

SOMEONE online asked, “What kind of church are we? We are a serving church, We are a giving church, We are a worshiping church, We are a relational church, We are a non-judgemental church and last of all we are a loving church.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE OF PRAISE

“But thank God! He has made us his captives and continues to lead us along in Christ’s triumphal procession. Now he uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume. Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing.” (II Corinthians 2:14-15, New Living Translation)

In the Roman victory parades, incense was burned in celebration of the defeat of Rome's enemies. In that way, people could both see and smell the evidence of a captured foe as it passed by. Paul describes God's use of Christians in a similar way. He uses us to spread the fragrance of His knowledge everywhere we go. We serve His purpose of spreading the truth of the gospel down every street He leads us along. Our life becomes a sweet smelling aroma to the Lord both in service and in our worship.

Genesis 22:5 ⁵ “Stay here with the donkey,” Abraham told the servants. “The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will **worship there**, and then we will come right back.”

THE FRAGRANCE OF OUR WORSHIP

Fragrance was an intricate part of Old Testament worship. The Lord gave Moses precise instructions on making perfume for use in the Tabernacle. (See Exodus 30:34-38 and 37:29.) It was never to be duplicated for personal use; it was holy to God.

We also see fragrance in New Testament worship through the act of love Mary showed toward Jesus. *“Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment”* (John 12:3). Everyone there could smell the fragrance of her extravagant act of worship.

The value of Mary's perfume was a year's wages. Assuming the median income in the United States, this worshipping woman poured \$12, 000 worth of perfume on her Lord.

HOW DOES YOUR WORSHIP SMELL?

John 12:1 Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. ²A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. ³Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.⁴ But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, ⁵“That perfume was worth a year's wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor.” ⁶Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples' money, he often stole some for himself. ⁷Jesus replied, “Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial. ⁸You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.”

Every church has a culture.

Worship is not an activity that is confined to this realm or the expression of music. It really should be called, 'worth-ship'. What is God worth to you? Is he worth the time and effort to publicly display your gratitude?

Judas devalued the woman's devotion because it devalued the importance of Jesus in her life.

If we are judging someone's worship by how they display that, we need to stop because we don't know the warfare they are going through just to get them to the point they are at.

Don't ever apologize for praising God.

Everybody worships something! You will never understand someone's actions or the reason behind what they do, even though in your opinion it might appear a waste of time and resources. Maybe there was something she was responding to that they had not experienced.

This woman knew from personal experience the grace of God. If you knew the warfare behind the worship of some people, you would not be wondering about them.

John 12 will show you why this woman was willing to worship without any worries about what people thought.

Have you ever felt the presence and peace of God on you by watching people worship? As if they took you with them in their expression.

In John 11 Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. In John 12:1 "Six days before the Passover Jesus arrived in Bethany where Lazarus lived who Jesus raised from the dead.

You will not understand 12 unless you experience 11

Vs 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus's honor. Martha served while Lazarus was among them reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure Nard and expensive perfume and poured it out.

She saw Jesus pour out life to Lazarus and she was willing to do the same. She saw her brother in the tomb for 4 days and knew JESUS WAS THE ONE who raised him from the dead. That is why she worshiped the way she did, and it was no one else's business!

If she never asked the question, she never would have seen the answer!

Because she saw the answer, she witnessed how awesome Jesus was and could not help but worship him.

She made an effort to get to Jesus. She could have stayed home and grieved but she was determined to not settle for the outcome. I just wonder how many people stay home from church isolated and incubated because they refuse to pursue the answer to their questions?

Study of 2 monkeys who were put in an experiment to see if they could scare the monkeys. They did this 2 ways.

- A) Put the monkeys in 2 separate cages and measured their cortisol levels. (The stress hormone) They would flash lights and make

loud sounds and the levels went nuts. So, they measured the stress when they were alone, then measured the stress when they were together.

B) This time there were the same sounds, same lights, but the stress level was half when they were together.

Some people go through hell at home because they have not learned to “not forsake the assembling of yourselves together”

Acts 16:16-40 New Living Translation

Focus on vs 25 ²⁵ Around midnight Paul **and** Silas were praying and singing hymns to God.

That little word “and” is part of your solution. If the devil can get you alone scrolling on Facebook, you may just fix your faith on your failures rather than your future.

Worship is a weapon. The devil’s desire is to make you more defensive than offensive!

The devil (Lucifer) was the worship leader in heaven and he let that get to his head! He knows how to defeat us by focusing our attention on ourselves. He wants you to lose the heart of worship, to lose your song. He wants you to close your song book and hang your head. He wants you to close your Bible and go buy a self-help book.

1 Peter 2:9 But you <i>are</i> a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
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Priest means Bridge Builder; to build a bridge of worship from Earth to Heaven.

He inhabits the praise of his people.

Did you know the intensity of our corporate worship at Impact is based on how it is nurtured at home before you get here?

IF the devil can keep you isolated, he can torment you with more fear. You will be discouraged, dissatisfied, disrespectful, disgruntled, disappointed, discontent, deflated and defeated etc.

But you came to church today with some praying people, some praising people, some unbridled, unrestricted, unselfish, unconventional, unreserved, uncontaminated people who know how to rejoice.
I will enter his gates (doors) with thanksgiving in my heart!

HE PUT THEM IN THE CELL

PAUL and SILAS start singing, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness.

PAUL- Shut up Silas and get some sleep!

PSALM 42 :5 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence

DISTURB=Murmur

SILAS kept singing...I dare not trust the sweetest frame

PAUL; Only lean on Jesus name

At midnight Silas belted out, "When darkness seems to hide his face, I rest on his unchanging grace.

PAUL goes..."In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil"

Then they both encouraged each other and sang, "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand.

CHAINS BREAK WHEN WE WORSHIP TOGETHER. HOPE RISES WHEN WE WORSHIP TOGETHER!

At Impact Church you are never alone unless you run out and even then, chances are someone will run after you. "Get your butt back in here"

All the prisoners were watching to see how they would react.

Can you hear Paul and Silas? Devil you might be able to bind my feet, but you can't stop me from singing. I can still lift my voice! My feet may be bound but I can lift my eyes.

You have to quit focusing on what you are bound to. You have to shift your focus to your faith. You have to focus more on the answer than the problem. Your perspective is either your prison or your passport!!

Sadly a crisis is what makes you connect more with your creator and your worship becomes more intense.

It creates an open heaven over us. You sing yourself into freedom

We need to consider it a gift when God becomes your only option because it is at that point you have learned to **surrender**.

NOTE: Surrendering grants you access into His presence.

Faith is the reward for surrendering. It is from that point, we find ourselves believing again.

God set their feet free by shaking the foundation to what their feet were connected to. He is going to shake the foundation to break what you are bound to.

Everyone was loosed that was bound! It was a chain reaction!
Some people, on the other hand, let their chains break their praise.

MY PRAISE BREAKS CHAINS!!!

Did you know the decision you are making comes from the conversations you are having? Conversations are a result of the connections you have. The connections you have formed the perspective you now have.

You may just need to Disconnect yourself from some people!
Paul and Silas were free before they were freed!!! Because they had the proper perspective of praise. Their perspective was not connected to their pain!! Their perspective was connected to their purpose.

Your perspective is a product of your connections!
Paul and Silas didn't look at prison as a penalty! They kept everything in context because they knew what their calling was.
Had they not gone to prison; the message would not have spread so fast.
Your testimony and how you praise God through it are what stands the test of time. It was in prison that they found their freedom.

2 Corinthians 3:16-18 TPT

But the moment one turns to the Lord **with an open heart, the veil is lifted and they see. Now, the "Lord" I'm referring to is the Holy Spirit, and **wherever he is Lord, there is freedom**.** We can all draw close to him with the veil removed from our faces. And with no veil we all become like mirrors who brightly reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus. We are being transfigured into his very image as we move from one brighter level of

glory to another. And this glorious transfiguration comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

If you can sing and stand through the shaking, you will witness first hand why worship is important to us at Impact Church

- 1) Great worshippers know God intimately. We cannot worship a God we do not know
- 2) Great worshippers release themselves from this realm to the next. Don't confine yourself to one style. Your box can be a barrier. There are about 7 different Hebrew words for praise in the OT. David is a great example of how he expressed his worship. Sometimes he shouted, sang, danced, knelt, raise hands, sit and meditate,
- 3) Great worshipers block out distractions. Try closing your eyes
- 4) Great worshippers prepare their hearts before the service
- 5) Great worshippers focus on the words and not the style
- 6) Great worshippers practice worship throughout the week

We have to learn to worship God based on who he is rather than through our circumstances. Worship is a constant conversation. Be careful not to worship-worship. You are connected to your creator in communion.

When we know how greatly loved we are, our perspective will change.
NEXT WEEK --- Don't let anyone steal your song!