

Praise and worship should always be built on theology

Written by Josh Winslett

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Very often this dynamic is flipped to satisfy the individual's personal desires. Sometimes various groups will focus on experience and feelings over objective truth. We should certainly desire a religion that we can feel. Yet, a religion that is not built on theology proper, the work of Christ, and Biblical principles will soon leave us void of any sustaining enjoyment.

For example, promising some type of repackaged "game changing" program that is not built on objective fundamentals will not only leave us dissatisfied, but it can also drive some to question their faith. The individual can have their faith made shipwreck when they are promised success and happiness, yet, the new program has left them again void of any lasting assurance of salvation. This person will often find their life crumbling while they either question their individual faith and/or stand wondering why God didn't fix their problem. Instead of asking these questions, question the false methods.

The simple truth is that we must begin with some theological starting points. God is holy and sovereign, we are not. As sinners before a holy God, we deserve far worse than we often experience in this life. Thankfully, as believers we have the assurance that even though we live in a world that is overwhelmed with sin, death, destroyed families, poverty, and the continual battle with the darkness that still resides within us, Christ is our victory. The sufferings of this present world may continue throughout the entirety of our existence. Yet, these sufferings cannot be compared to what we will one day enjoy in Christ. You see, our future hope strengthens our present journey.

Why is this important in regard to having a better theological base? Because God hasn't promised to make this world our final hope. To quote one Bible commentary, "God is not interested in improving the world, or making men comfortable in it, but in delivering men from it" (Believers Bible Commentary on Galatians 1:4). Understanding that future deliverance is our hope will make the present trials cultivate a greater desire of service in us, instead of making us question our faith.

Lastly, the way in which God communicates to us would then seem rather mundane. The ordinary methods through which God communicates experiential grace and assurance is simply through the preaching/study of the word, prayers, singing of hymns, Lord's supper, and

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fellowship of the saints. This is what we find in both the book of Acts and New Testament Epistles. If you are feeling the absence of the full fellowship you once enjoyed, don't seek something new, go back to the basics. Begin with proper theology and the ordinary, biblically prescribed methods through which God has promised to manifest his presence with believers. You should desire to experience your religion, but let that experience be built on truth. Let your theology lead you to doxology. Any other type of praise is soon to fail.