

## Principles in Worship

Valleys Family Church Sermon  
Stuart Wheatman, Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2014

### 1. Thankfulness

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. **Col 3:15-17**

- Paul had just been speaking to those in Colossae about forgiving one another if you have a complaint, as Christ forgave you. We can choose to magnify the negatives in one another and situations and end up being a complaining people. Paul gives us the remedy to this- take off the old and put on the new- the old complaining nature- take it off and replace it with the new nature- a nature which habitually is **THANKFUL**.
- V16 talks about teaching one another through song- what does this mean? I think it means that as we are habitually thankful to God and express this through different means so we also influence and teach, admonish, one another to do the same.
- Why do we have M.C's at raves? To admonish others to get into the groove, lift up your hands y'all. Their encouragement and example gives others the inspiration to join in.
- Worship leaders- to encourage us to worship, to lead by example- thus it's a teaching role, teaching by example. Some things are better 'caught' than 'taught', when someone is by nature thankful it's contagious. We all teach others by our example of thankfulness to God- how is your teaching going? Are you giving a good example or a bad example of a thankful life?
- 'Psalms' means 'to pluck the strings' so psalms could mean a song accompanied by music, or it could mean literally one of the Psalms of the Bible. 'Hymns' means a song sang directly to God as worship, 'Spiritual songs' means songs about God. A thankful spirit is a spirit that wants to sing out. People sing when they get merry, they sing when they are happy, when they watch football etc. What creative ways can you think of giving God thanks? Maybe writing a Facebook post?
- 'Whatever you do...giving thanks'- when we do everything, even our chores, as to God 'In the name of the Lord Jesus' we can give it our all and do it with a thankfulness to Him.
- "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." -**Paul, the Apostle: I Thessalonians 5: 16-18**
- "I thank Thee first because I was never robbed before; second, because although they took my purse they did not take my life; third, although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed and not I who robbed." -Matthew Henry after being robbed
- "We pray for the big things and forget to give thanks for the ordinary, small (and yet really not small) gifts. How can God entrust great things to one who will not thankfully receive from Him the little things?"  
-**Dietrich Bonhoeffer**
- Psalm 100:4 'enter His gates with thankfulness'. - When we first come into the presence of God (i.e coming through the gates) to worship God or enter into prayer it's good to start with praise- i.e. thanking God.

- How often have we come to a meeting and the last thing we feel like doing is worshipping? Perhaps we've had a tough week, we're tired, emotionally drained etc. we're not naturally feeling very spiritual. However, as we set our mind to give thanks and make the sacrifice our emotions get engaged too and we become truly thankful. This is what happened to David when he spoke to himself in Psalm 103:1-5  
Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.  
Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. David made a list of the things he should be thankful for. If you did the same, what would be on your list?
- David exhorted himself to thank God- he encouraged himself to 'go for it'. We all need to do the same. The sons of Korah did so in Psalm 42 and 43 when they said 'Why are you downcast O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God for I will yet praise Him my Saviour and my God'. When was the last time you exhorted yourself to do the same?
- Psalm 95 starts with an exhortation to thank God- 'Come' is an imperative- a command, it is followed by 3 Jussives 'let us' (unlike English, Hebrew has a jussive form of the verb- where the verb is changed into an encouragement to do something- 'let' or 'may'), so 'let us sing' is one word, 'let us shout' is one word and 'let us come' is one word. So the Hebrew language has exhortation built into it to express itself, a bit like an M.C encouraging the crowd at a rave. How could we creatively express an encouragement to others to 'go for it' in worship?
- Notice the 'shout aloud' in verse 1? Our worship should express both loud and quiet,  
Isaiah 44:23 Sing for joy, you heavens, for the LORD has done this; shout aloud, you earth beneath..  
Psalm 81:1 Sing for joy to God our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob  
Psalm 47:1 Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.  
Psalm 150:5 praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.
- Dynamic range on a microphone- same with our worship.
- **Hebrew: Rua- to split the ears, a shout, a war cry. Hallal**-to praise, to make a show or rave about, to glory in or boast upon, to be clamorously foolish about your adoration of God. **Guwl**-to spin around, under the influence of any violent emotion **Todah**-an extension of the hand, avowal, adoration, sacrifice of praise, thanksgiving . **Greek: chairro**- rejoice/be glad/celebrate. **Agaillo**- to jump for joy/rejoice/exalt
- Psalm 95:6 -'Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker'- just as it's good to have the loud worship, so it's good too to have the quiet worship, and the one will tend to lead to the other.
- Greek for worship is **proskeuneo**='to kiss towards' and it conjures up a picture of someone bowing down to kiss the feet of a king. **Sebomai**- worship in reverence and awe. In Hebrew **Barak**-'to bless' (God), but literally means to kneel or bow, to give reverence to God as an act of adoration. **Shachah**-to depress or prostrate in homage or loyalty to God, bow down, fall down flat
- Hab 2:20 The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.
- People are not often ready to enter straight into the quieter contemplative worship where we just fall at God's feet in adoration, we often need to do some 'declaration' of our praises and His goodness before we see Him as He really is, then our

response turns to awe, reverence, respect, submission, adoration. This is a general tip for those leading worship, although not a rule to be bound by.

- We need to be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is doing in a meeting- there is a time to shout and there is a time to be silent, and God will help us to develop an awareness of this. Sometimes there is a flow from praise to worship and then back and forth.

## 2. Participation

- 1Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- 'Come together' implies that we have worship privately and corporately. When we worship as a lifestyle we have something more to share when we come to meetings with other Christians- it's not either one or the other but both which are important.
- 'Each one has'- this means when we come together to worship we all have something to contribute. We are called to be a part of a body- the body of Christ and as such each one of us has a role to play and a contribution to make in the worship. In the Old Testament the concept was anointed individuals, but in the New Testament the concept is the anointed body-i.e we all have the Holy Spirit anointing us and so will have a contribution to make.
- Priesthood of all believers- 1Pet 2:4-5 As you come to him, the living Stone-- rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him-- you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- Some Churches one-person ministry from the front. Provider-Consumer model of Church- priest does everything. Entertainment model- rock concert. This is not a Biblical model- even in Churches in Africa or other nations which are highly successful and lively etc. if it is all the person at the front then something is missing- we are to function as a body
- Synergy- the total is greater than the sum of the parts- from the greek word synergos='working together'. Pest synergy- Parasite A may cause 10% fatalities, and parasite B may also cause 10% loss. When both parasites are present, the losses would normally be expected to total less than 20%, yet, in some cases, losses are significantly greater. In such cases, it is said that the parasites in combination have a synergistic effect. Sound- a drummer, a song played by a band, an orchestra. An apple tree too high to pick apples- person A is too short, so is person B but when A goes on B's shoulders they get the apple as a result of their synergy. This is why it's important to not be disconnected with other Churches and with Catalyst network- we achieve more together than we can apart.
- Pareto principle- 80% of the work gets done by 20% of the people
- Creativity- be creative in expression of praise to God- raising hands, speaking 'amen' or 'hallelujah' etc. Lying prostrate, bowing down, dancing, using a flag, using a tambourine or shaker or drum, jumping, spinning, shouting, clapping, exhortation, bringing a tongue, bringing an interpretation, singing spontaneously in English/tongues, prophesying, sharing a word of knowledge, sharing a picture/vision/dream, being silent, praying out, sharing a testimony/answer to prayer, reading a verse of scripture, reading a psalm, leading worship, preaching, sharing the gospel, serving
- 'for building up' -If we don't share our contribution others are not built up as they could have been

- Keys- be filled with the Holy Spirit- He brings us the gifts to share
- Boldness, courage, stepping out, doing something new, something for the first time – 'sing to the Lord a new song'- Ps 96:1. When was the last time you did something new for God?

## **Summary**

- Thankfulness
- Participation