

Are We in Danger of Worshipping Worship?

The question needs to be asked: Are we in danger of worshipping worship?

The mood. The atmosphere. The melody. The crowd. The emotion. Your favorite worship leader or your favorite speaker.

The band. The performance. The feeling.

Are we being moved by the right things? Are our hearts aimed in the proper direction?

The problem with our worship culture is that we equate worship with an experience, a moment. We end up loving *worship* more than we love *God*. We end up talking about *worship* more than we talk about *God*.

Our culture has made worship an end in itself, rather than what it should be—a way of life with Christ at the center.

But when life is chaotic, what do you turn to? When crises hits your life, what worship songs are you singing?

The Distracted Worshipper

I'm not advocating we create boring, terrible music or rid our gatherings of emotion. This isn't a time to point the finger, listing all the churches, record labels, and artists who are doing it all wrong.

I'm issuing a caution—a warning to guard our hearts from loving *worship* more than we love *God*.

The image you see on the top-right isn't just a nice image. Cameras *focus*. They block out all distractions and zero in on what is most important in that moment.

Imagine hiring a photographer for your wedding who was so distracted by the scenery that he never took any photos of you and your spouse.

Not only would we call that unprofessional, we'd call it ridiculous. As a camera focuses in on a singular object, a special moment, so your life should frame itself around Jesus Christ.

But with good intent, many of us are running around focusing on anything and everything but God Himself. It's as if Jesus is enthroned before our eyes but we're taking Instagram shots of the throne itself.

We're more enamored by the gifts and talents of God's people more than the Creator of all things.

If we took away the music, the songs and the artists, would we have anything to say to God?

Are We in Love With the Right Thing?

If you were alone in a room with Jesus Christ, what would well up from the depths of your heart? What would you say or feel? How would you respond?

Can you talk about worship music for hours but have nothing to say about who God is in your life and what He is doing?

Do you know all there is to know about the latest worship album but barren when it comes to knowing Scripture?

I'm not here to guilt you. I want you to know God. I want you to have a history of seeing God move and seeing His promises at work in your day to day.

I don't want you to look back on the glory days of your faith. I want each day to bring new perspectives, adventures, divine appointments and experiences that show the reality of God to the world.

That's why the Biblical understanding of worship needs to be kept paramount in our minds.

How True Worshipers Experience Art

Being impressed by talented people and feeling good through the force of their performance is not enough. The wise worshipper will enjoy that, bless that, encourage that, but will also see through it to the Giver of all gifts.

- The true worshipper learns to sing through the storm—cry out through the confusion of life.
- The true worshipper knows how to scour the Scriptures for daily bread. The true worshipper knows how to pray.
- The true worshipper isn't just moved by powerful music. He or she is moved by the weight of God's glory and is hushed by the magnitude of His presence.

It's not that great art is wrong or unnecessary. The worshiper of God just knows how to use it. It's never an end in itself but a gateway to seeing more of the glory and perfection of God.

C.S. Lewis says it better than I ever could:

"The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things—the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself, they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshipers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of the tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited."

Question: How do you guard your heart, your team, your church from loving worship more than loving God? How do you use your full talent in the local church without swaying the hearts of

God's people away from Him?

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