
Understanding Worship Part 13

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Being Impacted by Christ

Romans 12

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God' this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1-2

We are called to be a *living sacrifice*, which means we are to be living in Christ, growing, and performing as agents of His. In worship, we are being impacted by what Christ has done for us and then letting Him know about it. The ancient Jews praised God as a continual lifestyle of worship. As this practice continues, it also refers to the fact that we belong solely to God, not to ourselves or anyone or anything else (Rom. 3:25; 6:12-17; 8:13; John 15:13-15; 37-38; 1 John 3:16), because His shed blood paid for us! We make our commitment to His election and truly dedicate our right to ourselves over to Christ. The bottom line is that we give Him our all. We live for Him. Consider that it is easy to die for a cause, but are we willing to live for one, to live for Him? It would mean living for Him as a tool, a life that is in perfect obedience we are poured out to Him and Him alone. So, is your strength gone over to Him? Do you trust and rely on Him? Do we acknowledge His holiness by our reverence and obedience (Psalm 96:9; 103)?

Overwhelmed? Do not fret; we are not alone in this essential matter. As Christians, the Spirit transforms us completely, including all we are, all that we are to be and do, our will, our plans and our opportunities are all His and He even gives us the ability to do this (2 Cor. 3:18). However, we cannot do it unless we give up our selfish will to His (John 3:30; Gal. 2:20-21; Phil. 3:1-14)! The incentive for our surrender to Christ is that His Way is better than ours. His plans are better than ours. He gave us a gift we cannot fathom, the gift of grace and eternal life, so why would we not seek to please our Living, Loving Lord by offering our worship to Him (Isaiah 1:12-13; 29:13; Jer. 6:19-20; Amos 5:21-23)?

The problem is that most Christians respond to His impact with a “rear end” firmly planted in a pew that goes nowhere in service or glory to Christ. They hold on to a will that will not allow conviction or change to their routine or life. Their doctrines do not translate to duty or to life. Thus, church is just a club for comfort and not a “huddle” to strategize and put forward how to play the game of the Christian life after receiving orders from our *Coach*. Worship, then, is not “real,” or, it is all about what we expect and want, unwilling to give what God wants. *Impacting worship* will see a change from the emphasis of “anthropocentric,” which is serving ourselves by how we worship God, to the emphasis of “Christocentric” worship, which is really worshiping God by placing Him first and foremost. This will help us go from our personal quest for prominence and position to seeking His glory and preeminence (Psalm 115:1; Isa. 42:8). Thus, *impacting*

worship also sees the supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus Christ as our Lord. There will be an application that creates change as we go from being prideful, hardened, and judgmental to being poured out to Him and exercising the Fruits to others (1 Cor. 13; Gal. 5:19-22; 2 Pet 1: 5-11).

We need to know that Christ calls us to change our minds like we change the oil in the car. This is what Romans 12 is about—to be a “devotee” to Christ. In other words, we are to be changed persons so we can be authentic, impacting worshipers so we can be change agents to others. Being a living sacrifice is a key aspect of our growth and maturity in the faith. The purpose of knowing God’s principles and the study of His Word is not just the knowledge we gain (which is very important), but our supreme goal is what we do with that knowledge. His work in us is to be applied, not just studied—or ignored. Our devotion to Christ must be rooted in our minds, then allow the doctrine to translate it to our feet and the rest of our bodies in between. Our *impacting worship* will influence the body, both our individual human body as well as a body of believers in relation to all those around us. It is our duty.

We have to realize that pleasing ourselves (as so many of us pursue) is not the goal of the Christian life either. Rather, we are to follow Christ and be imitators of His character, letting it transform our character. We are to do this through love and the acceptance of others as Christ did with us, even though we did not deserve it.

God, of course, does not need our permission or will to impact us; He does this by His election. But, our continued commitment and worship of Him requires our extended efforts that He rarely overwrites. Being a living sacrifice is something we do; it is our share in our covenant with Him. He help us, but we must put in effort, and not just wait for Him or His overwrite. He overwrites our will for our conversion, then He seeds us with faith and opportunities; it is up to us to grow in and with it. So, we need to take His impact and grow it further so we are worshiping Him.

The problem with many of my associates in ministry is that they think *Christ impacting* is just emotional or something we do not need to work on. They see *impacting worship* as how piercing the music is and measure the quality of our services by technical standards. Worship becomes the procedural of the staff so it is pleasing to the congregation, and thus we ignore its prime purpose. Worship becomes about how it feels, how it is bearing to our members emotions and outlooks, not about how we are impacted by Christ so we are changing and thus praising Christ for what He has done in us. Real *impacting worship* will help us connect to God, then to one another, and then to the community. When we are not impacted, we are not worshiping rightly, and thus our connections with God and others will be skewed and messed up.

Questions to Ponder

Read Romans 12:1-3

1. What is your favorite worship song or hymn and why? How does this song help you focus on worshiping Christ?

2. Why are music and song important in your church? How important are they are to real worship?
3. What does it mean to you to be a “devotee” to Christ? How have you practiced this?
4. How would you describe being a *living sacrifice*?
5. Why do you suppose you are called to be a *living sacrifice*?
6. What does it mean to you to be living in Christ, growing, and performing as agents of His Will?
7. How is worship about being impacted by what Christ has done for us and then letting Him know about it?
8. Because Christ shed blood paid for you, you will...?
9. What commitment do you need to make to be truly dedicated to giving up our right to yourself over to Christ? What would that look like?
10. The bottom line is that you can give Him your...?
11. Consider that it is easy to die for a cause, but are you willing to live for one, to live for Him?
12. What would it mean to be living for Christ as His tool, a life that is in perfect obedience we are poured out to Him and Him alone?
13. What needs to be done to give your strength over to Him?
14. Do you trust and rely on Christ?
15. Do we acknowledge His holiness by our reverence and obedience (Psalm 96:9; 103)?
16. What is the incentive you need to surrender to Christ, that His Way? What about the fact that His Way is better than yours? His plans are better than ours!
17. What do you need to put on hold from your will to allow conviction and change to your routine or life to be more heartfelt to Christ?
18. What does “Christocentric” worship mean to you? How is this really worshiping God? How can this attitude help you place Him first and foremost?
19. What do you think is the purpose of knowing God’s principles and the study of His Word?
20. How has *Christ impacting* been just emotional or something you do not need to

work on? Why do some people have this attitude? What can be done to change it?

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