

LIVING BEYOND THIS LIFE - WORSHIP PART V

“WHY WORSHIP”

June 14-15, 2008

Ice Breaker

What can make it difficult to worship?

Introduction

In today's study, we will be talking about why it is sometimes difficult to worship. Life can be very difficult. It might be because we are faced with a major loss like the death of a loved one, or we find ourselves trapped by difficult circumstances. We may even be facing a spiritual attack from the enemy, or simply feeling disappointed and discouraged. Yet in all these situations, we need to worship God, not because of what we feel, but because of who He is! These are the very times that God wants us to connect with Him.

Worship Thought

Quietly meditate on the love of God, and think through the words of Job, a man who was willing to connect with God in worship, even though he was faced with extremely difficult circumstances. In the midst of terrible personal tragedy Job was still able to say, “Though he slay me, yet will I will trust Him” (Job 13:15). Express in your own way, your trust and gratitude to God for who He is.

This 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.”

Life Example

*Scattered words and empty thoughts seem to pour from my heart
I've never felt so torn before, seems I don't know where to start
But it's now that I feel Your grace fall like rain
From every fingertip, washing away my pain*

*I still believe in your faithfulness
I still believe in your truth
I still believe in your holy word
Even when I don't see, I still believe*

These lyrics, written by contemporary Christian artist Jeremy Camp, are powerful words. Even more so when you realize they were written after the death of his 21 year old wife, Melissa, from ovarian cancer. They had been married only a few months when she died.

The first time Jeremy met Melissa, he was leading worship for a small Bible study and watched in awe as she worshiped God, raising her hands high, her great love for God was evident. They became friends, and for a time were apart as Melissa felt God was preparing her for “something.” Later, after she was diagnosed with cancer, Jeremy visited her in the hospital and felt God's leading to ask her to marry him. Five months later they wed. On their honeymoon, Melissa began having stomach problems. When they saw the doctor, they were told she had only months to live.

On February 5, 2001, Jeremy stood with her family at her bedside and began worshiping God in song as she took her last breath. Later, he said, “I didn't want to do it, but I knew I was learning something about obedience.”

Never allow your circumstances to dissuade you from worshiping God. Worship God because He alone is worthy.

Key Passages

Genesis 22:1-3, 5 ; Job 1:14-21 ; Acts 16:19-34

Discussion Questions

- Read Daniel 6. How did Daniel press through his circumstances to worship God? What was the result? Have you ever pressed through something difficult to worship God? What happened?
- Read about the Israelites in Psalm 78:8-11, 32 and Psalm 107:28-32. What kept the Israelites from pressing through their circumstances to worship God? What finally brought them to worship God? How might their experience have been different if they had pressed through sooner?
- Psalm 18:3 states that God is worthy. What makes God worthy? How do you show that something is valuable and worth a lot to you? How can you show God that He is valuable and worthy in your life?

Prayer/Ministry

If you are in a place right now where it is difficult for you to worship – for whatever reason, acknowledge it to the Lord. He already knows, He can handle it, and He has brought others around you who can pray for you.

Going Deeper

What do you think is needed for people to be able to persevere through difficult times?

Read Psalm 84:11,12

What does God promise for those who walk with Him?

Read 2 Corinthians 6:3-10

What were the circumstances that Paul faced on an ongoing basis? What was his attitude in the midst of these circumstances?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:9,10 and 2 Corinthians 12:9

What was the key to his positive and victorious attitude?

How does this help you still worship God in spite of the difficulties you might be facing?

Take a moment to thank God for His grace. Realize that His grace is enough to get you through the tough times of life.

Next Week's Memory Verse

Job 1:21, “...The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.”