



Experience 31: Praise and Worship

Monday, February 22, 2021

Colossians 3:18-20

From beginning to end he's there, towering far above everything, everyone. So spacious is he, so roomy, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding. Not only that, but all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe—people and things, animals and atoms—get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the cross.

MSG

What is in the middle of your living room? I am not 100% sure what you have but I know that for most of us a TV and a couch are in the middle of our living rooms. No matter how spacious our accommodations are that's usually how a living room works. This is because whatever we want most of our attention on we place it at the center of our view. Isn't it the worst when dad or grandpa always pick the best spot for TV viewing before you get to?! Each of us by nature tries to place whatever we are focusing on at the center.

The very first followers of Jesus made an incredible discovery. They realized through years of contemplation that the way the universe works is that Christ is at the center. This is what Paul means when he writes the afore mentioned verses. Everything seen and unseen in all creation is designed to work best with Christ at the center of it. Just like how a sink in the middle of the living room wouldn't

feel quite right, anything else at the center of our existence would throw things off. Which is exactly where we find ourselves. To become a follower of Jesus is to rightly follow the pattern of all things in creation and place Christ at the center of who you are and who you are becoming.

This is the truest meaning of what we call worship, when Christ is acknowledged in all we are.

Of course, not all of us have Christ at the center, even if we say we do. If security or financial perfection is at the center, we end up off balance, even if that center seems really reasonable. If pleasure or freely sleeping around with whomever we want is our center, then we won't feel at home anywhere, even when we are at home. If more power and visibility to others is at our center, we may find ourselves oddly out of place even if our title says we have the best spot. Christ is who belongs at our center and usually all our other wishes or issues begin to slowly find their proper place around Jesus. So, as absurd as it may sound, choosing to have habits or practices of worship could be exactly what your finances, your blood pressure, your marriage, your career, your best friends, and your grandkids need the most.

What we are NOT saying is that you should go singing some songs instead of seeing a doctor, addressing your spending, or dealing with your relationships. What we are saying is that if your weekly flow of life is marked with

habits of worship like singing, reading, fasting, conversations, and prayer, it will be the wind to your sails and the rearranging of your life's momentum you need to do the other things. This is about putting first things first and getting things "properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies" as Paul would call it. The best way to know if this is true is to try it, that's why we endeavored to these 40 days of Powerful Worship Experiences together.

So what helps you keep Christ at the center? Is it music, is it silence and solitude, is it prayer or reading the Bible, or is it weekly intentional conversations with someone about faith? How can you better renew that practice this week and make it highlighted as a part of your calendar and weekly flow. Share with us what you do and how you have been working on this by sending us an email to pastorchrist@ccof.church.

Actions to take

- Listen to "Across the Universe" by Mosaic MSC. Listen for the words and phrases that help you feel connection between all things and Christ.
- After listening, say a prayer. What does that song make you want to say to Jesus?
- Identify the best practices from this 40 day series that help you be centered on Jesus the most (Praise/Worship, Focus, Prayer, Fasting, Sharing.)
- What is one habit from one of these topics that you can intentionally calendar as a weekly re-occurring time? Take the step and set the calendar with a reminder.
- Ask one person to check up on you and remind you of this commitment and have a talk once in a while about how it's going.