

LIVING BEYOND THIS LIFE - WORSHIP PART IV

“HIS WAY”

June 7-8, 2008

Ice Breaker

Have you ever tried to do something your way, only to find that you would have been much better off if you would have done it God's way from the start?

Introduction

One of the most challenging aspects of worship is getting our focus completely on God - and off of ourselves. Two major hindrances for this are our pride and our circumstances. Often we are so conscious of our selves, that worship becomes more about us than about God. Today we will be discussing how to get past the fear of looking or feeling “undignified” when we are worshipping, and not let the “how” become more important than the heart. This means that we must get rid of our pride, and become truly humble in worship.

Also, as difficult as it can be in tough times, we cannot let our circumstances dictate our feelings towards God. We must realize that we will never fully understand God and all His ways, but strive to stay focused on who He is and know He is the only one who can see the “big picture.”

Worship Thought

Today, as you focus on God, draw near to Him in humility. Express in some way that you are willing to be fully surrendered before Him as you sing this song:

Verse 1

All to Jesus I surrender
All to Him I freely give
I will ever love and trust Him
In His presence daily live

Verse 2

All to Jesus I surrender
Humbly at His feet I bow
Worldly pleasures all forsaken
Take me Jesus, take me now

Chorus

I surrender all
I surrender all
All to Thee my blessed Savior
I surrender all

This Week's Memory Verse

Colossians 1:27, “To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Life Example

What does it mean to worship “God's way”? As we have been learning, it would probably include a combination of awe and reverence with gratefulness and uninhibited love. From the many examples in the Bible, it would also seem to include being able to look beyond our present circumstances and situation to still sincerely worship God for who He is. A great example of this is the story of Paul and Silas.

Paul and Silas had been led by the Lord on a missionary trip throughout many parts of Europe and Asia and were now in Philippi. They had seen God use them by the response of many as they shared the gospel along the way. On their way to a prayer meeting in Philippi, they cast a spirit out of a slave girl, which had enabled her to predict the future, and earn large amounts of money for her owners. The owners were furious when this happened and incited a crowd to attack Paul and Silas and have them arrested. The two missionaries were beaten, severely flogged and thrown into an inner dungeon, their feet clamped in stocks.

If anyone had good reason to complain and question God, it would seem to be Paul and Silas. They however, were able to focus on God instead of their circumstances, which enabled them to have a different perspective. So instead of complaining, it says in Acts 16 that they were praying and worshipping God around midnight when they were miraculously set free.

It can be very difficult to worship when things are going wrong. **But one of the purest forms of worship is praising God even when you don't feel like it**, because it shows God that your worship isn't **based on circumstances**. Worship is based on the **character of God**.

Key Passages

2 Samuel 6:1-23

Discussion Questions

- How do you fill the void of loneliness in your life? How did David deal with loneliness (Psalm 63)? How does worship help satisfy our need for relationship?
- Is there a wrong way and a right way to worship? Explain. In what ways have some churches imported the world's ways into worshipping God? Is this always wrong?
- How do we find the balance between freedom in worship and worshipping properly? What brings dishonor to our worship? How can we best honor God in our worship?

Prayer/Ministry

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you ways you have tried to fill any voids in your life “your way,” with the things of this world instead of God's ways. Confess these things and thank God for His forgiveness acknowledging that God's ways are better than our own.

If you have judged others because of the way they worshipped, this is a good time to confess and ask for forgiveness - or if you have been hurt by the way someone treated you because of the way you worshipped, release and forgive them at this point.

Going Deeper

Pride vs. Humility

- Study the example of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel 3:1-7 and 4:30-32. How would you describe Nebuchadnezzar's actions? How did his life end?
- What does the Bible say about pride in the following passages? Proverbs 16:5; Malachi 4:1; James 4:6; Psalm 138:6
- Look at the example of David: Read Acts 13:22. What kind of a man was David?
- What does the Word of God say about humility in the following passages? 1 Peter 5:6-7; Philippians 2:3-7; Psalm 149:4; Isaiah 66:2

Is there any attitude of pride in your heart that stops you from worshipping God His way instead of your own way. In humility, allow God to break any spirit of pride so that you may enter into a deeper worship relationship with Him.

Next Week's Memory Verse

Isaiah 55:8,9, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”