

## Sermon Summary - Worshipping God

Bible Reading 2 Chron 29:1-36

We are born to worship. If people do not worship God they will replace Him with something/someone else. God's people are called to worship God above all. We are called to love (and worship) God with all that we have.

- **In the O.T.**

When the people of Israel were led from the cruelty and oppression of Egypt to freedom they celebrated with singing and dancing. (Exod 15)

When King David brought the Ark (which symbolised the presence of God) back to Jerusalem he celebrated enthusiastically. (2 Sam 6:16-23)

When King Hezekiah had the temple restored and the people of God repented, they worshipped with great joy and delight (2 Chron 29:29)

There was great variety in the way the people of Israel expressed their love and appreciation for God - they danced, sang, played musical instruments, fell prostrate before God, clapped their hands, raised their hands, knelt, brought their offerings and sacrifices to God.

- **In the N.T.**

When Jesus healed people they often worshipped Him, they fell at His feet. When he appeared to the disciples in a resurrection appearance, the disciples worshipped with great joy. (Lk 24:52) The early believers sang psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. (Col 3:16) Paul encouraged the believers to lift holy hands in prayer (1 Tim 2:8)

If the people of God were very expressive in their worship under the old covenant, it is reasonable to assume that with the coming of Jesus and the glorious presence of the Holy Spirit that the believers were, at the very least, as expressive as those in the Old Testament. As time moved on there was less involvement by the people as all was centred in the hands of the clergy. This led to a loss of spontaneity and joy in worship which became stifled, as solemnity and 'dignity' became the goal. The book of Revelation gives us a glimpse of heaven — the worship in heaven is very expressive as it flows from hearts overwhelmed by the glory of God. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

- **Present day**

In the past 20 years most churches have faced the issue of what style of worship to adopt Do they disregard hymns and replace them with modern songs/choruses? Over the past 10 years we at CHBC have seen significant change.

Recently we introduced a time when people were given the opportunity to express their own response to God's goodness and faithfulness. This was accompanied with a basic chord structure and people were invited to reflect, sing, speak out their praise of God and/or to pray. This was new to some and as a result some felt uncertain. Some of the concerns were:

1. Some felt uncomfortable. Yet it is simply another way of expressing our praise to God. No one feels uncomfortable when people express their feelings of support or praise at a football match. If people can get excited at a football match, then surely we can get excited about what Jesus has done for us.
2. It is not traditional for a Baptist church to do this. It is difficult to define a traditional Baptist church as there is so much diversity. Traditions can help our faith, but they should never be used as the parameters by which we respond to God or by which we insist that God respond to us. When God breaks through in revival it is never in response to the traditions that people have set up. God does new things.

God is seeking those who will worship him in spirit and truth - our hearts, rather than the form of expression, is the key.