



“FOCUS IN WORSHIP!”

Introduction:

- A. Worship -- A Command Of God; An Action To Which Christians Are Deeply Committed; An Action That DEMANDS Focus!
- B. A Recent Conversation With A Preacher Friend Of Mine -- He Is Very Disillusioned By What People Are Doing With Smart Phones In Worship.
 - 1. He has served communion and observed what people are doing.
 - 2. Also he has observed the sites that people are surfing during worship.
- C. Christians Should Find GREAT Joy And Anticipation About Worship.
 - 1. JOY to be there!
 - a. Ps. 122:1 “A song of Ascents. Of David. I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the LORD.’”
 - b. Hear the anticipation!
 - 2. You will not hear an appreciative Christian say, “Do I HAVE to!”
 - 3. Christians:
 - a. Understand the need.
 - b. Appreciate the privilege.
 - c. Anticipate the privilege!
- D. Oh There Is A Sense Of Commonality, Of Fellowship, And Of Comradery In Worship -- A Sense Of Strength, Brotherhood, And Blessing [“Blest Be The Tie That Binds Our Hearts In Christian Love!”] However, Our Worship Is So Much More Significant Than Those Around Us!
- E. Today’s Challenge -- “FOCUS In Worship!”

I. (Slide #2) Focus Upon The Godhead!

- A. We Are Here To Honor And Glorify The Father, The Son, And The Holy Spirit!
 - 1. God's command for His expectations to the Jews: Dt. 6:13 "You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him,"
 - 2. When Satan tempted Jesus by offering Him all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would just worship him, Jesus replied: "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, '*You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.*'" Mt. 4:10

- B. Our Focus Is Not Upon The Preacher, Not Even An Apostle, But On God!
 - 1. Christians worship with devotion, love, and heart-filled appreciation for the Godhead!

 - 2. Our focus must NOT be upon men!
 - a. When Cornelius tried to worship Peter, Peter responded: "As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped *him*.²⁶ But Peter lifted him up, saying, '**Stand up; I myself am also a man.**'"
 - b. When the people of Lystra began to worship Paul and Barnabas:
 - 1. "Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian *language*, 'The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!' ¹²And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes. ¹⁴But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, **they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out ¹⁵and saying, 'Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you,** and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,'" Ac. 14:11-15
 - 2. Paul and Barnabas were APPALLED that men were attempting to worship them!
 - c. Don't worship angels!
 - 1. Col. 2:18 "Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,"
 - 2. Rev. 19:10 When John fell to worship an angel: "And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, '*See that you do not do that!* I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. **Worship God!** For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'"
 - 3. Rev. 22:8,9 "Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹Then he said to me, '*See that you do not do that.* For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the

prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. **Worship God.**”

C. (Slide #3) Awe And Respect!

1. Bowing.
 - a. Ex. 34:8 “So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.”
 - b. II Chr. 20:18 “And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.”
 - c. Why bow? Because of utmost awe and respect!
2. Prostration.
 - a. Lying on the ground!
 - b. Idolatrous worshipers did that at Nebuchadnezzar’s image. “So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, *and* lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages **fell down and worshiped** the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.” Dn. 3:7
 - c. God’s people did it too!
 1. Gen. 17:3 “Then **Abram fell on his face**, and God talked with him”
 2. The wise men worshiped Him when they came to his house! Mt. 2:11 “And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and **fell down and worshiped Him**. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”
 3. After Peter and the fishermen caught the great catch of fish, “When **Simon Peter** saw *it*, he **fell down at Jesus’ knees**, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!’” Lk. 5:8
 - a. These professional fishermen had fished ALL NIGHT and caught nothing.
 - b. Yet, Jesus tells them to go back on the Sea and fish.
 - c. They caught enough fish to fill two boats.
 - d. Peter immediately realized Jesus’ power and began to worship Him!
3. Awesome respect and fear!
 - a. Ex. 19:10,11 “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. ¹¹And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.’”
 - b. Ps. 95:6 “Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.”

- c. Ps. 89:7 “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all *those* around Him.”
- 4. Glorifying Them!
 - a. I Chr. 16:29 “Give to the LORD the glory *due* His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!”
 - b. They deserve all of our glory!
- 5. Giving Thanksgiving!
 - a. Giving THANKS unto the Lord!
 - b. Ez. 3:11 “And they sang responsively, **praising and giving thanks to the LORD: ‘For *He is good*, For His mercy *endures* forever toward Israel.’** Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.”
- 6. (Slide #4) “Hosanna!”
 - a. “Save now!” [“save, rescue, savior!”]
 - b. Thank Them for all They have done to provide salvation for us!!!
- D. And Christians Rejoice In Christ!
 - 1. Phil. 3:3 “For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,”
 - 2. Our confidence exists ONLY because of Christ!
 - 3. Gal. 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

II. (Slide #5) Worship As God Commanded!

- A. Jn. 4:24 “God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship **in spirit** and **truth.**”
- B. Gen. 4:4 “Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,”
- C. Cain Did Not!
 - 1. If you do not worship as God commanded, He will not accept your worship!

2. Gen. 4:5-7 “but **He did not respect Cain and his offering**. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. ⁶So the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.’”
- D. What Did God Say When Nadab And Abihu Made An Unacceptable Offering?
1. Lev. 10:3 “And Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the LORD spoke, saying: **‘By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.’**” So Aaron held his peace.”
 2. When they offered unauthorized fire, God sent fire from heaven and consumed them immediately!
- E. Samuel’s Message To Saul -- I Sa. 15:22 “So Samuel said: ‘Has the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, *And* to heed than the fat of rams.’”
- F. The Point: Determine BEFOREHAND What God Expects; Do It; Have No Desire To Change Worship To Please Yourself; Just Do It Correctly And Have Your Focus Upon The Godhead!!!!

III. (Slide #6) Praise Them!

- A. Ps. 35:18 “I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people.”
- B. (Slide #7) Ps. 100:1,2 KJV “Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. ²Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.” [NKJV “Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! ²Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.”]
- C. Our Singing Is To Be Rooted In “Grace” [Gratitude; Thanksgiving!] Col. 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
- D. Praise Demands Our Awe; Praise Requires That We Show HEART-FELT Gratitude!

- E. We Must Be Really Engaged!
- F. Song Leaders -- Our Worship Must Be JOYFUL! Lead With Enthusiasm; Understand Crowd Dynamics; Help Brethren Feel That They Are Giving Praise To The Lord!

IV. (Slide #8) Appeal To Them In Prayer!

- A. As God's People Approach Him, They Understand Their Total Reliance Upon Him!
- B. Thus, "Give us this day our daily bread. Mt. 6:11
- C. Phil. 4:6,7 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
- D. Mt. 7:7-11 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"
- E. Ps. 27:13,14 "*I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living. ¹⁴ Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!"
- F. Jn. 15:5 "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."
- G. **(Slide #9)** And Understand The Power Of Prayer! Heb. 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

V. (Slide #10) Have Open Ears And An Eager Heart For God's Word!

- A. Is. 2:3 "Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."
- B. Heb. 4:12 "For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
- C. The Bereans are an example to all of focus during sermons [and Bible Classes]! Ac. 17:11 "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so."
- D. Be EAGER To Hear And To Apply God's Word To Your Life!

VI. (Slide #11) Focus Upon Christ's Sacrifice In The Lord's Supper! [Communion]

- A. I Cor. 11:17-31 "Now in giving these instructions I do not praise *you*, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. ²⁰Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. ²¹For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of *others*; and one is hungry and another is drunk. ²²What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*. ²³For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' ²⁵In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.' ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. ²⁷Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep. ³¹For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³²But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. ³³Therefore, my brethren,

when you come together to eat, wait for one another. ³⁴But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.”

B. Observe Paul’s Pointers:

1. Focus upon the communion aspect of the Lord’s Supper for EVERY Christian! (Don’t you make distinctions based upon wealth, etc.!)
2. Focus upon Christ’s Body and Blood! It is a REMEMBRANCE! 24,25
3. It is a PROCLAMATION of our faith and trust in the power of the Death of Jesus! 26 “I Believe In The One They Call Jesus!”
4. We can do this in an unworthy manner if our focus is not upon Jesus!
5. It is a time to focus upon ourselves and our relationship with Jesus!
6. Lack of focus brings disobedience, spiritual sickness, and can lead to separation from Christ!

C. It Is SO MUCH MORE Than A Piece Of Bread And A Sip Of Juice!!!!

D. It Is About JESUS!

VII.(Slide #12) Focus In Giving:

A. It Is NOT A Thoughtless, Flippant Action!

B. Traits Of Acceptable Contributions:

1. It is pre-planned and thought out! I Cor. 16:2 “On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”
2. It is rooted in a committed heart! II Cor. 8:5 “And not *only* as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and *then* to us by the will of God.”
3. It shows our love for the Lord! II Cor. 8:24 You show “the proof of your love.”
4. It is to be done JOYFULLY! II Cor. 9:7 “a cheerful giver!”

(Slide #13) Conclusion:

- A. Question -- Have You Lost The Wonder Of Worship?

- B. **(Slide #14)** Our Challenge -- To Be Better Focused Worshipers!

- C. Our Challenge -- To Suppress Things That May Distract Our Focus:
 - 1. People doing things in front of us -- sit near the front!

 - 2. Unruly or screaming children -- THANK GOD FOR CHILDREN IN WORSHIP! [Parents -- if they become disruptive, use the cry room!]

 - 3. Smart Phones and Apps -- Facebook, Google, Pop Up News Flashes, Et. Al.

 - 4. Bulletins we receive at the door.

 - 5. Bible Class Teachers -- Working on upcoming Bible Lessons during worship.

 - 6. Reading other materials and having our minds distracted from focus upon worship!

 - 7. Not controlling a “wandering mind!”

- D. **(Slide #15)** Our Goal -- To Develop A Focus In Worship, A Bond For Worshiping With Our Brethren, And A Joy That Causes Us To Proclaim: “I LOVE Worship!”