

Passionately Pursuing
our God in Worship
and Music

The Challenge of
Worship

Not all worship pleases God.

Five ways worship can go bad.

- 1. We're not primarily concerned with learning about how other people in history failed in their worship.**

1 Corinthians 10:11 – Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Lord, are there any ways in which any of these tendencies are also occurring in my heart and life?

***Psalm 139:23-24* – Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.**

2. For each failure listed in Scripture, there is a positive alternative.

***Proverbs 14:16* – A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and careless.**

***I. Lamech – Selfish Worship*
– *Genesis 4:16-26***

- A. Note the contrast between the wicked line of Cain and the godly line of Seth.**
- B. The wickedness of Cain's descendants was demonstrated in part by their music.**

Zephaniah 3:17 – The Lord your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet *you* with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.

Job 38:7 – When the morning stars sang together And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

B. Music is a powerful window to the heart.

1 John 2:15-17 – Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

Genesis 6:5 - Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

C. Music reveals your god.

Psalm 30:4 – Sing praise to the Lord, you His godly ones, and give thanks to His holy name.

II. Nadab and Abihu – Unbiblical Worship – Leviticus 10:1-3

A. They tried to worship in ways that violated God's commands.

“offered strange fire before the Lord”

“which He had not commanded them”

***David Peterson* – Vitality and meaning will not be restored to Christian gatherings until those who lead and those who participate can recover a biblical perspective on their meetings, seeing them in relation to God’s total plan and purpose for His people.**

***John Frame* – Therefore, we must seek above all to do what pleases Him. To do this, we cannot trust our own imaginations. Nadab and Abihu trusted their own wisdom, and God judged them severely. Can any of us trust ourselves to determine, apart from Scripture, what God does and does not like in worship?**

Our finitude and sin disqualify us from making such judgments. For such a serious decision–potentially a life-and-death decision– we must seek God’s own wisdom, the revelation of His own heart. We must ask the Scriptures what God wants us to do in worship. Then, as we worship, we must do those things–and only those things.

B. This event is especially unfortunate because these were the sons of Aaron.

Proverbs 15:5 – A fool rejects his father’s discipline, but he who regards reproof is sensible.

***III. Uzzah – Indifferent Worship
– II Samuel 6:1-23***

A. Uzzah – “whatever”

B. David – wholeheartedly worshipping God.

verse 5 – all kinds of instruments made of fir wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals...

verse 14 – and David was dancing before the Lord with all his might.

C. Michal – indifferent, despised those who passionately worshipped God

verse 16 – she despised him in her heart.

John Frame – Therefore, it is a matter of utmost importance, literally a life-and-death matter, to know how to worship God rightly, according to His will. The wrong kind of worship provokes God's wrath, not His blessing. We may not do anything we please in God's awesome presence.

Modern Christians are far too casual about worship. The letter to the Hebrews admonishes us to “worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our ‘God is a consuming fire’” (Heb. 12:28).

John Frame – One sometimes hears Christians express the wish that they could speak with God personally, as He appeared to people during the biblical period. But meetings with God in the Bible are awesome and terrible. Job also requested an interview with God (see Job 23:1-7; 31:35-37). But the interview God granted him was terrifying and humiliating (see chapters 38-42).

Perhaps we should be satisfied, even thankful, that our meetings with God today are less direct (though just as real, as we shall see). Surely we can be thankful that we stand before God in Christ, who has borne the fearsome wrath of God in our place.

IV. The Children of Israel – Half-Hearted Worship – Malachi 1:7-14, 3:7-14

- A. They despised God's name – 1:6**
- B. They presented offerings that were lame and sick – 1:8**

- C. They were bored with worship
– 1:13**
- D. They robbed God in their giving
– 3:8**
- E. They said that serving God was a
vain thing – 3:14**

***Charles Haddon Spurgeon* – There should be some preparation of the heart in coming to the worship of God. Consider whom He is in whose name we gather, and surely we cannot rush together without thought. Consider whom we profess to worship, and we shall not hurry into His presence as men run to a fire. Moses, the man of God, was warned to put off his shoes from his feet when God only revealed Himself in a bush.**

How should we prepare ourselves when we come to Him who reveals Himself in Christ Jesus, His dear Son? There should be no stumbling into the place of worship half asleep, no roaming here as if it were no more than going to a playhouse. We cannot expect to profit much if we bring with us a swarm of idle thoughts and a heart crammed with vanity. If we are full of folly, we may shut out the truth of God from our minds.

**V. NT Jewish Leaders – Legalistic
Worship – Mark 7:5-9**

**Matthew 4:10 – “...Away with you,
Satan! For it is written, ‘*You shall
worship the Lord*’ your God, and Him
only you shall serve.’ ”**

**Romans 15:4 – For whatever was
written in earlier times was written
for our instruction, so that through
perseverance and the encouragement
of the Scriptures we might have hope.**
