

Sermon Notes Sunday, September 20, 2016 “How & Why We Worship: Real Worship” Psalm 95:1-7a; 100

How do you face very difficult troubles in your life with peace, with rest, with steadiness? I’ve come to realize that it’s not always mainly through petitionary prayer. Of course, the Bible is filled with petition, where you go to God, and you make your needs known, and you cry out, and you ask for God’s blessing and healing and all that. You *should* do that, you *will* do that, and we *have done* that. That’s in the Scripture of course. But the ultimate and main way to handle the troubles of life with peace is not just through petitionary prayer, but through worship.

This particular psalm is the classic text in the Bible about worship. It answers the questions, *what is worship, why should we worship, and how can we worship?*

We continue with the question we have been asking:

1. What is worship?

Last week I gave you two definitions. One from Warren Wiersbe which was: “Worship is the believer’s total response in mind, emotion, will and body to all that God is and says and does.” The answer of the Bible and the answer of this text is that *worship* is the act of ascribing ultimate value to something in a way that energizes and engages your whole person, your whole being.

Let me break that down for you. First, worship according to this text is something that engages every aspect of your being: mind, will, and emotions.

- Notice there are three calls. Verse 1 we’re called to worship God with the emotions. It’s emotional language. “Sing, shout aloud, thanksgiving, extol, music.”
- Secondly, in verse 6 we’re called to worship him with our wills. The language is that of submission, of volition. “Come, kneel, bow down.”
- Lastly, in v. 8 worship includes the language of reason. It’s the language of thinking. “Hear his voice. Listen to his voice. Accept what he says.” It’s the language of thinking and understanding.

This is extremely important to understand. If you go to some kind of ritual and you go through the ritual and you affirm the doctrines and beliefs without ever experiencing in your inner being a ravishing sense of beauty and joy, it's not worship. You could go to a service and experience great emotion, you could weep, you could have a tremendously emotional experience, but if it doesn't change the fundamental way in which you live it's not really worship.

All of the emotion, all of the worship, all of the life transformation, is coming from something the psalmist is doing. He's taking an inventory of the excellencies of God.

Many people believe in God, but they are completely unaffected, completely unaware of the value of Him. The difference between a common, just-get-along life, just go to God for help when I need it life, and a transformed life, a life just shot through with thanksgiving and joy, is not the difference between not believing in God and just believing in God. The difference is worship.

2. Why should we worship God?

Why should we work at this? The answer of the text (though you may not see it at first; it's in verse 3) is because you're already worshipping something. You're already ascribing ultimate value to something. Your whole life is already controlled and oriented toward something to which you've ascribed ultimate value. So you're either worshipping the wrong things or you're worshipping the only One whose worship will not distort your life, but the very One who created you and, in this worship, is the only way we will be transformed into the people we were created to be.

Look at verse 3. Here's the answer. *Why should we worship?* "For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods." Therefore, true worship is transferring the ultimate value from the things that your heart has already ascribed value to, to God. That's what changes your life.

The Bible says your ultimate problem is always what you worship. If you keep getting distressed, if you keep finding yourself rolled around

emotionally, and if you are constantly struggling with anxiety or despondency or nervousness or fear of what people think, or about life itself, nothing less than reassigning the ultimate value of your life from where it is to God will heal you and change you and bring you freedom and joy.

Every act of genuine worship brings healing, it's moving yourself, pulling your heart off of those things that control you onto the One thing that will not distort your life, but only bring genuine meaning and joy and thankfulness. Worship is always about giving thanks, and it results in a heart and an attitude of thankfulness.

Or Psalm 100 exhorts us this way!

The importance of worship is not just something you're supposed to do as a kind of duty; it's the ultimate need of your heart, the ultimate need of your life. Do you see why God seeks for people to worship Him? Not because He needs it, but because *you and I* need it. To worship is to wake up into the real world. The reason you have to worship God is it's the only way to be fully human.

So go to Him and say, "I see now I've been worshipping other things. I want to worship you." Everything you've ever really wanted is in His face. The psalmist says,

"... in [his face] your presence is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore."