

Worship is Stronger Than Praise (YC 2006)

Acts 13:36 (NLT) After David had served his generation (TIMELY) according to the will of God (TIMELESS), he died and was buried.

This generation has to have a life-altering experience with God! Religion won't do! Church as usual won't do! Tradition won't do! It may have satisfied people even a generation ago, but it will not work today. So, if there ever was a time for us to "get out of our comfort zone" it is NOW!

The greatest danger is always at the edge (where the church meets the culture). But so is the greatest opportunity for rescue and redemption. The New Testament church always lived "on the edge" – never safe, just one step from disaster if God didn't intervene! Jude felt the tension:

Jude 1:22-24 [22] And of some have compassion, making a difference: [23] And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. [24] Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

The problem with living on the edge is that some people try to push you over and other people try to pull you back. It's dangerous on the edge – people actually fall off the edge from time to time! But there is absolutely no chance for the church to impact our culture unless we get on the edge! Almost all of the growth in any church comes from the edge, because the trend is for Christians to disconnect from unsaved people the longer they are around church. That's not the way Jesus – the friend of sinners – did it. That's not the way Paul – all things to all men – did it. They were not isolationists! They engaged their culture!

Missionary C.T. Studd said, "Some want to live within the sound of Church or Chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.

That's the spirit of Jude, of Paul, of Jesus, of the New Testament church!

Many Apostolic people have gotten too comfortable with the status quo, and I would even have to include some of my ministry colleagues among them. Church has become a comfortable place, a place that is always the same. The same friends, the same events, the same songs, the same sermons, the same faces, the same size, the same methods, and the same results! That mentality is an affront to God, who called us to impact our culture with the life-changing gospel.

Over 70% of North Americans do not attend a Christian church of any kind! The fortress mindset, the bunker mentality will not work today!

To grow, have revival, and do the will of God, our local churches may occasionally have to change their METHODS. However, you can be assured that we will never change our MESSAGE. To change a method doesn't mean eliminating the old, but incorporating the old within the new. Notice that Israel did two contrasting things when they left Egypt:

Moses took with him the bones of Joseph (Exodus 13:19). Those bones were the symbol of the Hebrews' history, prompting them in their struggle to remember, equipping them in their war against forgetting. But Israel also plundered the Egyptians (Exodus 3:21) when they left – they used the inventions of the Egyptians to do the will of God in their own nation.

We need to do what Ezekiel did (Ezekiel 37) – we need to make those old bones live! Use every bit of modern technology and method, but keep ourselves tied to our heritage, making it come alive!

I may use the technology of a new generation, but I have the "bones" of the pioneers in me! I want to make those bones live in my generation!

AND WITH THAT DIFFICULT BALANCE FIRMLY IN MIND ...

Exodus 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

We do "praise" better than any generation has ever done it (IMHO!). Praise styles change from generation to generation – I know that! But worship is not a style ... because **worship is stronger than praise!**

PRAISE is an expression of approval or admiration, of gratitude and devotion for blessings received. Praise of God is the acknowledging of His perfections, works, and benefits.

WORSHIP is the act of paying honor to a deity, and the Hebrew and Greek words reflect the meanings "to bow down, to prostrate oneself before another, to fall down in adoration or honor, to kneel before someone, to offer something or serve someone.

I know we sometimes use the words interchangeably. I know both praise and worship are powerful ... but **worship is stronger than praise!**

Praise says, "Thank you God, for what you've done for ME!"

2 Chronicles 20:22 And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

2 Chronicles 5:13 And when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD;

Psalm 9:11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings.

Psalm 18:3 I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

Psalm 22:3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Psalm 98:4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Psalm 100:4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

Psalm 113:3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name is to be praised.

Psalm 107:8,15,21,31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Psalm 150:6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Isaiah 61:3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

PRAISE WILL BE DIFFERENT IN EVERY GENERATION, BUT EVERY GENERATION MUST LEARN TO PRAISE THE LORD!

Psalm 145:4 One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

IF WE DON'T PRAISE THE LORD, WE'RE GOING TO PRAISE SOMETHING ELSE ... AND IF WE DON'T PRAISE THE LORD, SOMETHING OR SOMEONE ELSE IS GOING TO PRAISE HIM!

Luke 19:39-40 ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. ⁴⁰ And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, **if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.**

The Bible is filled with praise! We don't apologize for our exuberance in worshipping God. We only apologize that more churches (and more of our own people) are not this way! With so many commandments in the Bible to praise God, who in their right mind could call themselves a Christian and not worship with exuberance?!

There are 206 bones in my skeleton supporting me, but really it's God holding me up with His everlasting arms – **for this, I give Him praise!**

There are 600 muscles in my body allowing me to move, but really it's in Him that I live and move and have my being – **for this, I give Him praise!**

There are 2 million optic nerve cells in my eyes that let me see, but really it's God that has removed my spiritual blindness – **for this, I give Him praise!**

I have a heart the size of my fist that pumps 10,000 liters of blood every day, and there are 60,000 miles of blood vessels in my body, but really it's His precious blood that gives me life – **for this, I give Him praise!**

I have a brain weighing 3 pounds and 100 billion neurons in my central nervous system feeding me thousands of pieces of information every second, but really I only need to know that my Redeemer lives and sense that He's here in this place right now – **for this, I give Him praise!**

There are 8.4 million creatures on this planet, but only human beings have the ability to speak the praises of God! PRAISE HIM!

We do praise better than any generation has ever done it (IMHO!). Praise styles change from generation to generation – I know that! But worship is not a style ... because **worship is stronger than praise!**

You can be a praiser without being a real worshipper, but you can't be a real worshipper without also being a praiser.

Praise says, "Thank you God, for what you've done for ME!"

VIDEO CLIP: It's All About Me

I LOVE TO PRAISE GOD ... BUT THIS STOPS ME COLD ...

In the latter days there will be ...

- *an overemphasis on power rather than on righteousness;*
- *a great emphasis on praise to a God they no longer pray to – it will become easier to celebrate than to agonize;*
- *a strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit and gifts rather than on the Lordship of Jesus Christ.*

Worship says, “God I want to do something for YOU – here I am!”

God wants his people to worship him. This is made clear in both the Old Testament (Exodus 34:14) and the New Testament (John 4:23).

Exodus 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

John 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

First Mention Principle: Because of the unchangeable nature of God and His Word, the first time a subject is mentioned in Scripture a pattern is established at that point which remains unchanged throughout the remainder of the Bible. It is the truth with which that subject stands connected in the mind of God, and it impacts on all other occurrences.

Example: Satan is always a deceiver (serpent), etc.

Leah’s children:

- Reuben – because the Lord has looked on my affliction
- Simeon – because the Lord has heard that I was hated
- Levi – now this time my husband will be joined to me
- Judah (finally!) – now I will praise the Lord

Genesis 29:35 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I **praise** the LORD: therefore she called his name **Judah**; and left bearing.

Genesis 22:5 (NIV) He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will **worship** and then we will come back to you."

PRAISE IS ABOUT “GETTING” / WORSHIP IS ABOUT “GIVING”

That’s why there are dozens of Scriptures in the Bible that associate worship with bowing down, bringing offerings, falling down, kneeling, faces to the ground, holiness, etc.

The New Testament takes the terminology of the Old Testament worship and re-interprets it for us to describe a radically new way of worship.

Under the Old Covenant the people brought “the fruit of their fields,” but under the New Covenant we bring “the fruit of our lips” ...

Hebrews 13:15-16 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

(continually - "his praise shall continually be in my mouth" - praise that sounds like a chant - like a crazy person talking to himself!)

Psalms 34:1-8 ¹ I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. ² My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. ³ O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. ⁴ I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. ⁵ They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. ⁶ This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. ⁷ The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. ⁸ O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

VIDEO CLIP: Pakistan (worship can do what praise can't do)

Under the Old Covenant the people brought a “whole burnt offering” (a whole animal offered to God), but under the New Covenant we offer our “whole life” to God! Not a whole animal to be killed, but a whole life to be lived! Because we have received the ultimate blessing, we can give the ultimate thank you, and sign over the title deed of our life to God.

1 Chronicles 16:29 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

The devil says, “You can praise God, but just worship me!”

Matthew 4:8-9 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

ILLUSTRATION: TITLE DEED

Worship is not a “style” ... it is a “lifestyle.”
Because worship is stronger than praise!