

Personal Worship

Jim Downing

I. Introduction.

- A. The Bible indicates it is good to have some formality in approaching God.
- B. A son and a jester had unmediated access to the king in the ancient world.
 - 1. The two approached differently.
 - 2. The son approached with respect and deference and we are to imitate him.
 - 3. God wanted Moses to get with it for Him. (Exodus 25:22)

II. The tabernacle.

- A. God's intention with the tabernacle was to dwell among His people.
- B. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. When the cloud of glory was over the tabernacle, the Israelites did not move. When it lifted, they moved. (Exodus 40:34)
- C. God had to abandon the tabernacle eventually. (Psalm 78:60)
- D. The items of the tabernacle.
 - 1. The outer court.
 - a. The brazen altar.
 - b. The laver of cleansing.
 - 2. The Holy Place.
 - a. The candlestick
 - b. The table of showbread.
 - c. The altar of incense.
 - 3. The Holy of Holies.
 - a. The Ark of the Covenant.
 - 1) In it was Aaron's rod, the Ten Commandments, and a pot of the manna they were fed with in the desert.

2) There was a veil separating the ark and the rest of the items from the Holy Place. This was torn in the New Testament signifying that access to God was opened.

E. The Old Testament was a pattern of worship for the New Testament believer. (Hebrews 9:24)

III. Steps through the tabernacle.

A. Thanksgiving.

1. Christ died outside the gate. (Hebrews 13:12)

2. We are to thank Him for this.

B. The brazen altar. (Hebrews 10:10)

1. We do not rush into God's presence as a result of our own righteousness.

2. The only way is through Christ who was offered on the brazen altar.

3. We are to acknowledge this before God.

C. The laver signifies spiritual cleansing. (1 John 1:9, Proverbs 28:13)

1. We are to confess sin.

2. We are to forsake sin.

D. The candle stand.

1. Christ is the light of the world.

2. All the wisdom one needs for the challenges of the day is available to be claimed.

E. The table of showbread. (Psalm 104:14, 27:14)

1. Bread strengthens man's heart as God does.

F. The golden altar of incense.

1. This could be the prayers of the saints. (Revelation 8:4)

2. We have the opportunity to delight the heart of God.

3. We delight the heart of God by approaching Him.

G. The Holy of Holies.

1. The reverence this required.

a. The Jews took this very seriously.

b. When the high priest entered, a rope was tied around his ankle in case he had a heart attack, so that he could be drug out.

2. The opening of our being in God's presence should be occupied with worship and adoration dependent upon an attitude and expression. (Psalm 104:1, Revelation 4:11, Psalm 29:2)

a. A great deal of liberty is allowed with personal imagination.

b. One can give glory to God by letting Him know about His Person and work. (Psalm 145)

3. We are to express love to God. (Psalm 18:1)

a. The gifts of God are bountiful for which we can express love for Him. (John 12-21)

4. Praise. (Psalm 100)

a. This is different than thanksgiving.

b. The example of praying Hyde. When he failed to praise his prayers were not answered.

c. Praise is talking to God about what he has already done over prayer, which talks to Him about what He has not done.

d. Praise gets God into perspective to ask for great things.

5. The presence of God is powerful and fellowship with Him passes by quickly.

a. One could move into the presence of God right in the middle of a sentence.

b. We are coming into the presence of God with no time limitation. (Hebrews 9:27)

c. The most important part of this fellowship is talking about what is real to the person and what is real to God.

6. We are to make our requests known to God. (Philippians 4)

a. God likely wants to take care of this as rapidly as possible.

b. His primary focus is on our fellowship that we take away like a fragrant flower into our daily life.

IV. Conclusion: when all else fails in personal worship, rely in the directions in Hebrews 9.

Application questions

1. List the major steps the speaker suggests for personal worship in your own words.

2. Which of these steps do you find to be most important? Explain.

3. How has this message changed your view on personal worship? What aspects will you incorporate into your worship experience?
