

Psalm 50 — “Going Thru the Motions or Worshiping from the Heart?”

“[Of Thanksgiving]...There is no duty so commonly forgotten. God showers down His benefits upon us with both hands, large and free, and we receive them as a matter of course, and never consider Whose Love has bestowed them; and thus, in our unthankfulness, we rob God of his honor” (JJ Stewart Perowne)

Jesus Christ never gets boring. What happens is we get caught up in the things that surround Him.”
[Bob Kauflin]

Ps 50 invites us to enter the “heavenly Courtroom” and hear God the Judge Speak...

I. STAND IN AWE OF GOD THE JUDGE! (1-6)

Verses 1-6 are in the poetic form of a Theophany -- that is, ‘God appearing/manifesting himself visibly to people’ (eg, Mt Sinai - God coming down, Ex 19:16-19 (all of Ex 19-24— Mosaic Covenant).

Worship is our innermost being responding with praise for all that God is, through our attitudes, actions, thoughts, and words, based on the truth of God as He has revealed Himself.

Worship is our **response** to God's revelation of Himself.

II. GIVE GOD YOUR FULL HEART OF THANKS! (7-15)

- We can be **INSINCERE** // formalism // nominally orthodox // mechanically pious! (**Isa 29:13!** - **heartless worship!**)

How to practically aid in engaging your heart in worship?

(1) preparing before-hand (2) persevering during worship (3) putting it into practice afterward

III. TREMBLE AT GOD’S ANGER TOWARD HYPOCRITES (16-23)

- Some are HYPOCRITICAL / the hardened ones / the Bible-talkers with their lips but the sinful evildoers of life!
- They are “Antinomians” — they think they can belong to God, talk about God, have a little God sprinkled on their life while sin freely, openly, enjoyable, and consistently. (see Rom 6.1; 2 Pet 2.13)

If worshipers leave a service with no thought of becoming more godly in their lives, then the purpose of worship has not been achieved. If they walk away from an assembly without a conviction that they need to conform their lives to Holy Scripture, even if it means changing their lifestyle, then worship has been perverted somewhere.. The clear teaching of Scripture is that genuine worship is life changing. (Allen Ross)

So then: what does God really want?

1. Your heart —
2. Your life —
3. Your love —
4. Your boast —

★some pastoral helps on **WORSHIP** for us:

5. **Focus on your heart!**
6. **Flee to Christ!**
7. **Flow forth with Thanksgiving!**
8. **Fixate on Heaven: undistracted worship of God!**

Sinclair Ferguson warns us against **4 misunderstandings of worship:**

1. external/mechanical nature of worship. [externally-based]
2. individualistic interpretation of worship. [self-based]
3. emotional uplift of worship. [feelings-based]
4. performance (concert) mentality of worship. [appearance-based]

>>> MORE ON WORSHIP:

Scott Aniol:

“Israel’s manner of worship was not to be in line with the heathen people whom they were commanded to utterly destroy. They were to worship God according to how He told them. They were not to conform themselves to the worship practices of the world, but instead to be transformed by God’s renewing of their minds. Isn’t that exactly what Romans 12:1-2 teaches us as New Testament believers? What was true for Old Testament Israel is still true for the New Testament church. Our reasonable service of worship is to be done in a manner that does not conform to the lost world around us, but is distinctly different from that. This not only includes our times of corporate worship, but also our private worship of God. If all of life is worship, then all of our lives must be lived in such a way that is distinctly set apart for God.”

Steven Cole:

Do you think often about the fact that one day soon, you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ? Some, even some of those who have served Christ (may it not be any of us!) will hear the awful words (Matt. 7:23), “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.” They will be thrown into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 25:30). Others will watch in horror as everything that they labored for goes up in smoke. They themselves will be saved, but as through fire (1 Cor. 3:12-13). Still others (may you and I be among them) will hear the Lord say (Matt. 25:21), “Well done, good and faithful slave.... Enter into the joy of your master.” The Bible repeatedly warns us about the coming judgment so that we will live daily in view of it.

Alexander Maclaren:

“The psalm has as keen an edge for modern as for ancient sins. Superstitious reliance on externals of worship survives, though sacrifices have ceased; and hypocrites, with their mouths full of the Gospel, still cast God’s words behind them.”

William Temple:

Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of conscience by His holiness, the nourishment of the mind with His truth, the purifying of the imagination of His beauty, the opening of the heart to His love, the surrender of the will to His purpose.

Sinclair Ferguson:

The single most important activity of your life is to worship God. You were made for this – to offer your whole life, in all its parts, as a hymn of praise to the Lord. it is “Single-mindedness of Devotion.”

BRETHREN WE HAVE MET TO WORSHIP

Brethren, we have met to worship
 And adore the Lord our God;
 Will you pray with all your power,
 While we try to preach the Word?
 All is vain unless the Spirit
 Of the Holy One comes down;
 Brethren, pray, and holy manna
 Will be showered all around.

Brethren, see poor sinners round you
 Slumb'ring on the brink of woe;
 Death is coming, hell is moving,
 Can you bear to let them go?
 See our fathers and our mothers,
 And our children sinking down;
 Brethren, pray and holy manna
 Will be showered all around.

Sisters, will you join and help us?
 Moses' sister aided him;
 Will you help the trembling mourners
 Who are struggling hard with sin?
 Tell them all about the Savior,
 Tell them that He will be found;
 Sisters, pray, and holy manna
 Will be showered all around.

Let us love our God supremely,
 Let us love each other, too;
 Let us love and pray for sinners,
 Till our God makes all things new.
 Then He'll call us home to heaven,
 At His table we'll sit down;
 Christ will gird Himself, and serve us
 With sweet manna all around.

PSALM 50: PSALTER

Tune: "I asked the LORD that I might grow"

The Lord, the Judge, his people warns,
 Let hypocrites attend and fear,
 Who place their hope in rites and forms,
 But make not faith nor love their care.

Vile wretches dare rehearse his name
 With lips of falsehood and deceit;
 A friend or brother they defame,
 And soothe and flatter those they hate.

They watch to do their neighbors wrong,
 Yet dare to seek their Maker's face;
 They take his cov'nant on their tongue,
 But break his laws, abuse his grace.

To heav'n they lift their hands unclean,
 Defiled with lust, defiled with blood;
 By night they practise every sin,
 By day their mouths draw near to God.

And while his judgments long delay,
 They grow secure and sin the more;
 They think he sleeps as well as they,
 And put far off the dreadful hour.

O dreadful hour! when God draws near
 And sets their crimes before their eyes!
 His wrath their guilty souls shall tear,
 And no deliv'rer dare to rise.

— *Isaac Watts*