



A BLENDED VIEW OF WORSHIP

A GFC DISTINCTIVE



WORSHIP IS THE ACT OF ASCRIBING PRAISE AND HONOUR TO GOD. IT IS THE ACT OF GIVING HIM GLORY. A BLENDED VIEW OF WORSHIP DOES THIS BY BLENDING MODERN AND ANCIENT SONGS. IT MIXES MUSIC FROM THE PAST WITH MUSIC FROM THE PRESENT. WE DO THIS AS A CHURCH FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS.

1. GOD LOVES VARIETY

The Bible says that God loves variety. He is a God Who loves different things. He could have created all of us the same but He did not. He could have created all of our music the same as well but He did not do that, either. He created many different styles of music as Colossians 3:16 says:

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Here Paul mentions several styles of music that we can offer to the Lord. He says that, if the Word of God dwells in us richly, then we will sing “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.”

It would help to explain what these words mean. “Psalms” refers to Old Testament Psalms put to music. It refers to tunes with lyrics from the Bible. “Hymns” and “songs of praise” refers to songs that were arranged differently. They were written with lyrics from outside of the Bible. They were composed by the early church but the point is that God loves variety. He enjoys many different styles of music.

In fact, He likes this so much that the Scripture mentions several different instruments that were used in worship. For example, Psalm 150 mentions the trumpet, the harp, and the lyre in verse 3. It mentions the timbre, stringed instruments, and the pipe in verse 4. It mentions loud cymbals and resounding cymbals in verse 5.

Then he says, “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord” (verse 6). This means that everyone can do this. Anyone who has breath can sing to the Lord because the Lord loves diversity. He loves all of the creatures that He has made.

2. GOD DESERVES OUR BEST

A second reason why we hold to a blended view of worship is because God deserves our best. He deserves the finest music that we have to offer from the past and the present. The church has been worshipping the Lord for thousands of years. It has been making music for centuries and we want to take advantage of that. We want to sing new songs to the Lord as well as old.

The Bible has a lot to say about this subject as well. It tells us that the Lord enjoys new songs as well as old. For example, the Book of Psalms is a collection of ancient songs that were written by the Jews. It is a collection of choruses that date back thousands of years to the time of David (Psalm 23) and Moses (Psalm 90). Yet, even within this ancient collection, there are several references to new songs. Psalm 40:3 says, "He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God." Psalm 149:1 says, "Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of the godly ones."

Few things are as exciting as singing a new song. It brings joy to the heart and encouragement to the soul which is why the Psalmist mentions it here. He says that the Lord "put a new song in my mouth." He gave new music to sing along with the ancient songs because the Lord approves of both. He wants us to give Him the finest music that we have to offer from this age or any age.

One of the ancient Psalms sums it up well when it says:

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth.

Serve the Lord with gladness;

Come before Him with joyful singing.

Know that the Lord Himself is God;

It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves (Psalm 100:1-3).

The Psalmist says that we need to sing joyfully to the Lord. Why? Because He is God. He created us. We are His people and, therefore, He deserves our very best.

3. GOD WANTS US TO FOCUS ON THE SPIRIT AND THE TRUTH.

A third reason why we hold to a blended view of worship is because God wants us to focus on the spirit and the truth. In other words, He does not want us to focus on style as much as the heart behind it. He wants us to think about the reason why we sing. It does not matter if a song is popular or not; it matters if its words are true and glorify God.

Jesus told the woman at the well in John 4:23:

But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

In this passage, Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman. He talks to a person from a different culture. She listened to different songs. She played different instruments. However, Jesus says that “an hour is coming, and now is” when that will not matter anymore. Now that Jesus is here, the focus of our worship has changed. It is not about the external things anymore as much as the internal things because that is what God cares about. He cares about the heart.

In verse 24, Jesus explains this further when He says, “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” This means that, since God is spirit, our worship must mirror that. It must be spiritual, or sincere, and it must be built upon the truth. It must be built upon sound doctrine because that is what pleases God the most. He would rather see us worship with good motives than with a good melody.

James Montgomery Boice says:

True worship occurs when that part of man, his spirit, which is akin to the divine nature, actually meets with God and . . . [praises] Him.[i]

This is the most important thing in our worship. This is the most important thing in our music. Our spirit needs to meet with God. It needs to praise Him. Everything else is secondary to that.

[i] James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John*, Volume 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999) 297.

CONCLUSION

Since God is important to us, worship is important to us as a church. It is of the utmost priority and, as such, we mix music from the past along with music from the present. We try to find the best that there is to offer from this age or any age.

We do this because God loves variety and He deserves our best. We also do it because He wants us to focus on the spirit and the truth. The most important thing is that our worship is sincere and built upon the Scriptures. We want it to be from the heart and full of the Word of God which is why this is a distinctive of our church.

If you have any questions about the subject of worship or anything else in this pamphlet, we would love to hear from you.



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