**The Proper Place of and for Emotion in Worship**

Review of the previous lesson’s points: 1) Worship should not be *directed, dictated,* or even *driven* by how it makes “me/us feel;” and, 2) Such is worshipping and glorifying “self”(our wants and desires) rather than God.

However, **all avenues or acts of true biblical worship involve emotion.** I would not have it any other way. They are the natural outgrowths of a heart, mind, body, and soul lovingly committed to God, Mark 12:30. But striking these emotional chords, or reaching these emotional touchstones, cannot be the object of our worship- else *we* become the focus rather than *God,* which is idolatry, cf. Rom.1:25. Nonetheless, the involvement of our emotions in worship cannot be denied (so we shouldn’t attempt to do!):

* **Preaching** can and should produce a wide-range of emotions: *conviction* of heart, mind, and soul in *sorrow* for sin, Acts 2:36-37; *joy* and *hope* from spiritual solutions to our dire dilemma of sin and condemnation, Acts 2:38-39; *exhortation* and *encouragement* through education, Acts 2:40; and the thrill of victory and through Christ, Acts 2:41-47!

But if we contrive to make these kinds of emotions the *goal* of preaching rather than allowing them to be the *result* *of* and *flow naturally* from it, then the message becomes *“peddled”* (2Cor.2:17), *“adulterated”* (2Cor.4:2), and *“distorted,”* (Gal.1:6-7). Our *emotions* become the focus of the message instead of our *salvation,* Rom.1:16.

* **Prayer** without emotion is formal, mechanical, and dead. But its emotional component comes not from *posture*, *prose*, or *dramatic voice intonations*, but from: awareness of the great *privilege* of speaking to the Almighty, Heb.4:16; from the realized opportunity to lay bare the *true desires* of our hearts, Jas.5:13a,14-16; and *grateful appreciation* in the knowledge that such utterings are given ear and attention by the Creator, 1Pet.3:12.
* **Singing,** well that’s just the music of our souls (Jas.5:13b)- whether they be in throws of deep agony, or on the crescendos of faith and glory. But the emotion comes not from the pitch, melodies, harmonies, and meters- but from **words** of true *joy* and *praise,* Acts 16:25; and **lyrics** born of and that teach and highlight the eternal truths of inspiration, Col.3:16! The words of *praise*, of *dedicated devotion*, and of *encouragement*, they *educate* and *encourage* us, and are *the fruit of our lips* that praise the Almighty God of the Universe- our Creator, Sustainer, and Savior, Heb.13:15!
* And what would the **Lord’s Supper** be without emotion? The purpose is clearly one of *remembrance* and *appreciation,* Luke 22:19. Concentrating, even for a moment, on the agony of the cross, and the supreme love that led Him to and kept Him on it, produce both *sorrow* for the necessity of it for our sakes, and *loving appreciation* and *gratitude* for the same, Matt.26:26-28. But if we make these or other emotions the *goal* of the Supper rather than allowing them to flow from the *memorial remembrance,* we get all too concerned with mood lighting and other manipulations (one sister wanted her congregation to “hum”- not sing, an “appropriate” song while partaking, um, “No” was my answer).
* **Giving** too, has emotional components: ***purpose***from understanding *why* we give*,* 2Cor.9:7a,13-15; ***joy***from the *privilege* of participation, 2Cor.8:1-5; and ***cheerfulness***from a grateful heart*,* 2Cor.9:6,7b,2Cor.9:7-11.

**But,** please understand and remember that these emotional aspects of our worship all **result** from:

1. Proper **relationship** with God,
2. Proper **desire** to worship Him as He desires and dictates, and the
3. Proper i**nvolvement** of our minds, bodies, and heart in *what, how,* and *why* we worship.

They do not come from contrived manipulations of light and dramatics, but contact and fellowship with God, His Word, and His people in true worship. Thus, **the *emotions of worship* result from *relationship,* not *ritual.***