

Real Worship (It Will Transform Your Life) by Warren W. Wiersbe, Baker Books: Grand Rapids: 2000. (26 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

Part 1: Invitation to Worship

Chapter 1: In which the author admits his frustration

1. Evangelism Comes from Worship

Isaiah became an evangelist after attending a worship service in the temple and seeing God "high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1). Evangelism is an essential part of the church's ministry, but it must be the result of worship, or it will not glorify God. [Page 16]

2. Worship Comes before Missions

Paul's missionary call came to him while he was sharing in worship in the church at Antioch. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" (Acts 13:2). The Greek word translated "ministered" is *leitourgeo* and refers to priestly service rendered to God (see Heb. 10: 11). Paul was probably praying, fasting, and worshipping God when the summons came.

When missions is divorced from worship, the human need can become more important than the divine glory and the strategy used might be the result of man's observations rather than a God-given spiritual vision. It is when we worship God that we discover afresh that His thoughts and ways are far above ours. [Page 16-17]

3. The Church Needs to Return to Worship

"In whatever man does without God," wrote George MacDonald, "he must fail miserably - or succeed more miserably." The church today is starting to suffer from success, and it is time we returned to worship.]

4. Pleasing God and Glorifying Him Alone

I am not worshipping Him because of what He will do for me, but because of what He is to me. When worship becomes pragmatic, it ceases to be worship. R. G. LeTourneau used to say, "If you give because it pays, it won't pay." That principle applies to worship: if you worship because it pays it won't pay. Our motive must be to please God and glorify Him alone. [Page 18]

5. God Created Us for Worship

"God is trying to call us back to that for which He created us," wrote A. W. Tozer, "to worship Him and to enjoy Him forever!"²

²A. W. Tozer, *What Ever Happened To Worship?* (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1985), p. 12. [Page 19]

Chapter 2: In which we attempt to define worship

6. What is a definition?

Samuel Butler wrote that a definition is "the enclosing of a wilderness of idea within a wall of words." [Page 20]

7. The Bible Gives Demonstrations

... the Bible does not give us many definitions, but it does major on demonstrations and descriptions. The Bible is not a dictionary or an encyclopedia. Rather, it is a *Who's Who* of people who knew God, trusted Him, and got things accomplished. The cast of characters found in Scripture would agree with Thomas a Kempis: "I had rather feel compunction, then understand the definition thereof." Experience is important to understanding. [Page 20-21]

8. We Worship That Which Is Worthy

... our English word worship simply means "worth-ship." We worship that which is worthy. "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power" (Rev. 4: 11). "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain" (Rev. 5:12). Man is not worthy of worship, and certainly the idols that man makes are not worthy. Only God is worthy of our worship. What a person worships is a good indication of what is really valuable to him. [Page 21]

9. Worship Includes Attitudes and Actions

When you consider all of the words used for worship in both the Old and New Testament, and when you put the meanings together, you find that worship involves both attitudes (awe, reverence, respect) and actions (bowing, praising, serving). It is both a subjective experience and an objective activity. Worship is not an unexpressed feeling, nor is it an empty formality. True worship is balanced and involves the mind, the emotions, and the will. It must be intelligent; it must reach deep within and be motivated by love; and it must lead to obedient actions that glorify God. [Page 21]

10. E. Underhill's Definition

Evelyn Underhill has defined worship as "the total adoring response of man to the one Eternal God self-revealed in time."³

³Evelyn Underhill, *Worship* (London: Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1936), p. 61. [Page 21]

11. Worship Is Personal and Passionate

... worship is personal and passionate, not formal and cold; and that it is our response to the living God, voluntarily offered to Him as He has offered Himself to us. [Page 21-22]

12. God Is Worthy of Worship

... worship is the response of all that man is to all that God is and does. We do not worship God for what we get out of it, but because He is worthy of worship. [page 22]

13. Worship Is a Spiritual Strength

True worship should lead to personal enrichment and enablement, the kind of spiritual strength that helps the believer carry the burdens and fight the battles of life. [page 23]

14. Show Emotion

While I personally deplore religious emotionalism, as opposed to true emotion, I must admit that I tend to agree with Bishop Handley Moule who said that he would rather tone down a fanatic than resurrect a corpse. [Page 24]

15. Orthodoxy

... orthodox means "right praise" as well as "right opinion." [Page 24]

16. Our Personality Is Used to Praise God

Objective truth never changes, but our understanding of it deepens and our experience of it should become more and more meaningful. Divine revelation is one thing; human realization is something quite different. The Holy Spirit does not violate a believer's personality, but rather uses it to express praise to God. No two Christians have the identical worship experience even though they participate in the same service, at the same time, in the same sanctuary. For that matter, no two congregations, even in the same fellowship, express the same worship while following the same liturgy. Christian worship is both individual and corporate, personal and congregational. Led by the

Spirit, we have the right, even the responsibility, to express our praise to God in the manner that best reflects our individual personalities and cultures. If all of us would keep this in mind, it might encourage a deeper appreciation for one another's form of worship. [Page 25]

17. Through Worship We Come to Know God Better

Worship is the believer's response of all that he is - mind, emotions, will, and body - to all that God is and says and does. This response has its mystical side in subjective experience, and its practical side in objective obedience to God's revealed truth. It is a loving response that is balanced by the fear of the Lord, and it is a deepening response as the believer comes to know God better. [page 27]

Chapter 3: In which we discuss transformation and discover how dangerous it can be

18. Worship Makes a Difference in Our Lives

Every Christian is either a "conformer" or a "transformer." We are either fashioning our lives by pressure from without, or we are transforming our lives by power from within. The difference is - worship. [Page 31]

19. Worship Comes from Within

"The best public worship," wrote Bishop J C. Ryle, "is that which produces the best private Christianity."¹²

¹² John Charles Ryle, *Knots Untied* (London: James Clark and Co., Ltd., 1964), p. 234. [Page 32]

20. We Love God with Our Minds and Heart

A balanced Christian life involves more than duty (the will) and delight (the emotions); it also involves discernment (the mind). Passionate action without intelligence is fanaticism. We are to love God with the mind as well as the heart (Luke 10:27) [page 33]

21. We Should Think as God Thinks

Christians should think the way God thinks and not the way the world thinks. The believer's mind ought to be so saturated with divine truth that it can determine the divine perspective on every question, issue, or decision. A renewed mind is a mind alert to the world's false philosophies and Satan's subtle strategy. A renewed mind directs

the believer to offer intelligent worship to the Lord. "All Christian worship," says Dr. John Stott, "public and private, should be an intelligent response to God's self-revelation in his words and works recorded in Scripture." ¹³

¹³ John R. W. Stott, *Your Mind Matters* (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1972), p. 32. [Page 33]

22. God's Word Is Important in Public Worship

It is the Word of God, taught by the Spirit of God, that renews the mind. This Word may come through preaching and teaching, through personal witness in word or song or through study and meditation; but it always comes (if we are receptive) with that power to renew us. This is why the believer must spend time daily with the Bible, reading and meditating; and why the Word must be an important part of public worship. [Page 33]

23. Christian Love Is an Act of the Will

Christianity is basically a religion centering on man's will, not man's feelings. Christian love is not a feeling; it is an act of the will. Otherwise Jesus could not command us to love one another. I am not denying that there is a wonderful emotional dimension to Christian love; I am only emphasizing that Christian love is primarily what we do, not what we feel. [Page 33]

24. We Become Like the God We Worship

We become like the god that we worship (ps. 115:8). As we worship the true God, in spirit and truth, we are transformed to become more like Him. What we are and what we do are both determined by what we worship. [Page 35]

Appendix 1: In which we try to answer some questions

25. Progress

Change for the sake of change is novelty; change for the sake of growth is progress. [Page 168]

26. Progress and Change

Alfred North Whitehead used to say that real progress comes from change in the midst of order and order in the midst of change. [Page 168]