
Understanding Worship Part 16

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Getting our Church to “Get It!”

Psalm 138

First of all, the purpose of these curriculums is to show you from God’s percepts what worship is, so you can know and then teach your people to know too. You can also start to educate your church about true worship by stopping for a couple of weeks what you normally do and just meet with God in simplicity. Stop the PowerPoint, stop the organ, stop the praise band, stop the symphony and just come together simply in prayer, then sing some hymns or praise songs without compliment of instruments or just with a guitar or piano. After the first song, stop for a short explanation of what worship is, and experience His presence, practice His presence, and savor His presence and His goodness. Then pray, and resume the service. Do this a few times a year as a reminder that worship is not about the services and song, it is about our hearts pouring out to His! Then, come together with your leadership and pray! Commit to structure your worship for God, to please and glorify Him rather than doing what you or others want (Psalm 22:22-23; 138:2; John 4:23-24; Acts 2:42; Phil. 2:10-11; 3:3).

Impacting worship knows that our primary purpose, as our confessions state, is "to glorify God and worship Him forever." That means we are transformed by God's grace for His glory (Job 40:6-41:34; Psalm 29:1-2; Jer. 9:23-24). You may know this, but do the people in your church? Do they know that Jesus extends His hand of grace to us, who do not deserve it? Do they realize His sacrificial death by being crucified, and His resurrection? Do they realize He intercedes for us and pays our debt of sin before the Father? Do they realize we receive His grace apart from any merit or worth on our part? Do they realize what a privilege we have been given in that closeness to Him that the Prophets of old so passionately desired? Do they know that we should feel gratitude for what Christ has done and praise Him accordingly? Do they know we are to come to Him in humbleness and surrender to His Supremacy and wonder? This is what we celebrate when we come to worship at church (Matt. 4:17, 7:13-27, 9:13, 16:24-26; Luke 14:26-33; John 1:12-13; Acts 20:27; Rom. 3-5, 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 2:2, 9:16; 2 Cor. 4:5, 7:10; Gal. 1:6-8; Eph. 2:8-9; Heb. 2:9-18; 1 John 2:22-23, 4:1-4, 5:1-3)!

Real, heartfelt, God-exalting adoration must be the focus of the worship service. It must never lift up the leaders or be a performance for entertainment. It is God who is the audience and we are the people who are to praise and glorify Him! We are still to make our services friendly and innovative, as there is nothing wrong with being creative—even using drama and contemporary themes—as long as the service glorifies Christ and is not just a medium meant to entertain the people. Remember, the congregation is the performer, the worship team is the leader, and God is the audience! Don't mix these up! Many of my colleagues get this skewed as they look to business paradigms and trends for church growth principles and negate God's percepts (Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:7-9; Gal. 10: 1-10; 1 Thess. 2:4). You need to focus on Christ, not what others have to say. The focal point—the reason for discipleship and maturity—is to lift up Christ and not be afraid to offend those who do not “get it.” All that we do in the

church--from faith, fellowship, and outreach to facilities--come to this point and reason:
TO WORSHIP CHRIST (Psalm 138:1-4)!

Questions to Ponder

Read Psalm 138

1. Why is worship not to be rushed or coerced?
2. When we worship, we are to respond to Christ and only to Him, why? How?
3. Worship is the aptitude, attitude, and practice of expressing the desire to know our Lord and Savior further, and being grateful for Who He Is and what He has done for us. How is this shown in your churches services? How can it be shown better?
4. Is your church doing worship wrong or perhaps deviating from what is best and pleasing to God? What will you and your church leadership do about it? You want "leadership" not "chickenship!"
5. What does it mean to you to come before God and meet with Him with reverence, gladness, and joy?
6. How can the true worship of Christ by your submission to Him with earnest sincerity and serenity help create character and maturity in you and prepare you for life now and for eternity?
7. How is Christ worthy and in charge? How is He in charge of you?
8. What can you do to increase your trust and feel more secure in Christ? Consider what He has done for you!
9. What must we do to worship Christ effectively and earnestly?
10. After digging into this series on worship, do you have a better idea of what Worship is?
11. What would happen if you stopped your normal worship for a couple of weeks to repent and pray so you can realign it to be more pleasing to God?
12. What can you and your church do just meet with God in simplicity?
13. Why is it imperative that the worship leaders or service not be a performance for entertainment?
14. What would real, heartfelt, God-exalting adoration look like in your church? How can you make that be the focus of the worship service?

15. What will you and your church do to start to educate your church folks about true worship? What is stopping you? How will you overcome the roadblocks? Do you know the results will be worth the hassle? Remember it is far more important to give Christ the glory than pleasing personalities whose heart is not after God, no matter who they are!
16. How would you describe spontaneous and just worshipping Christ?
17. What can you do to prevent your church's worship from becoming a performance for themselves, for the members, or for a show of personalities?
18. What can be done to do as we are called, that is, to be offerings of praise to the main and only audience—Christ our Lord?
19. What can be done to increase your awareness of what Christ wants in Worship? How would that increase your love and passion for Christ as your Lord?
20. What can and should you and your church do to strive to make your worship services more engaging, more excellent, and be our best for His highest?