



Offering Acceptable Worship Part 4: Getting Practical and Offering Some Suggestions

January 25, 2015

Text: Hebrews 12:28-29

- The first Sunday of January, we said that an area of ministry that needs some attention within CRCC is the area of holiness: our practical holiness and to a much greater degree, our LORD's infinite, perfect holiness.
- We said that we need to process our Lord's holiness as it relates to:
 1. The life of the local church: how God's **holiness** should impact how we interact.
 2. The outworking of home life: how God's **holiness** should affect our homes.
 3. And our theme for January: The corporate worship of the local church...how God's **holiness** should impact our gathering.
- Our goal this Consecration is to come out of it more **reverent** and in **awe** of God, and prayerfully that change would impact our lives, our worship, and our homes! We have learned that one way to cultivate this change is to be reminded about WHO we are worshipping. He is HOLY.
- Our text commands Christians to be grateful. As a result of that gratefulness, we are to offer God acceptable worship WITH reverence and awe because our God is a consuming fire.
- To reverence God acceptably is to have a heart that is:
 - a. Aware of one's own sin, and is therefore not overly proud or boastful.
 - b. Modest...seeking to place all attention upon Christ in every way.
 - c. Childlike in faith and fear, simply willing to obey God.
 - d. Absolutely, positively unwilling to offend Him!
- Biblical worship is imbued with a **circumspect passion; controlled and biblically-governed forms and expressions; hearts that are prayerfully prepared and are thinking through what honors God instead of being ruled by emotion.**
- God is a God of order! We've learned that there is worship and conduct that is acceptable to Him, and there is worship and conduct that is NOT! Therefore, our worship should be:
 - a. **Passionate**, but not out of control
 - b. **Expressive**, but according to Scripture
 - c. **Fervent**, but with a reverent fear

Before we Get Practical...

1. Please know that CRCC is in NO WAY trying to command that which Scripture doesn't teach.
 - *1Co 4:6 ESV I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.*
 - *Pro 30:6 ESV Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.*
2. Nor are we trying to limit personal (yet biblical) expressions of love towards our God.
 - *1Pe 5:2-4 ESV shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; (3) not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. (4) And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*
3. There seems to be such a resistance in the Body of Christ these days to practical authority in any form. Therefore, we humbly submit these things to you as good Bereans.
 - *Act 17:11 ESV Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*

Offering Some Suggestions on Acceptable (Corporate) Worship

1. Preparation

- a. *Exo 19:10-11 ESV* the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments (11) and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.
- b. *John 4:23 ESV* But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.
- c. **Suggestion:** Set aside time Saturday evenings to pray, consecrate, read Scripture and repent. Ask for the Spirit's presence in your home and our church the next day. Focus your family on the truth of God's Word and the Holiness of God. Get to bed early. Awake refreshed and ready!

2. Prayer

- a. *Luk 6:12 ESV* In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God.
- b. *Act 1:13-14 ESV* And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. (14) All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.
- c. **Suggestion:** Prayer was a huge part of early church worship. Make fervent prayer a part of each day. On Sunday, arrive early for prayer. Help us saturate our gathering with the prayers of the saints, which God loves!
- d. *Rev 8:3-4 ESV* And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, (4) and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.

3. Leadership

- a. *1Co 14:33 ESV* For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,
- b. The worship of God is not a free-for-all. Church leaders are responsible for order.
- c. God, in his providence has designed the church to look a lot like the home should look.
- d. **Suggestion:** Keep leaders in your prayers. Look at God's New Testament commands in this area. He requires men to lead and speak authoritatively, all to sing, all to pray and use their gifts, and all hear and heed the preached Word. (1 Tim 2:11-14, 1 Cor 14:34-38; 1 Cor 12:7; Col 3:16; Jam 1:22)

4. Clothing

- a. *1Ti 2:8-10 ESV* I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; (9) likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, (10) but with what is proper for women who profess godliness--with good works.
- b. Modesty is an issue of the heart! (1 Pet 3:3-6)
- c. **Suggestion:** Ask the right questions as you dress for worship:
 1. Lord, how shall I respectfully present myself to you and my brothers and sisters?
 2. Am I drawing undue attention to myself?
 3. Is anything contrary to your Word?
 4. Is this outfit, "Too Much, Too Little, or Too Tight?" Great article on this by Robert Spinney:

5. **Music**

- a. *Eph 5:18-20 ESV* And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, (19) addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, (20) giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- b. *Col 3:16 ESV* Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
- c. **Suggestion:** Sing! With passion and a heart fixed on Christ...Sing! Our song services literally consist of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with an effort to sing to and about the Lord...who He is and what He has done! Help us! Open up your mouth and SING! 😊

6. **Postures**

- a. Praise! *Psa 150:1-6 ESV* Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! (2) Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness! (3) Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! (4) Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! (5) Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! (6) Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!
- b. Clapping: *Psa 47:1 ESV* To the choirmaster. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah. Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
- c. Kneeling: *Act 20:36 ESV* And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.
- d. Uplifted Hands: *Psa 134:2 ESV* Lift up your hands to the holy place and bless the LORD! (Also 1 Tim 2:8)
- e. Dance: *Psa 149:3 ESV* Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!
- f. **Suggestion:** as you are led, use them all!

Note: In the church there is what I call “selective exegesis.” This is when we take the whole Bible on some issues, the Old Testament only on some, the New Testament only on others, and only parts of the New Testament on some issues, ignoring other parts—sometimes in the same chapter!!! This process seems to be based on our preferences. Worship is one of those areas in which this is often done: “No clapping in the New Testament! But, um...singing the Psalms that exuberantly exhort clapping is ok...” Huh? 😊

7. **Preaching, Teaching, and Reading**

- a. *2Ti 4:2 ESV* preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.
- b. *1Ti 3:2 ESV* Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,
- c. *1Ti 4:13 ESV* Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.
- d. **Suggestion:** Listen closely, discern truth, apply to your life, and use as a part of your family worship. Attentiveness to the Word is important: *Rev 2:29 ESV* He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

8. **Communion**

- a. *1Co 11:26 ESV* For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
 - b. **Suggestion:** Prepare for the Lord's Table. Do some self-examination. Don't miss the Lord's Table. Teach your children about its importance and its role in causing us to remember and obey Christ.
9. **Fellowship**
- a. *Act 2:42 ESV* And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
 - b. **Suggestion:** Understand that fellowship is a part of worship and is a great benefit to so many. Don't run away after services so quickly! Somebody needs you! 😊
10. **Home** Life
- a. **Suggestion:** Take it all home and repeat! Who we are and how we worship at home should be who we are and how we worship at church! Our homes are important!
 - b. *Deu 6:5-9 ESV* You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. (7) You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (8) You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. (9) You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

This list is not exhaustive, but it is a decent start. Let's offer our God more acceptable worship!

Amen.