

Lost in wonder, love and praise: Psalm 84

Many thanks to Rachel for today's TFTD.



**How lovely is your dwelling-place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul yearns, even faints for the courts of the Lord;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
The sparrow has found her a house
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young:
at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God.
Blessed are they who dwell in your house:
they will always be praising you.
Blessed are those whose strength is in you:
whose hearts are set on the pilgrim way.**

Psalm 84: 2

I remember as a child being quite perplexed and confused trying to understand what worship was all about.

Saying sorry to God for the things that we had done wrong – well, that made sense.
Leaning about God through scripture and its interpretation – that made sense.
Asking God to make things better for me and others – that made sense.
The Eucharist? Well that did not really make sense but the drama of it all was enough to capture the imagination of any child.

But what was the point of worship?

Why would a God, so powerful, so omnipotent, so awe-inspiring, need the awkward and reflective little girl that I was, to tell Him how great He was ... was God really that insecure? My teachers would get very excited and tell us that in

heaven we would spend the rest of eternity worshiping God ... and that was when the alternative of Hell became rather appealing.

There is that point along life's journey of exploration when we make the awesome discovery ... that worship is about coming into the presence of God ... and that Hell is about being separated from the love of the living God. From then on, nothing is ever quite the same.

Today's Psalm is that voice which reaches out to us through the fog of millennia and speaks of the joy of worship. How could someone so far back in the mist of time so accurately depict our yearning for intimacy with God today? My only conclusion is that it is a yearning somewhere to be found in all of God's creatures, a yearning beyond time, beyond geography, beyond the boundaries of this world.

But what is it about worship that so powerfully arouses our emotional, spiritual, and even physical want for God?

Worship is about coming home; just like those birds in our Psalm who build their nests in God's presence. It feeds that deep human longing to belong somewhere.

Worship is about being who we are. It brings out the best of us ... And yet, we come as the worst of what we have been. We bring what happened to us five minutes ago and also what happened 50 years ago. It feeds that profound human angst to be loved and accepted for who we are.

Worship transforms us. It is those moments of life-changing intensity and of sudden razor- sharp clarity. It feeds that human hunger to escape the confines of our reality and brush against truths beyond our imagination.

Worship is that web which knits together into a giant whole all elements of our Christian life: prayers of confession and supplication, the reading and study of scripture, the sacraments, and the being in fellowship with one another. It is simultaneously breathtakingly beautiful and as mundane as brushing your teeth.

As we prepare to celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, there is a further dimension to our worship. Worship is that invitation to you and to me to respond to the call of "Thy Kingdom Come", to engage with God's divine purpose for this world and beyond.

And speaking of the world beyond ...you know what? ... maybe my teachers

were right all along and that the thought of spending all eternity lost in love,
wonder and praise in the courts of our Lord is pretty exciting after all.

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