

Unit Title : **WORSHIPPING GOD**
Lesson 2b : **THE ONE TO WORSHIP**
Bible Story : **THE PHARISEES & THE CANAANITE WOMAN**
Lesson Scripture : **Matthew 15:1-3, 7-11, 20-28; John 4:24; 1 Tim. 2:5**

Main Emphasis : A God-centered worship is worshipping the triune God in spirit and in truth.

Objectives : By the end of this session, the students should be able to:

1. define hypocrite;
2. determine how the Pharisees and Canaanites worship;
3. identify who the Canaanites are;
4. acknowledge exercising faith by worshipping God pleases Him;
5. determine the right way/means to worship the true God;
6. acknowledge the One they should worship;
7. acknowledge the triune God (Father, Son, & Spirit) and how glorious and unique He is;
8. assess their knowledge and their hearts about the One they worship;
9. dramatize the story of Jesus and the Canaanite woman; and
10. recite the memory verse.

Words to Remember:

Hypocrite – *one who acts contrary to what they say or what they believe.*

Tradition – *the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation; also called oral law for it is not based on the scriptures (written law).*

Canaanites – *wicked, idolatrous people descended from Noah's grandson Canaan, who was a son of Ham; conquered by the Israelites for their land was promised by God for them (Israelites)*

Memory Verse:

Psalm 100

¹ *Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.*

² *Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.*

³ *Know that the Lord is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.*

Pre-Session Activity: Show pictures of Filipino traditions/culture and let them identify or name that tradition based on the picture.

Lesson Proper :
TRADITIONS

Pharisees, being expert of the law, value traditions or oral law passed by one generation to another as equal with the written law or the word of God. They wanted to find a violation of the law from Jesus but failed so they used the traditions of the elders or oral law against Him. Jesus did not think it proper to regard these rules, and this was the reason why they "found fault" with him.

In Mark 7:3-4 list some of the traditions enforced by the Pharisees and practiced by the Jews. Other traditions include: the tithing of herbs (Matt 23:23; Luke 11:42); the wearing of conspicuous phylacteries and tassels (Matt 23:5); frequent fastings (Matt 9:14); and distinctions in oaths (Matt 23:16)

WORSHIP – PHARISEES VS. CANAANITES

The Pharisees placed great importance on Temple worship (in Jerusalem), but they had no personal relationship with God. Their worship was merely formal religious

observance. Also, the Pharisees asserted that God could and should be worshipped even away from the Temple and outside Jerusalem. To the Pharisees, worship consisted not in bloody sacrifices—the practice of the Temple priests—but in prayer and in the study of God’s law. Hence, the Pharisees fostered the synagogue as an institution of religious worship, outside and separate from the Temple.

When the Israelites entered Canaan, they found a land of farmers, not shepherds, as they had been in the wilderness. The land was fertile beyond anything the Hebrew nomads had ever seen. The Canaanites attributed this fertility to their god Baal. The Canaanites had an essentially pragmatic approach to worship. They wanted abundant harvests, so at their hilltop shrines they indulged in practices which they considered might encourage fertility and growth. Their worship patterns became little else than sexual orgies with a religious scenario, but such an approach to worship is utterly offensive to a pure and holy God.

POINTS

One of the things crucial to worship is the heart of the worshipper. Spiritual uncleanness is in the heart, the will, the mind, and soul, which are the spiritual nature of the person. It does not come from eating without washing the hands. The keeping of external regulations was to have directed the faithful to focus on inner spirituality.

In Hebrews 11:6, only with faith that we will be able to please God. Worshipping Him with a sincere heart pleases Him. Just like the faith of Canaanite woman, she desperately beg for Jesus to heal her daughter. Despite of racial barriers, and the disciples and Jesus’ words to her, still she did what is pleasing to God and that is her having faith and worshipping (v25) Him with a sincere heart, unlike the Pharisees being called hypocrites (v7).

Life Application :

What is the state of your heart when you worship? If you really acknowledge the One you are worshipping, you should please Him rather than please men. If your heart is not right and sincere, your worship is hypocrisy.

Despite of knowing that God is a triune God, how glorious and unique He is, there are still people who dishonor worshipping Him - making fun of the praise and worship songs, not singing or clapping their hands, shouting intentionally when singing, creating interruptions during service, etc.

If you really have faith in God (Father, Son, & Spirit), His power and authority over you, His works (blessings and grace) upon your lives, His unconditional love and mercy, and many more, you won’t have any issue or problem on exercising your faith though worshipping Him for sincere worship pleases Him.

Evaluation :

- 1. What do you mean by hypocrite? Who are those called by Jesus as such?**
- 2. Why did Jesus call the Pharisees hypocrite? What were the latter’s practices or beliefs?**
- 3. What did Jesus emphasize about against the Pharisees?**
- 4. Who are the Canaanites? How do they worship?**
- 5. What made Jesus amazed with the Canaanite woman?**
- 6. How do you worship God based on John 4:24?**
- 7. What do you need when you worship God?**

Background of the Lesson (For Teachers):

TRADITIONS

Transgress the tradition of the elders - The word "elders" literally means "old men." Here it means the "ancients," or their "ancestors." The "tradition of the elders" meant something handed down from one to another by memory; some precept or custom not commanded in the written law, but which scribes and Pharisees held themselves bound to observe.

They supposed that when Moses was on Mount Sinai two sets of laws were delivered to him: one, they said, was recorded, and is that contained in the Old Testament; the other was handed down from father to son, and kept uncorrupted to their day. They believed that Moses, before he died, delivered this law to Joshua; he to the Judges; they to the prophets; so that it was kept pure until it was recorded in the Talmuds. In these books these pretended laws are now contained. They are exceedingly numerous and very trifling. They are, however, regarded by the Jews as more important than either Moses or the prophets.

One point in which the Pharisees differed from the Sadducees was in holding to these traditions. It seems, however, that in the particular traditions mentioned here, all the Jews were united; for Mark adds Mark 7:3 that "the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders." Mark has also added that this custom of washing extended not merely to their hands before eating, but in coming from the market; and also to cups, and pots, and brass vessels, and tables, Mark 7:3-4. They did this professedly for the sake of cleanliness. So far it was well. But they also made it a matter of superstition. They regarded external purity as of much more importance than the purity of the heart. They had many foolish rules about it respecting the quantity of water that was to be used, the way in which it should be applied, the number of times it should be changed, the number of those that might wash at a time, etc. Our Saviour did not think it proper to regard these rules, and this was the reason why they "found fault" with him.

WORSHIP

The Pharisees placed great importance on Temple worship, but they had no personal relationship with God. Their worship was merely formal religious observance. This strict observance of the written and oral law (the latter often negating the former) and formal religion while paying no attention to the motives of the heart, led to self-righteousness and hypocrisy. When the Pharisees met Jesus, a clash was inevitable.

The Pharisees were primarily not a political party but a society of scholars and pietists. They enjoyed a large popular following, and in the New Testament they appear as spokesmen for the majority of the population. About 100 bce a long struggle ensued as the Pharisees tried to democratize the Jewish religion and remove it from the control of the Temple priests. The Pharisees asserted that God could and should be worshipped even away from the Temple and outside Jerusalem. To the Pharisees, worship consisted not in bloody sacrifices—the practice of the Temple priests—but in prayer and in the study of God's law. Hence, the Pharisees fostered the synagogue as an institution of religious worship, outside and separate from the Temple. The synagogue may thus be considered a Pharasaic institution, since the Pharisees developed it, raised it to high eminence, and gave it a central place in Jewish religious life.