

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 21 Jan 2024

Sermon Title : The Heart of Adoration

Speaker : Rev Reuben Ng

Text : Colossians 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 12:1

INTRODUCTION

To give a quick recap, our theme this year is to “Make Disciples Intentionally” and we concluded that to make disciples intentionally we first need to be intentional disciples of Christ. Last Sunday, we started a five-part sermon series called the "Heart of F.A.I.T.H." because here at Faith Methodist Church, we believe that the way to be such disciples is encapsulated in the 5 things covered by these 5 letters (Fellowship, Adoration, Involvement, Transformation, Harvest). We kicked off with “F” for "Fellowship" and learnt how we should support and sharpen one another, and the best place to experience fellowship is in a Life Group where we engage with one another. So do join a Life Group if you are not in one. This week, we will continue with the next letter in the F-A-I-T-H acronym, that is "A" for “Adoration”. ‘Adoration’ is really another word for ‘worship’ although there may be some slight differences in their definitions. For this sermon, we shall use these 2 words interchangeably.

Concept of Worship

We naturally would link the act of "worship" with Sunday services where people come together on Sundays (at a dedicated time) in church (in a dedicated place) to sing hymns or worship songs to worship God for about 2 hours or so (for a dedicated time). Our idea or concept of worship may thus be that worship ends when the Sunday service is over. Will we then be able to worship or adore God in a place outside of the church such as in a kitchen where there are no musical instruments, chairs or pews present but only standing up for the work to be done? Probably not for most of us as we believe the worship of God should be on “The Lord’s Day” or Sunday which is a sacred day where we dedicate 2 sacred hours for the sacred act of worship to God. Our concept is therefore: Sunday is a sacred day when we come to adore, worship and bring reverence to God while Monday to Saturday are secular days where there are just routines as we go through life.

Worship God everywhere

Brother Lawrence, a monk in the 1600s, who was a cook in a monastery showed that it is more than possible to worship God everywhere and it is what we are called to do. He was not a priest or highly educated and his simple daily duties were primarily to cook for the people in the monastery in Paris and to clean up afterwards. He knows

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that the 1st and greatest commandment is to love God with everything that we have: heart, soul, mind and strength and he was intent on fulfilling and obeying that commandment. He was convicted that to love and adore God it cannot be only in the fixed 'sacred' time of worship service or only in the sanctuary but beyond. He decided to worship and adore God with everything that he did in the kitchen since he spent most of his time there. He realized that he could encounter, worship, revere and adore God with everything in the kitchen. "The Practice of the Presence of God" is a compilation of all his sayings, letters and conversations with people.

True Worshippers of God

Brother Lawrence was purposeful and intentional in experiencing God in everything he did. As he shared about how he encountered God and the sweet presence of God in all that he did in the kitchen, people began to be transformed by his thinking and others too realized that they could encounter God and worship Him everywhere. He exploded the narrow definition of "worship". He challenged the very confined place of worship being only in a sanctuary or worship hall.

- He showed that the idea of a divide between sacred and secular is a false divide. Everything can be sacred and ought to be.
- He showed that the idea that there is what is reverent and routine is also a false belief because everything in the routine of life should be done out of reverence to God.

Here are some of his sayings:

- "There is no need to wait for great occasions to make acts of love for God."
 - there is no need to wait for Christmas, Resurrection Sunday, Good Friday or Sunday to worship God. Do not wait for an occasion because every minute or second and every breath we take should be good occasion for us to worship, adore and love God; no sacred moment or sacred day but every moment.
- "We can do little things for God; I turn the cake that is frying on the pan for love of Him... It is enough for me to pick up but a straw from the ground for the love of God."
 - He does things well and excellently out of reverence for God. It is the attitude and posture to do it well with the ability from God out of worship and adoration to Him. We can do menial acts like picking up a straw or tissue paper for the love of God when we see it left behind after a worship service because the worship service can end but the worship and adoration of God should never end.
- "We ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed."
 - little things we do matter when we do it as a form of adoration to God. Being kind to someone as a form of adoration to God would please God more than a

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preacher preaching out of routine or duty with no love. God is looking for how much love we put into doing things as reverence, adoration and worship.

What the Bible says:

- **Colossians 3:16-17** - Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:16 wrote about the importance of corporate worship because we must remember that even though we can worship God everywhere, coming together to worship God and singing praises to Him is highly important so we may offer corporate worship to Him.

Then in verse 17, Paul continues, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." These 2 words cover everything we do including ironing clothes, hanging out laundry, sweeping the floor, clearing the stain in the basin, washing toilet, studying, chairing meetings, writing reports...everything, whatever.

- **1 Corinthians 10:31** - Paul repeats this idea, "So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." Reflect if there have been things we categorized as secular and as just life or routine. How can we adjust and change so these things can become sacred by intentionally being aware of God's presence all the time as Brother Lawrence suggests.

Why it is important to worship God in everything

- **Romans 12:1a** - "And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you."
 - Paul seriously begs and implores Christians to give our bodies to God in response to His graciousness and mercy to us because this is what God wants us to do. This means there is no divide between the spiritual and the physical. Through the one body God has created, we are to offer worship and adoration to Him of any sort with no divide into spiritual or physical/material. We are to present our full body to God, not just some parts.

Romans 12:1b - "Let them be a living and holy sacrifice - the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him."

- Christ came to fulfil every offering and sacrifice and so we do not need to offer animal sacrifices to God today. God is not looking for dead sacrifices now. He is looking for us to present ourselves as living sacrifices; that our lives will be a sacrifice to Him – holy lives that are set apart, sacred reverential lives lived fully for Him following His ways and will where all our speech and deed is worship and adoration to Him. It is a sacrifice because it is not easy to sacrifice our own desires, to be living the kind of life that is acceptable to Him, but that is the way to truly worship Him.

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CONCLUSION

As we are called to worship God in everything that we do, let us not leave God behind in church when Sunday service is over, but instead do everything out of love for Him because there is really no separation between sacred and secular or spiritual and physical. Even in simple acts and routine tasks we can still worship and adore God when our posture is in reverence of Him. May we be aware of God's presence and so be intentional to offer our body as a living sacrifice that truly worships and adores God with and in everything, following His ways and will.

A. Review Sermon Application

Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk?
- 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?

2. Appoint someone to read Colossians 3:16-17, 1 Corinthians 10:31, and Romans 12:1 slowly.
 - a. Why did Paul instruct us to do everything in the name of Jesus and for the glory of God?
 - b. Reflect on your daily routine in the past week. How have you worshipped God in some of the routine tasks in your daily activities?

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B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

- 3a. (i) What are 2 things you have categorized as secular or as just going through life or routine before hearing this sermon?
(ii) How can you go through them with an attitude of love for God?
 - 3b. With this change in posture, what difference do you foresee in the outcome or execution of those tasks?
 - 3c. Commit to 3a(ii) above for the following week(s) and share on the outcome or execution of those tasks, and the impact of your change in attitude on people around you, at your next meeting.
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- 4a. Are you purposeful and intentional in experiencing God in everything you do?
 - 4b. In what ways can you cultivate the awareness of God's presence with you everywhere and in everything you do?
 - 4c. Brainstorm on how your group members can support one another to grow in the presence of God, recognizing it in every aspect of your lives. Shortlist 3 ways and pray for the Holy Spirit to enable each of you to do one of them to encourage at least one other member for the following week(s), till your next meeting.

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C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action

Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.

5. Share your personal testimony on how your love, adoration and worship of God in carrying out a menial task had impacted someone or your own life positively.

OR

Give thanks to God for being ever-present in our lives, that we can encounter Him anywhere and everywhere we go and in everything.

6. As a group, pray that you will intentionally get rid of the mindset that only certain things in your lives are sacred or spiritual. Be intentional and purposeful to allow God to show His presence to each one of you in His unique ways. Pray that everyone in our church will truly worship and adore God everywhere and in everything we do so even the smallest tasks will be done out of love for Him and our lives will be an acceptable living sacrifice unto Him.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. Praise – Elevation Worship <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raFnjGVkHe8>
2. Heart of Worship – Matt Redman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qljs4N7ZoD4>
3. How Great is Our God – Chris Tomlin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBD18rsVJHk>

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