

# Joy's Noise

## Why We Want to Worship

February 12, 2023

Well since Friday's super fun worship party just raised our roof, I thought **today we ought to talk about the purpose and power of our worship**; and specifically, why on earth *singing* songs works so well. Because without *reasons* for raising our voice, we're doomed to lower our standards and accept some wimpy phony that only inspires weak worship.

So be honest: **How noisy is your joy?** Cuz full disclosure, 'old Noah' was a hard *pass* when it came to singing songs on Sunday. And it took a *quite a while* for 'new Noah' to stop timing his church commute to sneak in just as the singing stopped! But guess what I discovered? **We need worship to live!** And deep down, we're *all* just *dying* to find a place to let it out with a big ol' *shout!*



And if you need proof, listen up. I don't sing. Maybe if I really worked at it, one day I *could* – but that hasn't happened yet. And despite how harmonious we sound together, I know what I add to the mix; here's my mic in last week's worship. So **why am I compelled to embarrass myself week after week with my off-key offerings?** The answer is simple; **I have to!** The *same* way we *have to* use the restroom! And that's not *my* analogy – it was *Jesus* who said:



Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes *into* the stomach and then out of the *body*? But the things that come *out* of a person's *mouth* come from the *heart* [because] – Matthew 15:17-18 NIV



Out of the *abundance* of the *heart* [which is what you've filled it with] the *mouth* speaks. – Matthew 12:34 NKJV



So, sorry for sounding *crude*, but God knows how to make a point hit home when He needs to – and apparently, we need to know the *urgency* in the way our words *work*: **what goes in must come out.** It's just as uncontrollable as any other bodily function! But you already knew that.

After all, in a few hours, a lot of us are going to get together to watch the Superbowl. And the team **who has more of your heart is going to move you to stand and shout or sit and pout.** Unless, of course, you're just there for the snacks and commercials. But either way, it's hard to hold it in! Like the time the Seahawks were a win away from the Superbowl and some die-hard fans were offered five grand to contain themselves and stay silent as they watched the game!

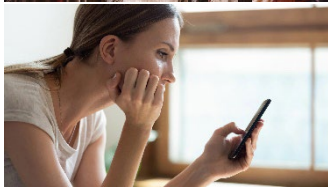
**So why are we so weak?! And what exactly does this have to do with worship?** Well, let's back up; do you know where we get the *word* worship? It's just an old English mashup of 'worth' and 'shape'. Worship literally means *worth's shape* or the *shaping of worth*. **Your worship is what you think and feel represents value itself;** it's what *you* deem *worthy*. And beyond *that*, as we all know, worship's *main* meaning manifests in its *action*.

In fact, the Bible's Hebrew and Greek words for worship mean to bow, prostrate, or serve – cuz worship is something you 'do' in response to something you *value*. **Worship means letting something's worth shape you.** It means somehow changing yourself to acknowledge and accommodate something else that has great value to you.

And to get an example of how this works, just think of the things that you value most; and then ask yourself if you've let *them* shape you. **Has the way you value money changed any of your ways?** How about the importance of *success* in your life? *Approval*? *Power*? Well what about *integrity*? *Honesty*? Or *loyalty*? Because it can be *good* or *bad*, but **what you value will determine how you do you.** And whether it's a *person* that you tell, **"You are my whole world! You're my reason for living!"** or a *possession* that makes you feel, **"This will complete me. This will fix all my problems!"**; believing that *either* are worthy enough to let them shape you is *worship*.



You might not *call* it that, but **when you give something in your life the power to change you, you've begun a worship relationship.** And whether right or wrong, the more the value, the harder it is to contain the change. So, just *imagine* what it was like to witness the power of Jesus 2000 years ago and ask yourself – **what would change if you, yourself got to watch Him work and experience what it was worth.**



When He came near... the whole crowd of disciples began *joyfully* to *praise* God in *loud* voices for all the miracles they had seen: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd [whose value was *elsewhere*] said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" [*shut 'em up!*] "I tell you," He replied, "if *they* keep quiet, the *stones* will cry out." – Luke 19:37-40 NIV



Because **restraining our worship is impossible!** We can *try* to delay or redirect it, but we just can't contain it! Like football fans, **speaking out is our natural reaction to what wows us.** And it comes with the *urgency* of a much-needed bathroom break! The only difference is that *worship* is the *ultimate* relief of our mind, heart, *and* body!



Cuz real **worship happens when something fills our thoughts, emotions, and actions.** It's not *just* a good *argument*, *touching* story, or *physical* reaction; it's all three! And the things that we think are most worthy, have all three dimensions!

And generally, **our worship is built by thoughts first.** We begin to *believe* in something's worth when we wrap our heads around what it *is* by what it *offers*. And we fill our *minds* by collecting info like stories, studies, and endorsements of *that* thing. **"Are you telling me, that this app can scan my meals to track my macros?! And that's how you lost fifty pounds?! Well it's worth a try!"** And as our minds *meditate* on whatever *increase* this thing offers, **our worship overflows into our emotions next.** If what we now *know* is *true*, our *feelings* for this thing change! Cuz our *heart* fills with thankfulness, appreciation, excitement, and joy! **"This is the app I've been looking for – I can finally fix the flaw that's been plaguing me in the past! This is worth getting excited about!"**

And once we're filled with *feelings*, **our worship spills out in our action**. We just *can't* sit still – we need to *do* something! And our *life* fills up with sudden outbursts and reasonable reactions. **“Woo-hoo! I'm a new man! I gotta tell the world cuz this thing changes you and it's worth sharing!”**

And **that's what has to happen when you grow to know and feel God's ultimate worth**; like Elihu:

[I] will tell what I know. For I am full of words, and the spirit *within* me *compels* me; *inside* I am like bottled-up wine, like new wineskins ready to *burst*. I must speak and find relief; I must open my lips and reply. – Job 32:17-20 NIV [or John and Peter's response to silencing:]

We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard. – Acts 4:20 NIV



**It's not really a choice**; once we see something's *value* **worship is the natural force that pushes our thoughts and emotions into our actions**. And as it fills and spills, worship builds and strengthens our conviction and character. But, *because* it ends up in our *actions*, it's also always on display. Which means it has a huge and humbling byproduct; **worship turns you inside out**. What you *value* is brought to the surface and ultimately overflows to *unintentionally* provide a picture of what you had hiding *inside* your heart *and* mind. It's like when that Backstreet Boys song comes on and you can't *help* but sing and dance along! **Worship reveals your true thoughts and feelings!** So it says more about who you actually are than your SSN, Credit cards, internet history, and social media combined! It makes you as vulnerable as possible – and that's *GREAT!* Because there's three groups who are greatly affected by the honest peek that you provided: **others, you, and God**.

So **what does it do to the others who hear you?** Well, what did it do for *you* after being forced to witness *my* worship? I'll bet you *pity* me a little more now. But like I said earlier, that leads to wondering *why* I'm willing to embarrass myself like that. And think about what that vulnerability also does for you. You likely feel a little better about yourself, and that builds confidence! Because **witnessing worship can interest and encourage others**.

But what about *ourselves*? When you let your own insides out, **what effect does it have on you?** Well, first off, it's a *relief!* But having an outburst doesn't just prevent your implosion – releasing your thoughts and feelings gives you an honest look at what you've been building and how it's holding up; cuz **witnessing worship can satisfy and edify ourselves**.

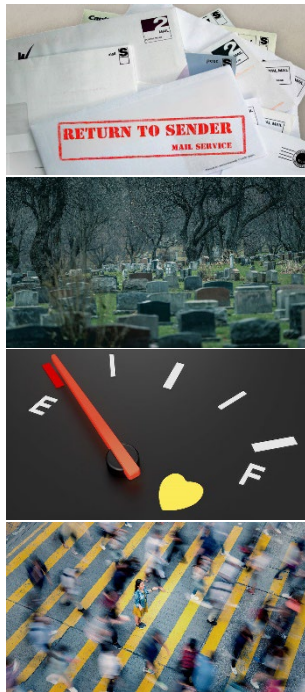
And then there's *God*. And He never misses a moment of all your action! So **what happens when He sees what you worship?** Well, He gets a snapshot of where you are and what He has to work with! And from *there*, He can find the way to get you filled with the real worth He wants to give. Because **witnessing worship lets God plan the change that saves our life and fulfills His will!** So:

I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of *God's mercy*, to offer *your* bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God - *this* is your *true* and *proper* worship. – Romans 12:1 NIV



But – just remember, **there are two big flaws that can pause or prevent true and proper worship:** The **wrong address** and **an empty tank**. Because **worship won't work without the right address** and if you assign ultimate worth to something that can't deliver true value, your worship is sunk!

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, *not* on earthly things. For you died, [to down here] and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. – Colossians 3:1-3 NIV



**Don't forget that we're a dead end!** We touched on this idea last week; but fake saviors aren't worth your time and the most common counterfeit is ourselves. But **being full of ourselves keeps our worship weak**. For our hearts and minds to be filled enough for ongoing overflowing, the worth we're worshipping has to always be wowing. And **we can't inspire that reliable reaction in ourselves**. And if you can't bring yourself to sing *God's* praise because you're still thinking you'll find ultimate worth somewhere down here, don't worry – but be prepared, cuz life is pretty good at robbing you of ultimate worth! Sickness, confusion, failure, and all manner of suffering are always at hand to remind us that we are not naturally the shape of worth itself! And if any imposter *is* taking the place of ultimate value, you *can't* be fully filled with the one love that's really *worthy* of shaping you. And *that* can contribute to problem two. Cuz **worship won't work when we're running on empty**. And whether your heart and mind have been falsely filled by a fraud or emptied out by apathy, the real worth of God's love can't spill out if it hasn't filled you up! But – if you're low-level worship reveals that you've been running on empty – *that's fine!*

Now you know what to fix! You need to be filled with some real worth! You need to let the Lord inside by either evicting whoever's in His way in your heart or **you just need to pay more attention to what He's already doing in, around, and through you!**

Earlier I asked what would change if you, yourself got to watch God work and experience what it was worth. Well that was a trick question! Cuz **every Christian ought to be having that experience!** Cuz if you've let the Lord lead, He should be filling your life with a love that overflows your thoughts, emotions, and actions! So, **how noisy is your joy?** Cuz the lower the volume, the bigger the problem; and **our silence says we're either full of ourselves or low on the Lord.**

[And here's the fix for both:] He *must* increase, but I *must* decrease. – John 3:30-31 NKJ

[Here's how we ask:] May the God of hope *fill you* with all joy and peace as *you* trust in *Him*, so that *you* may *overflow* with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. – Romans 15:13 NIV

Because if you just give Him His shot, He loves to prove His worth and when we let His Spirit do His thing, well, **worship just has to happen – cuz nobody can hold Him in!** And if you don't believe me, just listen to what happens when a church that's fit to burst with what Jesus is worth gets given a chance to sing, and shout and let it all out! But first, let's pray!

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Father God, thank You for loving me in spite of my sin; forgive me and cleanse me by the sacrifice of Your Son, my Savior; and free me and lead me by Your Spirit and Word, as I seek to trust and follow Jesus Christ, as the Lord of my life. Amen.