

Worship as the Fine Texture of Life in Christ

The Key to the Transformed Life

The Kind of Life God Has In Mind for Us...

“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”

(Col. 3:17)

Cp. I Cor. 10:31; Deut. 30:8-9, Ps. 119:89-91;
I Pet. 4:10-11

What Would Such a Life Be Like?

- A life cluttered with “religious” efforts?
No!
- But by an overall orientation of all we are,
“Body, soul & spirit” – “Sanctified entirely.”
(I Thess. 5:23)

How Shall We Achieve Such an Orientation?

- Not, of course, on our own
- When it comes it will be of Grace, but not passively
- Col. 3:17 is clearly something for us to do.

We can come to live in Col. 3:17 by cultivating a habit of constant worship of the trinity, in such a way that it penetrates and orients every aspect of our selves and our lives, without our giving special thought to it.

What is Worship?

- It is active, intentional, something we do. –
Though, again, not something we do on our own.
- Christian worship, Biblical worship, is focusing upon God as supremely worthy – “The being that which none greater can be thought of.”

“In worship we engage ourselves with, dwell upon, and express the supreme greatness, beauty and goodness of God, primarily through thought and through devotion of our will, but usually also with the aid of words, rituals and symbols, frequently in union with others.”

(The Spirit of the Disciplines, p. 177
See Rev. 4:11 & 5:12-13)

- Worship is “admiration to the point of wonder and delight.” (Words from A.W. Tozer)
- An old hymn says:
In our astonished reverence we confess
Thine uncreated loveliness.
- The irresistible response is “Hallowed be Thy name.” (Possibly shouted.)

But to be in this inner condition of mind and will is something we choose (in interaction with grace). It is not involuntary, except in very rare cases, and then briefly. (Isa. 6, for example.)

You must choose and cultivate it.

A worship leader is not just someone who does snappy, exhilarating services, to the enjoyment of all; but someone who is engaged in “admiration of the Trinitarian God to the point of wonder and delight,” and who is enabled to guide the group into it.

The Danger of the External – and Especially the Collective – Side of Worship

- “This people draw near Me with their mouth, but their heart is far from Me.”
(Isa. 29:13, Mark 7:6)

The Danger of the External – and Especially the Collective – Side of Worship

- “The true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be his worshippers.”
(John 4:23; cp. II Chron. 16:9)

The Danger of the External – and Especially the Collective – Side of Worship

- Be careful what you sing!

“Worship is the single most powerful force in completing and sustaining restoration in the whole person. It puts into abeyance every evil tendency in every dimension of the self,” so long as it prevails. (Renovation of the Heart, p. 107)

It is the only safe place
for the human being to stand.

How can we abide in worship until it becomes the steady, enduring orientation of every aspect of our being?

...So that Col 3:17 is realized in us?

By the renewing of our mind,
which is the primary forum of
worship in persons who have chosen
to devote themselves to God.

“Be ye transformed
by the renewing of your mind.”
(Rom. 12:2)

This is achieved by devoting
your body (Rom.12:1) to
in-corpor-ation
of the word of God.

(Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2; John 15:28; Col. 3:16)

Frank Laubach's “Game With Minutes.”

Develop the habit of returning the mind to God once every minute or so. This habit can be developed over time – if you want it.

- Experiment with ways of keeping the Greatness and Goodness of God hovering before and about the mind and the body and the social setting. Meet others under the Trinitarian presence.
- “I have set the Lord always before me.
(Ps. 16:8-9)
- Marinate yourself in the word of God.

“Content with beholding His face,
My all to His pleasure resigned;
No changes of season or place
Would make any changes in my mind.
While blessed with a sense of His love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove
If Jesus would dwell with me there.”

(John Newton)