

THE SOURCE OF WORSHIP

Acts 16: 13-18 (2/5/06)

(you are going to have to read this for yourself to understand this summary!)

Intro: I want to share some thoughts on worship with you. I view in our passages four types of worship, which I shall outline later. First, worship has one direction, one real source, one object. Worship must flow away from self, it must be sourced out of an intimate love for God, and it is directed to God. Oh that we might have a worship that cannot be contained, no matter the form in which it manifests itself. There is little value in forcing worship, though encouraging an atmosphere of worship has value. Yet, worship could have little to do with the circumstances. Let's look at four examples of worship together.

Continuous Response: Vs. 13-15. Lydia was acted upon by God in her heart. She was opened by God and worship happened to her. God had moved in her life and the natural result was worship. Remember the definition of a dog licking the hand? It's really better said as a spiritual foot washing. Worship must flow out of what God has done in my life that cannot be contained. I love Him because as one said, "I have been rescued."

False Worship-Chanting: V16. We have this damsel who is saying all the right words but it is sourced out of the wrong master. Her masters (kurios) are out to benefit themselves and she is just chanting, if you will, out of a demon controlled spirit. Maybe that is more severe than some false worship I engage in, but wouldn't it be a shame if I were singing and praising with words, without the flow of God's work in my life? Kind of like ritual and tradition without the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Circumstance Denying Worship: V23-25. Here they are. Paul and Silas in prison in stocks or leg irons. They sing out as if they were praise leaders at a WOW worship concert. The Scripture puts it like this:
Act 16:25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. I don't see any plan to sing hoping there will be an earthquake. What I see is men whose worship defies the circumstances. They are not just in prison. They are beat up on, dragged around, had their church clothes ripped off and they just can't be stopped from worshipping. You think I am kidding when I say that worship is not about what's going on in my life but about "whose" going on in my life? Are you able to be so engaged in worship that when God set's you free from your "oppressors" that you don't run from your circumstance, you transform them?

Compassion Worship: Vs. 33-34. Now you have this jailor who is set free from death. It isn't Paul and Silas who were *really* rescued... it was the jailor. Here is how the "Message" tells this:
Act 16:33-34 They never did get to bed that night. The jailer made them feel at home, dressed their wounds, and then--he couldn't wait till morning!--was baptized, he and everyone in his family. There in his home, he had food set out for a festive meal. It was a night to remember: He and his entire family had put their trust in God; everyone in the house was in on the celebration. Worship is often expressed in being a "waiter at the table." This jailor is so grateful for what God has done in his life (RESCUED HIM), that he must pour it out on others. This is really worship to God. The cup of cold water "in His Name." It is unto God but onto others!! CAN WE LIVE LIKE THAT?? CAN WE WORSHIP LIKE THAT???