

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY WORKSHOP

Practical Wisdom for your Life

June 7th, 2020, 11 AM via Zoom

The Ways of Worship, Worship as Willingness

The essential thing 'in heaven and earth' is... that there should be a long obedience in the same direction; there thereby results, and has always resulted in the long run, something which has made life worth living.

Fredrick Nietzsche

Your priorities in life aren't just marginal options. They are life-determining. Your personality is molded inescapably into the image of what you give priority....

We become like the god we worship.

Richard Halverson, Former Chaplain of the Senate

When people are free to do as they please, they usually imitate each other.

Eric Hoffer, The Passionate State of Mind

People can think correctly and behave rightly and worship politely but still live badly: live anemically, live individualistically self-enclosed lives, live bored and insipid and trivial lives.

Eugene Peterson, As Kingfishers Catch Fire

It (trying to keep the law) grants you the power to judge others and feel superior to them. You believe you are living to a higher standard than those you judge. Enforcing rules, especially in its more subtle expressions like responsibility and expectation, is a vain attempt to create certainty out of uncertainty. And contrary to what you might think, I have a great fondness for uncertainty. Rules cannot bring freedom; they only have the power to accuse.

Wm. Paul Young, God speaking in the novel, The Shack

When you break the big laws, you do not get liberty;
you do not even get anarchy. You get the small laws.

G.K. Chesterton

Centering questions

Take a few deep breaths and quietly consider the following questions:

What do you like most about a worship service?

What experience outside of worship most connects you with God?

This week's Biblical passage

Psalm:119:32-48

I run the way of your commandments, for you enlarge my understanding.
Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end.
Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.
Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.
Turn my heart to your decrees, and not to selfish gain.
Turn my eyes from looking at vanities; give me life in your ways.
Confirm to your servant your promise, which is for those who fear you.
Turn away the disgrace that I dread, for your ordinances are good.
See, I have longed for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life.
Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise.
Then I shall have an answer for those who taunt me, for I trust in your word.
Do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your ordinances.
I will keep your law continually, forever and ever.
I shall walk at liberty, for I have sought your precepts.
I will also speak of your decrees before kings and shall not be put to shame;
I find my delight in your commandments, because I love them.
I revere your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.

Discussion questions and background

1. What is this writer's sole and primary focus?
2. Why does he focus on the "law?" Is it a focus on the rules or on God?
3. If you're not focusing on God, will you be focusing on something else? Can a person live without some sort of meaning for their life? Why or why not?
4. What are some other things that give people meaning, that is their focus of worship?
5. Do those ultimately give the life they seek? Why or why not?
6. He says that God's law gives him liberty? How could God's law do that?
7. How does love orient your life? How does love orient God's?

Closing thoughts

The ultimate posture that prepares us for freedom is *humility*, quite simply coming to the end of ourselves.

Danielle Strickland, The Ultimate Exodus

There is no freedom like seeing myself as I am and not losing hope.

Macrina Wiederkehr, Benedictine nun

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