

Celebrate with gladness

There is a hymn that I love. The writer says, **“Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me, all his wondrous compassion and purity...”** For sure, others won’t see the beauty inside of us, if we stack our toolkit with negative energy. The question then is what brings excitement in your spirit?

What brings excitement to your spirit?

1. Canada beat the US in football?
2. Or the Raptors beat the New York Knicks in an NBA finals
3. Or Andre DeGrasse leading the Canadian relay team to victory in Paris Olympics
4. Or what about hockey or baseball? -
5. Or Summer McIntosh dominating in the swimming pool?
6. Do you absolutely love to see a great play?
7. Do you get excited and shout when you see a touch down, a home run, a goal, or a slam-dunk?
8. Do you enjoy entering the gates of a ballpark, a hockey rink, or a stadium?
9. Do you love the excitement?
10. Do you vicariously bask in the glory of your team’s victory?

Or it may not be any of those. But everyone gets excited about something

1. The birth of a grandchild
2. The prospect of a new home, or car, or promotion

So let me ask some another questions.

1. Are you excited about God?
2. Do you love Him? Do you show similar excitement about worship?
3. Do you enjoy entering His gates with praise?
4. Do you shout for joy and praise His name with joyful songs?

It isn't wrong to shout for a team, to support them, to talk about how great they are. But the question is, "Do you know that you are called to give the same, if not more, devotion and dedication to the Lord as you do to your favorite team?"

You are called to glorify the Lord, to spend the same kinds of energy on Him. In fact, He even tells you how to glorify Him. Did you know that you are called to glorify the Lord and that the Lord even tells you how to do it?

Psalm 95: 1 – Come let us sing for joy to the Lord, let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation

So Psalm 100 says, "Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

2 Worship the LORD with gladness; COME before him with joyful songs.

3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his;

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

That sounds like worship

So what is worship? Offer **7 underlining understandings of worship**

1. **Worship is adoration.** The word "worship" means to bow down before God. It comes from the Old English word "worthship." This word brings to mind the proclamation **of Revelation 5:12: "Worthy is the Lamb to receive honor and glory and blessing."**

When we begin to get a glimpse of the reality of God, the natural reaction is to worship Him.

In our worship...

1. We are declaring God's worth.
2. We are paying reverent homage and respect.
3. We are offering praise.
4. We are responding to God's greatness.

Worship is the highest form of love. Worship is our reply to what God has done. It is a "thank You" that refuses to be silenced. We're taking God seriously. God is enthroned through the worship of His people. The hymn writer says, "O Come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!"

2. Worship is celebration. Today we are talking about CELEBRATING WITH GLADNESS. In Luke 14, Jesus compared the Kingdom of God to a party! God is the Host, and we're invited. We do so with joy and enthusiasm. God is alive, and He's caused us to come alive in the new birth. Worship is not the funeral of a dead deity; it is a celebration of the exciting, exhilarating presence of a living Lord who makes possible our hope and joy. Worship celebrates what God has done in Christ, and what He is now doing in the world. Because we take God seriously, we approach Him in worship with expressions of joy!

3. Worship is spiritual. Jesus said, "God is Spirit, and His worshippers must worship in spirit and truth," John 4:24

1. Reminding us that there are matters of eternal significance;
2. Reminding us that ultimately, we answer to God;
3. Reminding us that we need Him every hour.
4. Reminding us that we must be vulnerable to God
5. Worship involves both faith and feeling. It is both spiritual and spirited.

Warren Wiersbe writes, "We're not worshipping God because of what He will do for us, but because of what He is to us."

4. Worship is proclamation. All the world reveals God's glory--our worship proclaims it! We are declaring the majesty of God. Our worship is directed

both upward and outward, to God and to all people. It is our means of expressing our commitment to God and our dependence on Him. Through worship we are stating what God has done for us. When we tell people what we do on Sundays, we are admitting that we cannot effectively journey through life alone. Worship keeps us focused as we focus on God. Our worship inspires our confidence and from that we gain encouragement to face the world. (Because he lives I can face tomorrow...)

5. **Worship is offering.** We bring "a sacrifice of praise to God," Hebrews 13:15. We bring ourselves as "living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is our spiritual worship," Romans 12:1.

In worship we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves. Our singing and our prayers remind us that **all we have, and all that we are and all the we ever hope to be** come from Above, not from within. We offer ourselves to God in worship. We're saying "yes" to God and "no" to the brokenness of this world.

1. Yet this offering is not to buy favor (we're not getting points for coming);
2. it is in gratitude to God giving us new life and hope for eternity. We often come to worship as needy people. Psalm 51 says, "**The sacrifices given to God are a broken and contrite heart.**" And so worship is an offering of our lives to God...it's not what we get out of worship that matters, but what we give.

6. **Worship is togetherness.** It's not something we do best alone. And it's not something we observe; it's something we do, with others. The worship experience is rooted in community. It is a dialogue between God and His people. We gather together because we care about each another. Going to church isn't like passively going to a movie, or to the club, where we don't know the people around us. In church we connect with others and participate in what's happening. We're more than an audience. We're receiving and being a blessing.

In Hebrews 10:24-25, it says, "**And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.**" Attending church introduces us to a diverse community of believers who share our faith and values. These connections can be wellsprings of support, friendship, and encouragement, fulfilling the biblical mandate to love one another.

Jesus promises, in Matt. 18:20 - "Where two or three are gathered in My Name, I am in their midst,". Christianity is like a team sport; we engage in shared worship. It is together that we are God's people, not as isolated individuals.

7. Worship is transformation. Worship is not just one hour that we spend each week, it is a way of life. Worship proceeds from awe to pardon to dedication. We become like what we worship. It's been said that,

1. "Those who worship money become, eventually, like human calculating machines.
2. Those who worship sex become obsessed with their own attractiveness or prowess.
3. Those who worship power become more and more ruthless.
4. Those who worship God discover what it means to be fully alive" (N.T. Wright).

May the worship and celebration that we offer be with joy, as we join with the songwriter and say, We bring a sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord, and we offer unto him a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and we offer unto him a sacrifice of praise!