

General Topics :: Worship should not be confused with feelings

Worship should not be confused with feelings - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/1/25 23:48

Worship should not be confused with feelings. It is true that the worship of God will affect us, and one thing it will frequently affect is our emotions. At times tears will fill our eyes as we become aware of God's great love and grace toward us. Yet it is possible for our eyes to fill with tears and for there still to be no real worship simply because we have not come to a genuine awareness of God and a fuller praise of Himself in His nature and ways... True worship occurs only when that part of man, his spirit, which is akin to the divine nature (for God is spirit), actually meets with God and finds itself praising God for His love, wisdom, beauty, truth, holiness, compassion, mercy, grace, power, and all His other attributes.

- James M. Boice

Re: Worship should not be confused with feelings - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/1/26 0:52

Yes. thanks for sharing this. Worship is a precious thing. Alan Martin in his message (<http://media.sermonindex.net/14/SID14657.mp3>) Confessions of a Pharisee talked about how the Pharisees reacted to the woman that came to worship Jesus. Truly nothing is more indicative of who we really are than how we react when someone is responding to God- especially in praise and worship. The Pharisees despised sinners that tried to worship Jesus.

And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. (Luke 7)

Can you imagine these men murmuring against Jesus? As if He did not know she was a sinner? They expected that if He were a 'real' prophet He would have preached her under conviction or denounced judgment over her, perhaps. but did Jesus do that?

It is a very dangerous thing to critique the worship and praise of others. Remember the story of how David danced before the LORD as the Ark came into the city? He knew God was returning to bring revival to Israel. He danced in celebration. But Michal his wife looked on and despised him for it and *God saw it*. Just like Jesus saw how the Pharisees were reacting to that woman. That was the worst mistake of her life and the only real deed of significance that we remember her for.

God made sure that she never had a child with which she could pass on that spirit of despising those that pour themselves out to God. Barrenness was her judgment. If He were a prophet he would know what manner of woman she was..., can you see the spirit behind that statement? And God will never validate that spirit with a revival.

Robert, on: 2009/1/26 1:33

Quote:
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Robert, that is one of my favorite passages of the Bible!!!!

How I love King David! Know why? He was real, he was authentic, sure he was messed up, but when Nathan confronted him with his sin, fooling with a married woman, and then killing her husband, one of his most loyal lieutenants, David i

Immediately confessed sin, didn't hesitate, didn't squirm or worm his way out of it, confessed, repented, and what do we have? What I judge to be the pinnacle of the Psalter, Psalm 51!

No wonder God said this was man after His Own Heart....he was real. David was a hard core guerilla fighter, he had blood soaked hands, he sometimes didn't take prisoners, (that neighborhood has been a bad one for thousands of years) but when they got the Ark back, he stripped to his skivvies and danced with abandon and joy, didn't care what anybody thought of him.

I love that man, and I love that passage and I love reading Psalm 51 as a prayer and a cry out to God.

love, neil

Re: Robert - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/1/26 8:17

Quote:
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I am often challenged by the notion that when God comes down and gives a great victory there was always a great celebration. The angels in heaven rejoice of a soul that repents.

When I was pressing hard in the subject of repentance in 2004 I started to lose sight of how to rejoice when there was a genuine repentance or deliverance. I got into such a negative mode that I could only see God moving in harsh ways. I thought that a long face was evidence of spirituality. This is one of the things God delivered me from in Greenock.

I wonder many times why God never validated Ravenhill's teaching with a revival? Then I was listening once to a prayer meeting where he was criticizing the way certain people were praying calling it 'mutter' 'mutter' as if someone suddenly appointed Him as God to dictate how people should pray and worship. I knew then why he died not seeing God move.

If I want to mutter in prayer, that's my God given prerogative. If I want to pray in tongues I can do that. And I don't need someone telling me how to pray as if I'm two years old and don't have any sense. I don't need someone telling me how to worship God. That is between me and God. And this was the jest of Carter Conlon's message and why it was by and large rejected. Christians reserve the right to tell man how to pray and worship and tell God how to send revival. And with that attitude there will be even more tombstones in the picture gallery and still no revival. God will not honor the way men critique each others response to Him. Never has and He never will.

Re: - posted by graceamazed (), on: 2009/1/26 9:04

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I've wondered the same thing many times and arrived at a similar conclusion. I love listening to Ravenhill, but have found that I can only do it sparingly, lest I start to become critical and elitist in my perspective of other Christians. I've known other men of God (the ones that come to mind are coincidentally British as well) that preach a hard and largely sound message, but it is mixed with such a degree of cynicism toward other "less enlightened" Christians that I find myself turned off to hear the more valuable nuggets in their messages. Yes, the gospel can be a hard word that offends many, but the cynicism and offense that I'm speaking of is usually not associated with the message of the gospel, but the attitude of the speaker.

Re: - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2009/1/26 10:42

So often we think of worship in terms of the experience; Did I experience the fulness of God's presence?? Did I sense His stirring in my heart and mind?? But worship is not around I or me; but delighting in the LORD and being filled with reverence and awe and gratitude for Who HE is and all that HE has done!!

Re: - posted by White_Stone (), on: 2009/1/26 10:44

Quote:
-----Yes, the gospel can be a hard word that offends many, but the cynicism and offense that I'm speaking of is usually not associated with the message of the gospel, but the attitude of the speaker.

Dear graceamazed,

You make a good point there. Charity is the hardest grace to perfect, in my opinion. Especially, when viewing others faults. I strive to view them through their faults but often run into the walls they have erected around their hearts. The gentler we can approach, the less likely their defenses are to be in place.

God give us the grace to walk softly, and show our worship of Him in the manner we approach others, white stone

Re: - posted by 4givenchris (), on: 2009/1/26 12:21

This is a very good topic. I have struggled a bit in this myself. I have been critical of others style of worship in the past. I have had a hard time making it to the college study at my church because I have noticed how there is a lot of emotionalism in the worship, but who am I to criticize? Maybe because I am not that emotional (tears, crying, etc) its harder for me to understand when someone else is.

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/1/26 12:51

Quote:
-----Maybe because I am not that emotional (tears, crying, etc) its harder for me to understand when someone else is.

Amen. I think many of us can relate to that. Yet, we have to keep in mind that God is the one that is being worshipped and not us. So we really have no right to criticize. It amazes me at times of my own audacity to want to tell someone how to express their love to Christ or how to praise and worship Him. The sinner woman just did what she felt in her heart and God honored it. I tremble to think I would withstand someone trying to worship God- even if I somehow thought I had a better ideal. That would be like jumping in front of a moving truck.

Truly I think if we thought about it we would realize that it is the devil trying to work us to despise the person as Michal did. It is the same bad attitude that cause the people to rebuke the children for coming to Jesus; I just hear in my heart to both worshipper and child... *suffer them to come and forbid them not!*

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2009/1/26 15:24

Hi RobertW...

Speaking of children, I once heard a child who was asked to define "worship." She said, "*Worship is directing your love toward God.*" What a simple yet profound definition!

I will admit that the most memorable times of worship that I have ever experienced weren't accompanied by words, songs or music. I just sat in quiet adoration of God. Even during those unemotional "dry" times -- I still just pour out my soul before him as a "dry" offering (since my heart feels more like powder than tears). I believe that God is pleased with our offerings...no matter if they are wet or dry. Perhaps the heartfelt desire to worship itself is a form of worship?

I have read so many things and heard so many sermons that seem to complicate the entire matter of worship. Worship knows no bounds! There is no prescription for it...although there are many possible ways we can demonstrate it through! Psalm chapter 150 is filled with outward manifestations for praise. I always felt that worship was just a bit more intimate...but can still encompass those same manners in which we praise.

I used to encourage the children in a bus ministry that I was in charge of. I would explain how happy my mother would feel when I would draw her a picture that said, "*I love you.*" I told the kids that it was much more special when my mom knew that it didn't come at a time (like Mother's Day or Valentine's Day) when our teachers assigned us such a work. Those things were still special to my Mom. But when such works of "art" came "just because" -- it was even more special to my mom! I told them that my mom was very pleased with it, not because it was a great painting like Michelangelo or Leonardo da Vinci, but because it was from the heart. I always encouraged the children to make sure that their worship was from the heart...always offered in truth.

In my opinion, if it isn't simple, it might not be truly necessary for worship. I've discovered that times of corporate worship are less meaningful to me when the "praise team" seems to be mimicking a particular artist (or style) or when the emphasis is upon the music or sound rather than the heart. I am concerned that many "worship leaders" are far too concerned with the structure of the music than hearts presenting simple adoration and love toward God. Sometimes, I have felt like I experienced the pleasure of God just laying on my bed in worship...or sitting outside at the college with my guitar...than in the middle of a congregation with a 20 piece orchestra and a 200 member choir. It is the level of intimacy (direction of love) that matters the most to me.

Anyway, thank you for this discussion! Leonard Ravenhill has a great series of messages on worship found here on SermonIndex. I was thinking about them just this week, so it might be time to listen to them once again!

: -)

Re: - posted by graceamazed (), on: 2009/1/26 17:41

This past week I was thinking on this topic of worship and how it transcends so many of the boundaries we try to limit it to. For example, I have gone through seasons in my Christian walk when the experiential/emotional aspect of glorifying God was a great emphasis for me, and in other seasons I've found myself humbled before God as He revealed Himself to me through my intellect and the receiving of biblical truths and knowledge of Him.

When we're experiencing the glory of God in a particular manner, it's easy to think we have arrived and those who are hung up on seeking knowledge or who we perceive to be too emotional are somehow lacking in their understanding of His majesty.

For me, I want to know the reality of His glory as it effects and penetrates my emotions - LORD, LET ME CRY, WEEP, SHOUT, DANCE, AND TREMBLE BEFORE THE REVELATION OF WHO YOU ARE! I want to be passionate and zealous, but I don't want to just seek Him and experience Him with my emotions, I want to see the beauty and coherency of His revealed Word as it corrects, changes and influences my intellect. I want to know Him every way I can know Him, with my emotions, my intellect, my sufferings, my triumphs...LORD INVADE ME AND INVADE ALL OF ME!

Re: Worship should not be confused with feelings - posted by narrowpath, on: 2009/1/26 19:02

Today we sung a very simple children's worship song at home with my wife and 3 daughters aged 17, 6 and 3.

I worship here

I worship there

Everywhere I am I worship

la la la lalalalalalalal

la la la lalalalalalalal etc.

I could almost sense Jesus joining into this song. His presence was there, and yes, even feelings were involved. You may say it is a silly song with no depth. It was wonderful to see the children praising God. We were truly blessed and my oldest daughter's bad mood disappeared.

"I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

Re: - posted by graceamazed (), on: 2009/1/26 21:08

Quote:

narrowpath wrote:

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"I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

AMEN.

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/1/26 21:36

Quote:

-----I worship here I worship there Everywhere I am I worship la la la lalalalalalalal la la la lalalalalalalal etc. I could almost sense Jesus joining into this song. His presence was there, and yes, even feelings were involved.

You may say it is a silly song with no depth. It was wonderful to see the children praising God. We were truly blessed and my oldest daughter's bad mood disappeared. "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

I thought of the passage:

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18)

It's amazing how easy it is to read the bible and totally miss what Jesus keeps saying time and time again. If one didn't know better they would think it was full on rebellion to be so dismissive of such straight forward statements.