in truth"?
5. Why does God require that His children worship Him "in Spirit and in truth"?
6. How has our current sermon series at church about worship helped you? What have you learned? What is God calling you to do differently regarding worship of Him?