

Sermon Series: Intentional Disciples–Purposeful Worship–Lord of Life, Westfield, IN—1/15/2006

Title: “God-focused/Christ-centered Worship”

Text: Psalm 100: 1-5 & Rev. 5: 11-12

Intro: *Ills.: Not taking God for granted*

Theme: Worship is a service that we direct toward God and surrounds the message and story of Jesus’ love for us which naturally causes a response of praise.

Worship is a God-thing (Print and read Psalm 100: 1-3)

- Coming to meet someone important
 1. The thrust of the language by David is like a trumpet blast—heralding the arrival of the king
 2. Much of modern day worship/theology heavily weighted toward a casual rather than awed view of God
 3. **Ills.: Someone Bigger Than I**
 4. Having a “big view of God” affects your trust, walk, and worship—worship is not about me but about my God
- It is about a relationship not a transaction
 1. Our human haughtiness is thinking we bring something God needs
 - a. We get caught up in the “show” of worship and forget our best effort pales in comparison to God’s greatness
 - b. **Ills.: Don’t thank me**
 - c. *“Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” Rom 11: 35*
 - d. Not self-made people but celebrating our dependancy on God’s provision and deliverance
 - e. Not having to self-generate joy in our worship but knowing that **“the joy of the Lord is your strength”**(Neh 8:10)
 - *I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. John 15: 11*
 - Able to worship today with a broken heart, a gnawing fear of sickness/surgery, a turbulent life
 2. Seeing worship as an act of service owed to God, our Savior (Yahweh), who has done and will do it all for us
 - a. Worship is hard work (liturgy=service) (being sharp for worship—enough sleep; engaging your heart and mind)
 - b. **Ills.: Giving Your All**
 3. Worship is a “know” theology (**Print Psalm 100: 3**)
 - a. **KNOWING** God and his will so well that you say **NO** to things that your **KNOW** are not his will
 - b. *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may know what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2*
 - c. **KNOWING** the Good Shepherd’s voice so that you follow him and listen only to him
 - d. *“I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me.” John 10: 14*
- A “goodness and mercy” remembrance and celebration (**Print Psalm 100: 4-5**)
 1. We come together in our praise of God for his goodness and mercy but are benefitted by remembering it, also
 2. *Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Ps. 23: 6*
 3. Remembering God’s mercies, new every morning, so we do not wither and decay without hope tomorrow

Worship happens because of Jesus (Print and read Revelation 5: 11-12)

- Worship – a little piece of heaven
 1. In worship being ushered into the Almighty Father’s presence because of Jesus, *“the Lamb who was slain”* vs. 12
 - a. *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Heb 4: 14-16*

2. In worship joining in a simulcast of heaven's worship
 - a. **Ills.: Newest trend in mega-churches is to simulcast worship**
 - b. In worship transported into the eternal song of heaven where we are part of the thousands and ten thousands
- Worship is about getting back to the main message—a Christ-centered one
 1. The “worthy One” makes us, the unworthy ones, fit to stand before God
 2. Worship is a time to focus on Jesus and take our eyes off of our own and others fallenness
 3. Worship is a time in which to focus on confession and forgiveness & to receive the meal of forgiveness
- Worship is a time to give it up to Jesus
 1. Appropriate to give only Jesus the praise and thanks – applause and encouragement contexted in what Jesus has done
2. **Ills.: Man thanks those who saved his life**

Not taking God for granted

While hurrying through Chicago's commuter train station, I had an "Aha!" moment that stopped me in my tracks. I'd just left the candy counter where I'd bought Valentine's treats for an upcoming party a few of us were planning for our church's single moms. Doing so took my thoughts back to a cookout the previous summer, for which I had covered the cost. The single moms, their children, and I enjoyed a glorious day at a local sunshine-drenched beach, conversing and stuffing ourselves with burgers, chips, and all the trimmings. As the afternoon ended, I sat among the moms at the picnic table as they enthusiastically divided up the leftover hot dogs, sodas, and desserts. No-one thought to offer me a thing. Though no-one suspected it, my feelings were a little bruised. No, I didn't need the food. And most of the moms had given little thought to where the picnic spread had come from. But the slight was significant enough that I recalled it in the train station six months later. Then it hit me! How much more slighted God must feel when, as recipients of his enormous generosity, we're reluctant to share a portion of our resources with him. Just as I didn't need the potato salad, he doesn't need our money. But he does crave our gratitude—our acknowledgment that all we have is from him. **Judy Keene, Hoffman Estates, Illinois**

Don't Thank Me

A woman leaving the worship service said to the minister, "I enjoyed the sermon." "Don't thank me. Thank the Lord," said the minister. "It wasn't that good," the lady replied. **Robert S. Smith, Kane, Pennsylvania, Christian Reader, "Lite Fare."**

Giving Your All

One Sunday morning, Pastor McGhee noticed that little Alex was staring up at the large plaque that hung in the foyer of the church. The 7-year-old had been staring at the plaque for some time, so the pastor walked up, stood beside the boy, and said quietly, "Good morning, Alex." "Good morning, Pastor," replied the boy, focused on the plaque. "Pastor McGhee, what is this?" Alex asked. "Well, son, these are all the people who have died in the service," replied the pastor. Soberly they stood together, staring at the large plaque. Little Alex's voice barely broke the silence when he asked quietly, "Which one, the 9:00 or the 10:30 service?"

Man Thanks Those Who Saved His Life

Roy Larson thought the most difficult part of his day would be maneuvering the unfamiliar stick shift on a "loaner" electric wheelchair as he ventured into downtown Glen Ellyn, Illinois, for a haircut. But his day was about to become much more trying. As he was crossing the railroad tracks on Main Street, one of the chair's wheels became lodged in the track. As Larson struggled to free the wheel, something went wrong with the chair's electrical system, and the chair refused to move. Suddenly the lights began to flash, and the signal bells started to ring. The gates in front of Larson and behind him began to lower. The first person Larson saw as he frantically looked for help was Mark Bade. Bade had been running an errand when he saw that Larson was in trouble. He sprinted to Larson's side and began to struggle with the chair. At almost the same moment, Don Burgeson had stopped his car at the gates and saw what was happening. He leaped out of the car and helped Bade wrench the chair free from the track and drag it out of harm's way. The three men looked up, just in time to see the train was less than 20 yards away. "After the train went by, I just said thanks," Larson said. "The only reason I am here today is because these two guys saved my life." Jesus Christ came to save our lives. We too need to say thanks.

Adapted from Cindy Urrea, "Instant Action, Instant Heroes," The Sun (9-28-01)

Psalm 100:1-5

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

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

³Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us; we are not self-made; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

⁵For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Rev. 5:11-12

¹¹Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹²In a loud voice they sang:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise!"