

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 27 Jun 2021

Sermon Title : What is Worship?

Speaker : Rev Eddie Ho

Text : Philippians 2:10-11

INTRODUCTION

What is worship? Worship is giving worth, honour and reverence to God, whom we find worthy of our admiration and praise.

The God we worship is the Almighty Triune God:

- The 1st person of the Godhead is our Creator of heaven and earth, from whom all lives come and owe to, our Abba Father, a good God, a God who loves us and who desires life for all mankind. He is also God the Father who sent His Son, Jesus to save us from sin and death.
- The 2nd person of the Godhead is His Son, Jesus, who despite being God, did not consider Himself equal to God, but took on the form of a servant, in appearance of a man, and humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2:5-8). He died for our sake to rescue us from the power of sin and redeem us from the condemnation of sin which is death. He is also the One, who was, who is, and who is to come, and who gives us the Holy Spirit.
- The 3rd person of the Godhead is the Holy Spirit who enables us to live life to its fullness.

Worship is our *only* response to God

Philippians 2:10-11 affirms that at the name of Jesus, every knee in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, will bow and every tongue confess Jesus as Lord. In Revelation 5:13, John says, he heard “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: “To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might forever and ever!” This is worship! When created creatures including demons meet Jesus, they bow their knees and worship Him. Worship is the *only* response when created creatures meet God.

How should we worship?

We have our own idea of what good worship is and our preference on how to express love to God in our worship. Some may prefer online over physical church

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

services. We may choose the type of song with a style that suit us most, be it a traditional hymn or a contemporary worship song. But what we should do is to ask what our Abba Father wants or expects from us in worship because worship is about Him and what He wants, not us.

God's original idea of worship

If worship is the *only* response when created creatures meet God, then the Garden of Eden was the original place of worship where human beings were created to meet God.

In the original place of worship, God assigned two roles to Adam and Eve:

1. They were to 'work' (Gen 2:15)

In the beginning of time God put Adam and Eve were created in the Garden of Eden to 'work. In the original language, this is the same word as *service* and *serving* in Numbers 4:23-24 which were the kind of work priests were to do in the temple. The Hebrew word 'to work' also mean to serve, cultivate, minister, take care, or in our modern language – to disciple. In other words, Adam and Eve were called to work as 'priests' in the original place of worship.

2. They were to 'keep' (Gen 2:15))

To 'keep' means to guard and obey. It doesn't mean to 'keep' for their own consumption but to guard the sanctity of worship by obeying God's commands.

In other words, Adam and Eve (human beings) were created not just to worship, but to lead creation in worship. We were created to be worship leaders or priests. That's why 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV) says, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession..."

Worship ceased when we became disobedient

Then something terrible happened. Adam and Eve became disobedient to God. They stopped the '*keeping*' part of worship leading creation away from God. From that moment onwards, worship ceased. The bond and communion with God was broken.

But God wants fellowship and communion with us and so He set a mission to reclaim creation to restore communion. John Piper aptly puts it, "Mission exists because worship does not." Mission is God's plan to reclaim worship.

God restores our worship of Him through His Son

As a temporary solution in the Old Testament, God set the Israelites apart to be His priests; and set up a replica of the original place of worship in the form of the tabernacle. He displayed the power of His presence in worship. In the desert, He appeared in the cloud by day and fire by night over the tabernacle. His glory filled the

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

temple when Solomon built and dedicated the temple to God. But these were just temporary solutions.

Then God provided us a permanent solution. He sent His Son, Jesus to us to fulfil the requirements of Old Testament worship. Jesus became the Passover Lamb, who restores our worship of God because He:

- Took the sins of the world,
- Paid the penalty for our sins to save us from sin and death,
- Removed the veil in the Holy of Holies so that we can approach God,
- Reconciled us to Him so that we can commune with Him in worship.

On the night Jesus was betrayed, He taught the disciples some important lessons on worship. He commanded them to love one another as He has loved them (John 13:34-35). This is the '*keeping*' part of worship.

He also taught them a radical teaching on serving by washing His disciples' feet. This is the '*working*' part of worship.

But the most memorable and shocking teaching on worship was a sumptuous meal! Jesus took bread, and after blessing it, broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body... Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant.." (Matthew 26:26-28) Worship is a communal meal where we were to eat His body and drink of His blood.

Two Application Points

We are created not just to worship, but to lead each other in worship.

1. Worship is '*working*' and '*keeping*' as priests
 - We are to serve, cultivate, minister and care for our brothers and sisters.
 - We are to obey His commands and keep the sanctity of worship.
2. Worship is not just about 'me' expressing my emotions to God, but 'we' responding to God – Worship is a communal 'meal'.
 - We are different individuals joined together by the baptism of water into one body in worship. Despite our differences and disagreements, we are created to worship together as one family as we eat of His body and drink of His blood.

CONCLUSION

We are called to worship by '*working*' and '*keeping*', as priests. May we always worship God the way He wants to be worshipped and come together with our brothers and sisters to eat of His body and drink of His blood as one family in Christ.

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

As a group, spend some time to share your success and struggle in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do at the previous meeting.

A. Review Sermon Content

Purpose: *Reflect on one key takeaway.*

Appoint someone to read Philippians 2:10-11 twice, slowly.

1. At the end of the reading, the reader will say, ‘This is the Word of the Lord.’

All to respond, “Thanks be to God.” Our response reminds us that this is the Word of the Lord. Just as God had spoken to His people in the past, He is still speaking to us even today, right now.”

- a. As God's word was read, which verse speaks to you the most?

- b.
 - (i) What is the key takeaway for you from the sermon “What is Worship”?
 - (ii) How will you align the way you live to your key takeaway?

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

2. What is worship to you and why is worship our appropriate response to God?
 - a. What does God's expectation of worship tell you about God?
 - b. Why is it important to worship God the way He wants to be worshipped?
 - c. Worship is communal in the Garden of Eden, in Old Testament worship and also in Jesus' life. What does this mean to you?

- 3a. How have you been worshipping God in '*working*' and '*keeping*', as priests?
- 3b. (i) Has your worship been about responding to God as His people or about your preference?
 - (ii) What is one thing you need to change in your worship of God?
- 3c. How can your group members encourage or help you achieve 3b (ii) above, for the following week(s) till your next meeting?

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

C) Testimonies and Prayer

Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.

- 4) Share your testimony on how God has transformed your experience or life in corporate worship despite challenges you encountered.

OR

Give thanks to God for helping you to worship God as one family and one body despite differences, such as your preference in music and style of worship.

5. With a prayer partner, take time to pray for the concerns in 3b(ii) and 3c above, submitting to God your preferences in worship and seeking to please and honour Him the way He wants.

As a group, pray also for the Spirit's unity to be upon your group and the church so you can come together to worship God as one family and one body despite your differences.

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7