Careless Worship is Dangerous

Intro

How we see God impacts our worship. If we have a casual view of God, then our worship will be reflected by that attitude. If we have a high view of God, it will make a difference in how we worship. We don’t come to God and worship Him as we want but we come to God as He wants to express ourselves to him in truth.

How would you define worship?

Worship is treasuring God above all. It is an all I am response (body, mind, emotion) to all that God is.

I. Context in 2 Samuel 5 Life is awesome for David.

A. David has been running for his life from King Saul for a long time and finally the battle is over and David is finally anointed King of Israel 5:3

B. David conquers Jerusalem and makes it his capital. 5:6-7

C. David battles the Philistines and defeats them. 5:20, 25

D. In Chapter 5 everything is going great for King David. So when we come to 2 Sam. 6 David wants to celebrate God for what He has done.

II. David’s First attempt to worship God. Read 6:1-5

A. David puts together a long procession (30,000 men) to bring back the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem from Baalah. (about a 9 mile trek)

B. What do you know about the Ark?

1. it represented the presence of God

2. it was to be transported by being carried by the Priests on poles. (Ex, 25:13-14, Numbers 4:15))

3. it was not to be touched

C. David is celebrating with all his might before the Lord with music and dance. 6:5

D. This is how we tend to think about God.

1. We tend to think about God as a Chapter 5 God.

2. He brings us victories over our challenges

3. He helps life get better

4.. He gives us the things that we desire

5. He delivers us from our enemies and our greatest challenges.

E. Therefore we tend to approach God as David does on Sunday with celebration and praise. We tend to think that God is here to help our lives be better. He is here to give us what we desire. The Bible is a self-help book if we do what it says we will be happy and have an easy life.

F. As a result, if that was all that God was it would make sense that our worship would be one dimensional and always just full of celebration.

G. But David’s worship is careless and careless worship is dangerous.

1. David put the Ark on a cart. 6:3

Perhaps it was easier, more convenient, more efficient. But it also showed a lack of reverence for God.

2. If we only have a one-dimensional God, that He just makes life better and our worship is just celebratory, then we don’t have room for the holiness of God.

3. David is transporting the Ark without considering the holiness of God and tragedy strikes.

H. God strikes Uzzah dead Read 6:6-7

1. This is one of those stories that we struggle with because it doesn’t seem to make sense to us.

2. Uzzah was just trying to be helpful. It may have even just been a reflex. The ox stumbled and he didn’t want the Ark to fall to the ground.

3. There is a huge celebration going on and he just makes and innocent mistake and God kills him.

4. it probably never occurred to him that the dirty ground may have been more holy than Uzzah’s touch.

5. This totally destroys the mood for the celebration.

Tell the story of tubing and a student got injured.

I. Notice David’s response 6:8-10

1. At first it says that David is angry.

a. In Chapter 5 God did all these wonderful things for David and now because of a silly mistake, God kills one of David’s friends.

b. Have you ever gotten angry at God because He did something that didn’t make sense to you and it hurt? You felt like God had let you down.

2. Then it says that David is afraid.

a. David can’t control this God. He isn’t doing what he wants him to do. God is supposed to only bless him not harm him.

b. The holiness and wrath of God terrifies him.

c. Is this all bad? Why/why not? (Prov. 1:7, 9:10)

III. A Second way of viewing God 6:11

A. David has a hard time reconciling these two sides of God.

1. On the one hand God is good. Chapter 5

2. On the other hand God is terrifying. Chapter 6

B. So David decides he no longer wants God in Jerusalem and so he took the Ark to the house of Obed-Edom. Read 6:11

C. Sometimes we can’t make sense of God and so we put Him aside.

D. We may not doubt if God exists, but we begin to ask if God is good? Can we really trust Him? it reminds me of the line from Narnia, “Aslan (God) is good but He is not tame.”

E. When injustice and pain, disease and cancer, and other terrible things enter our world, how do we make sense of this, if God is in control, then why is this happening?

F. if God is good, then why is there so much evil in the world?

G. How do we understand this if we only know a chapter 5 God?

IV. A third option with God

A. After 3 months David doesn’t know what to do with God, but he hears that God is blessing Obed-Edom.

B. David is reminded that God is dangerous, and we don’t always understand Him, but He is also good.

C. So David decides to try again Read 6:14-16

1. David brings the Ark back rejoicing and dancing and celebrating.

2. it looks like before but this time there is a difference.

D. The priests are carrying the Ark this time. Read 6:12-13

1. After they have taken 6 steps they stop and offer and animal sacrifice.

2. We don’t know if David did this just once or if he did this every 6 steps until they got to Jerusalem. What is going on?

E. David has learned his lesson.

1. His worship is no longer flippant and casual and just celebratory.

2 Now his worship is also full of fear and reverence.

Hebrews 12:28-29 (the context of these verses is Moses not entering the promised land because of his disobedience and warning the Israelites to obey Ex. 4:24)

3. What was the point of the animal sacrifices?

a. Animal sacrifices were a way of acknowledging our dependence upon God, our sin before a Holy God, and our worship of God.

b. Animal sacrifices pointed to Christ. Our sin demands judgment and Jesus paid the price so we can come to God and worship Him. But we must never forget the seriousness of sin, the holiness of God, and the beauty of the cross.

F. This time there is celebration and rejoicing but also sacrificing.

1.So what has changed?

2. David’s view of God has enlarged.

3. It wasn’t just one dimensional of celebration or one dimension of reverence, but David brought it all together in his worship and now He sees God more fully.

4. God is good but He is also Holy.

5. David was now approaching God with rejoicing and reverence- a proper fear of God.

6. When you read through the Psalms, which is Israel’s song book of worship, we don’t just see celebration. We also see songs of pain and lament. Read Psalm 55

G. When we worship God it is ok for us to acknowledge our pain, fear, and confusion. If your life is more like Chapter 6 than Chapter 5 it is ok to acknowledge the pain and hurt and cry out to God and worship Him even when you don’t understand.

Conclusion

We don’t serve a one -dimensional God. God is good. But that doesn’t mean that He is here to serve us. We are here to serve Him.

When life is hard and doesn’t make sense and we are struggling to celebrate, it is ok to acknowledge that to God. But we don’t want to push God out of our lives because He isn’t doing what we want Him to do.

God is Holy which means that He can only ever do what is right and best. In moments like this we need to remember the gospel. I am a whole lot more evil than you will ever know and God is infinitely more holy than I can ever comprehend.

If I really got what I deserved this would seem like nothing in comparison.

So what should you do when you come to a worship service and the songs are all about God’s victory and you didn’t experience victory in your life this week? Should you not sing because you don’t “feel” this is true?

When you come to worship and you don’t feel like singing. Sing in faith asking God to make true the things that you are singing even if you aren’t experiencing them right now.

Worship is all about Him. God must be central, not us. Careless worship is dangerous. Thank God that it is only because of Christ that we can approach God and be sure to do it humbling, dependent upon God.

Small group questions

1. When you think of God what words first come to mind?

2. Do you tend to have a chapter 5 view of God or a Chapter 6 view of God? Why?

3. How does bringing the goodness of God together with the holiness of God impact your view of God?

4. Do you find it hard to worship God when life is not going as you desire? What can you do to help you worship God even then?

5. What is one thing you want to take away from this lesson to apply to your life this week?