

## **Worship – The Emotional Component**

*“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth,”* (John 4:24).

Every element of true worship involves some emotional component. The emotional component is not driven by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit (as in Calvinism) or “getting the Holy Spirit” (as in Charismatic practice). The emotional component of true worship is the result of one’s informed relationship with Deity.

The faithful disciple will go into every assembly with the emotion of joy, reverence for Deity and the anticipated interests in praising Deity and being edified. The true worshipper will leave the assembly with the emotional satisfaction of participating in all that God has directed, unto His glory. The proper emotional component is not contrived and forced or coerced. It is the result of one’s informed relationship with God.

One should not perform some emotional display, because it is perceived it is expected by others. One should not imitate the emotional display of another. The faithful one’s emotional response (seen or unseen by men) is the result of one’s informed relationship with God.

When **the Word is faithfully preached**, there should be a range of emotions in the hearts of faithfully listeners (remorse, assurance, joy, the satisfaction of knowledge gained). In partaking of **the Lord’s Supper**, remembering His death, the emotions of both sorrow and gratitude should combine in our reflection. **Singing** has a strong emotional component. But this emotional result is directed tied to lyrical content. What do the lyrics mean to the worshipper? Some love music and are moved by what they believe is good music, but without any self-examination or thought to lyrical content. The emotional connection derives from content (the words in the songs), not form (harmony, meter, structure). Likewise, **praying** is not simply a formal, mechanical exercise. It has great emotional potential, but not due to voice or poetic structure, but content and direction (praying to Deity). **Giving** should also have an emotional component (a cheerful giver, II Corinthians 9:7).

*In a lecture about this in 2005 I told the audience:* Ignorance of what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit, combined with the popularly promoted Charismatic concepts can combine with the passion for the contemporary, and reduce our worship to events designed toward the pleasure of men instead of God! In this process (that may extend slowly into another generation), biblical knowledge can be set aside to pursue the emotional needs perceived by humans in their cultural context. True worship is not about competing with the modern marketplace. Our focus cannot be on drawing crowds or showing our affinity with the modern Charismatic style of worship. God is the object of worship, not the changing emotional needs of man. We must, from baptism until death, listen to the call of the gospel, not the call of the culture or religious world.

Regarding the influence of the Charismatic movement on worship, I want to recommend that we carefully consider the danger of engineering assemblies and meetings for emotional outcome. What’s at stake here is the very definition of worship! In the New Testament, worship is not presented to us as something humans set up, so that other humans can find some “spiritual high” or emotional fix. The object is to respond to God with reverence and obedience: *“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him,”* (Psalm 89:7).

Worship is not depicted as a resurrection; conversion is! When people who are terminally unspiritual, willfully ignorant of the Scriptures and religious only in some systematic or institutional way, come to the building to be raised from the dead – we cannot cater to their wants. What these people need is conversion, not “worship” designed to meet their felt needs. When we engineer worship to answer the emotional needs of people who are not concerned with the Scriptures, we fail to serve the Lord; we give people something that can never be ultimately satisfying, and we set ourselves on the road of apostasy. Worship is the avenue God has given for converted people to show their respect for Him and honor His Son. These purposes cannot be served in any sense until we decide to follow His instructions. The Charismatic format is motivated primarily by the aim to hit a human emotional target. God’s people cannot go there!

**- by Warren E. Berkley**

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## ***Nothing to Hide!***

Consider this:

- If a man has some printed money but is not willing to have it examined, people think it is counterfeit.
- If a man is afraid to take a lie detector test, people think he is guilty of crime.
- If a man conducts a business but is unwilling to let anyone investigate it, folks think he is running a crooked business.

Yet many preachers teach doctrines that under no circumstances will they test or allow to be tested by the Bible. However, millions of people will accept them as upright, honest teachers of the truth, and will risk their salvation upon them. What makes the difference? The Bible instructs us to try the teachers (1 John 4:1). The truth never fears investigation! It has nothing to hide!

**- by Bill Crews**

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## ***He Never Had Such Good Friends***

A man – a brother in Christ – has slipped away and fallen seriously into sin. Though he was once growing and active in the Lord's service, now he is distant, unconcerned, and clearly pursuing a different agenda.

His brethren see his condition. They are aware of the spiritual danger he is in. All signs point to the fact that he is heading down a path to eternal ruin.

Out of love for his soul, and with knowledge of their own duty in such matters (Galatians 6:1,2) his brothers and sisters in Christ reach out to this erring one. They are crushed to think that one who once worked hand-in-hand with them in the Lord's service could now be so alienated from them and God. They humbly try to encourage him, reminding him of things he already knows – but has chosen to ignore. They plead with him to “repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee” (Acts 8:22).

And, what is the response from this brother in desperate need of rescue? Too often the response is one of bitter animosity and resentment. Instead of looking inwardly and humbly admitting his sins, he lashes out at those who are trying to help him. He has harsh words of criticism and disdain for them. His effort is to deflect attention away from his own sins, and place focus on what he perceives as the failings of others.

What this man fails to realize is that he never had such good friends as these fellow Christians who are committed to help him and restore him to a right relationship with God. It would have been easier – much easier – to look the other way and ignore the situation all together. Let him go – clear his name off the ‘church roll’ – and proceed as though nothing significant had happen. But, love will not allow this. He is a brother – a friend – and they cannot, will not, let him go without a fight for his soul. Truly, he never had such friends as these.

**- by Greg Gwin**