

Acts of Jesus, Lesson 31: Focused Lives, Part 2

Acts 16:22-25

The last time we were together we took a look at the missionaries, Paul, and Silas, who, though in terrible circumstances, focused on the goodness of God.

- We saw that it has been proven that it's not our outward circumstances but our inward focus that determines how we feel/our reality.
 - This one of many things that make worshipping God so import for our lives.
 - I left you last time sort of hanging; I told you to worship, but I didn't give you the tools to accomplish that goal.
 - In my experience, the average Christian doesn't really know what worship is; he thinks he knows because he attends "worship":
 - But too often we attend church but don't worship
 - We sing songs but do not worship.
 - We listen to preaching but do not worship.
 - We too often mistake the means of worship for worship itself.
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1. Oxymorons: A self-contradictory phrase

- Boring and Worship are contradictory/mutually exclusive words.
- Worship is meant to be the greatest grounding and stabilizing factor in a Christian's life
- The chief end of all that we have received from God.
- The most exhilarating experience that a human can possibly have.

2. So, what is worship?

- Let's start our answer by considering a passage that describes worship in its many forms:
Psalms 95:1-7
 - Can you feel the focus that is implied here...required here?
 - Real worship is all about focus...all on God and nothing on you or your circumstances.
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What worship is not:

1. Worship is not for our benefit – worship is for God's benefit.

- The focus is completely on God, not ourselves.
 - If we come seeking a style of worship or a certain song we immediately exempt ourselves from true worship.
 - The typical Christian mindset about worship: They think of themselves as the audience, the music leader and pastor are the entertainers
 - Bottom line is that when we seek to "get something out of worship" we are taking God's place and are in essence, committing idolatry.
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2. Worship is not about getting, it's about giving! **I Chronicles 16:28-29, Ps. 29:1-2**
 3. Cannot be half-hearted
 - Half-hearted worship is not worship at all.
 - Someone has said, "We can worship God imperfectly, but we cannot worship Him insincerely."
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What worship is:

1. It is a summons:
 - **V.1** – "come" summons us into the presence of the Almighty.
 - It is not optional for us.
 - We come to Him because He came to us.
 - We come on His terms...again it's not about us!
 2. Something that God seeks: **John 4:23-24**
 3. It is something that is intentional on our part.
 - Worship is not something that happens to you...you make it happen.
 - Paul and Silas had no stimulation from the outside to bring them to place of worship.
 - It is a decision that requires much effort.
 - You will never worship unless you mean to and want to.
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4. Worship is a sacrifice. **Hebrews 13:15** calls worship and praise a sacrifice on our part.
 - It is giving up of focus on ourselves.
 - Giving up of our agendas.
 - Giving up mentioning to God our needs so the focus can be on Him.
 5. Worship is an extreme expression of faith.
 - Worship says, "I don't have to worry about my situation or circumstances because You are in total control."
 - "I don't have to worry about my needs because You are going to meet them."
 6. Worship is a matter of Obedience.
 - We come to church to be moved, but we don't want to move.
 - "I want to feel good, God, but don't rearrange my life"
 - **We want to be moved emotionally, but we don't want to be moved obediently.**
- Worship is a matter of heart...a matter of Focus on God who has done so much for us.
- Coming to church is relatively cheap but true worship is costly.
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