

a theology of worship

tim smith – acts 29 luncheon – session 1 – october 7th, 2009

what is worship?

- before we get practical we must get theological
- if we fail to define the nature and object of worship we create idolatrous false worship
 - nature: biblical context of worship
 - object: how does God desire our worship
- there is no middle ground in worship: you either worship God or satan: *if you are spiritual without the Holy Spirit, you are demonic, because they are the only other types of spirit!*
- a worship leader that does not study fails

doxa: glory, glorious, honor, praise, dignity, worship, splendor, brightness, magnificence, excellence, preeminence, grace, majesty, blessedness, extol, celebrate, luster, renowned, illustrious, worth, exalted

God's glory is eternal: John 17:5, John 17:24-25

Man's glory is finite: Heb 2:7, 1 Peter 1:24

Sin is creation rebelling against Creator: Isaiah 14:12-15 (Satan's rebellion is to "make myself like the Most High"), Genesis 3:4-5 (Satan tempts mankind with the same rebellion to be "like God")

Idolatry: Romans 1:21-23 (idolatry is exchanging the glory), Romans 1:25 (worshiping and serving the creature rather than Creator)

Glorify of Jesus: John 1:14-15 (as of the only Son from the Father), Hebrews 1:3 (Jesus is the exact imprint of His nature; the radiance of the glory of God), Hebrews 2:10 (makes a way for us to be brought back into glory through His suffering), John 12:27-28 (the purpose of Jesus' death is to glorify His name), Romans 6:4 (Christ was raised by the glory of the Father)

The Enemy's Plan: Satan wants to blind people to seeing the glory of God in the person of Jesus. He veils, misdirects, hides, and distracts from the radiance of God (Jesus).

Transformed by Glory: 2 Corinthians 3:18 (as we see Him and behold His glory, we are transformed into the same image)

Eternal Glory: Revelation 21:22-23 (the light of Heaven is the glory of God in the person of Jesus)

"It appears that all that is ever spoken of in the Scripture as an ultimate end of God's works is included in that one phrase, the glory of God." - Jonathan Edwards

Implications

1. All of life is worship.

- Worship is both gathered & scattered.
- We do not go to worship, but come worshipping.
- Worship is our response to God's initiation (the seeking Father, John 4:23)
- Worship is the continuous outpouring of all humanity.
- If we tell people that they can worship God by changing their behavior without a change in heart, we are preaching a totally different Gospel than the Gospel of the Scriptures.

2. God's Glory Should Move Us

- 1 Peter 1:8 (We should respond with joyful rejoicing that is inexpressible & full of glory)
- *So much of what we do or believe is based on the experiences we've seen rather than the Scriptures that we read.*
- *"God is glorified in His people by the way we experience Him, not merely by the way we think about Him. Indeed the devil thinks more accurate thoughts about God than a saint does in his lifetime. The problem is not his theology, but his desires. Oh how easy it is to think we are what we ought to be when the emotions are made peripheral. Mere thoughts and mere deeds are manageable by the carnal heart." - John Piper*
- Scripture does not suggest ways that we are to be moved, it commands them! (Joy, love, anger, etc.)
- Scripture commands that we respond to God's glory with the full range of both inward and outward expression! Every time joy is mentioned in the Psalms, it is linked with jumping/shouting/dancing!
- Something moves you. What is it?
- *"The duty of singing praises to God seems to be given wholly to excite and express religious affections." - Jonathan Edwards*

Preference & Baggage

- anti-theology: don't define yourself by what you're not
- ie: Mars Hill is not charismatic or American evangelical
- Where is your baggage?
- CS Lewis *Transposition* in the Weight of Glory
- the Spirit fills our limited expression with new meaning

First Things First (Priorities)

- **Heart** before practice (If you want people to be moved, *you* and not your plans, have to be moved)
- **Private** before public (If you want others to be moved in public, you have to be moved when alone)
- **Singers** before performers (You must be moved to sing before singing before others to move them)
- **Worshippers** before worship leaders (You must worship on your own, apart from having others to lead in worship)
- **Family** before congregation (this hits hard: according to 1 Timothy 3, we have to lead our family in worship before we lead our church in worship)

Discussion Questions

from Gordon Duncan, pastor of Sovereign King Church in Garner, NC

- Are satisfied merely knowing Jesus?
- Have you seen God's glory?
- Is God's glory the primary motivation of your life?
- Does God's glory move you?
- Does your private life match your public ministry?