

Tuesday, February 3, 2004

WORSHIP LIFE

Encouraging The Worship Life Of Every Believer

WRITER'S OPINION

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Special to ASSIST News Service

COSTA MESA, CA (ANS) -- How Is Your Worship Life?

Recently I was reading through the book of Exodus in my daily devotions. I came across a scripture that I had never really noticed before. Has that ever happened to you? The verse I discovered was Exodus 6:8-9. It says, "And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the Lord." So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; but they did not heed Moses, because of anguish of spirit and cruel bondage."

BACKGROUND

Previous to this verse, Moses had been in conversation with God. God was revealing His plans on how He was going to deliver the nation of Israel from the cruel oppression under Pharaoh. He reminds Moses of His covenant with Israel with the powerful declaration of His love for His people - I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Now imagine this, Moses has just spent this incredible time in the Presence of God. He's just heard the most life changing message and has been commissioned to carry this message to the people of Israel. It's a message of hope. And as he begins to proclaim this message of hope and deliverance – he notices that no one is listening, no one is cheering, no one is paying attention. Why? Because the anguish of their own hearts and the cruel bondage that they had found themselves in had overwhelmed them to the point that they had stopped listening to the voice of God. They had completely lost hope that God would deliver them. They were living with a fatalistic acceptance of their broken condition.

As a worship leader, I often see folks that come into the sanctuary with the same look of hopelessness that the Israelites must have had. They're so overwhelmed by the anguish of their hearts. They're overwhelmed by the cruelty that they've suffered under. They've lost sight of their deliverer.

David The Psalmist writes - I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living (Psalm 27:13).

The wonderful thing about worship is that we can come to God just the way we are – warts and all. We can come to him with our disappointments, our sorrows, our guilt, our shame, our brokenness. We can lay our burdens down at His feet and He hears us – but He doesn't allow us to stay in our troubled state.

What do you mean? Jesus taught us to pray saying – Our Father, which art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Notice, He did not teach us to pray – Our Father, which art in heaven. You're just like everyone else in my life that's let me down. He did not teach us to pray – My kingdom come, My will be done because I deserve better than what I've gotten so far. To worship God, we must see Him as He truly is. That He is our Father, not a stranger. He loves us perfectly as only He can. He is holy. He's not like anyone or anything in all the earth. His will is to bless us abundantly and to deliver us from all our captivities. His kingdom is a kingdom of rightness, peace and joy. That's His desire for us – but are we like the nation of Israel who would not listen because of the anguish of our hearts? Do we miss the message of hope because we're caught up in the cruelty of what we see? Or can we say like David – I would have lost hope unless I believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord.

Often, the issue comes down to a choice. Will we trust the Lord with the circumstances of our lives? Will we allow our hearts to become embittered by the difficulties of life? Or will we turn to the one – who not only bore our sins upon the cross, but who also bore our griefs and our sorrows? Are you grieving over the loss of a child or parent? Maybe the loss of a spouse or friend? Maybe you sorrow over the loss of a childhood. Maybe you feel like it's all you can do to just go to church – let alone worship.

There was a time in my life when I didn't feel welcomed in church. No one told me I wasn't welcomed, but I was so overwhelmed by the life of sin I had lived that I felt unwelcomed. I would stand in the back of the church and in my heart I would pray – Lord, it's all I can do to just be here and the Lord would speak to my heart and say, "That's alright, I'll take it." After a while, I felt more at ease and I would pray in my heart, "Lord, I'd like to sing, but I don't want to lift my hands." The Lord would say, "That's alright, I'll take it." Then I got to the point that I prayed, "Lord, I'll lift my hands, but not very far." The Lord would say, "That's alright, I'll take it." And over the course of several months, He drew me back into His presence by His love. I fell in love with Jesus all over again.

You see, at some point I had to be willing to step out of my "reality" and step into the truth. I had to be willing to set down my offenses, my sin, my guilt. I had to be willing to walk out of the prison I was in and walk into the loving arms of Jesus. I couldn't hold on to the anguish of my heart any longer. I had to exchange it for God's peace at the cross.

My friend, wherever you're at in your journey with God; whatever anguish may be consuming your heart; there is good news. You can exchange it for God's peace at the cross. You can exchange your bitterness for His forgiveness. You can exchange your sin for His righteousness. You can receive His love and this love that God so freely gives – this is the love that we freely offer back to Him in worship.

Holland Davis is the worship leader at Calvary Chapel Of Costa Mesa, California and also runs Calvary Chapel Music. He is published by Maranatha! Music, Vineyard Music, Word Music and Rolltop Music. His most popular song is - Let It Rise - featured on WOW Worship Blue which went Platinum. Other noted songs are Who Is Like The Lord, Healing Word and At The Cross. (Pictured: [Holland Davis with his wife Roxie](#)).



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