

5 Ways to Set the Atmosphere for God's Presence

God is stirring hearts and people are hungry for an outpouring of the Spirit. I would like to discuss strategies for leading people into the glorious presence of God. I certainly don't want to imply that these strategies are exclusive. I am sure there are many effective strategies, but I have found that these concepts have helped me in my leadership capacity.

1. Break a man-centered focus while cultivating a God-centered focus.

"... the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:16).

Too many Christians want to make the kingdom of God about meeting their individual hurts and needs. The only song they want to sing is the old gospel song that sings, "When He was on the cross, I was on His mind." We need to remind ourselves and others that the gospel is not primarily about us. It is about the Lord and His purposes. If we would truly make Him the focus, our services would be transformed.

2. Move beyond the restraints of time and culture.

"For you need patience, so that after you have done the will of God, you will receive the promise" (Heb. 10:36).

I think Americans are more time conscious than any people in the world. We speed through life going to one appointment after another. At restaurants, people are pulling out their cellphones and palm pilots. Time and culture too often define our lives. Churches must be prepared to move beyond the restraints of time and culture. The world does not dictate our values or our schedule. If we would only allow Jesus to set

our agenda, we would experience a greater sense of the glory.

3. Don't do everything! Decide what is the most "needful thing," and do that.

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all discernment, 10 that you may approve things that are excellent" (Phil. 1:9-10).

I have noticed a lot of the churches I visit are attempting to do everything. They have food pantries, mother's day out, men and boy's baseball and many other activities. This is not to say it isn't good for churches to do a lot of things, but there are often weightier things that need to be focused on. I believe churches need to stop asking, "What do we need to do?" Instead they need to be asking, "What are the most important things we need to do?" When we begin to focus on the weightier matters, we will experience a greater expression of the grace of God.

4. Make every adjustment necessary to replicate the atmosphere of heaven.

"After these things I heard a great sound of many people in heaven, shouting: 'Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments" (Rev. 19:1-2).

What is heaven like? We need to consider the atmosphere of heaven and strive to see it manifest in our services. There is no betrayal in heaven. There is no backbiting in heaven. No one is saying I don't feel like singing or lifting my hands. In heaven every creature is in utter submission to God. If we could get the people of God to become like those who are in heaven, we would see an immediate transformation. in our services

5. Make every possible effort to restore honor unto God.

“Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name’s sake ” (Ezek. 36:22).

Many of us no longer have a grasp of honor. Illegitimate births and broken families litter the American landscape. The only people we seem to care about is ourselves. We forget that we were created to bring honor to God. If we would only bring honor to God, it would change everything. When a congregation begins to bring glory and honor to God, the glorious presence of God will envelope the room.

I believe these strategies are very important. If we the people of God would only focus our attention on God and make the necessary changes, we would have a place the Lord wants to visit. Everybody likes to talk about the presence of God, but so few are willing to do what it requires to see the presence manifest in our midst.

I pray you will apply these strategies both individually as well as corporately. If you do so, I believe you will notice a remarkable change in your services. {eoa}

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