

Lecture 2- Relationships Among Worship Leaders: Unity & Praise

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name."
Romans 15:1-9

Key Concepts

- Unity is part of worshipping God as He desires
- Acceptance of fellow worshippers

Lecture Objectives

- Identify the source of our unity
- Explore the purposes of our unity

Preliminary Questions

- How do you, in your church, embody the unity that our Lord demands of his people?
- What kinds of things are hindrances to that unity, and what can you do about them?
- How does corporate public worship relate to all of life as worship?
- How can a critical spirit in worship be avoided when we do not agree with the worship service?

Relationships Among Worship Leaders: Unity & Praise

Introduction: Discussion of one page worship chart (Appendix B) and Romans 15:1-13.

How can we come into God's presence in worship when we have no unity and no reconciliation among ourselves?

A. Reciprocal relationship: Strong and weak, both please neighbor for edification

1. Strong: Don't offend the weak and be patient

2. Weak: Don't judge the strong and grow stronger

B. Strong and weak both please neighbor for their edification (Rms. 14:19; 15:2)

C. Model of Christ: He did not please Himself, but went to the cross for the joy set before him (Heb.12)

I. I. God-Given Unity for the Purpose of Praise (vs. 5-6)

A. Crying out to the source of our unity: Who manufactures this unity?

B. So that...one heart and mouth glorify God

"God is not truly glorified by us, unless the hearts of all agree in giving him praise, and their tongues also join in harmony...for the unity of his servants is so much esteemed by God, that he will not have his glory sounded forth amidst discords and contentions."

John Calvin

- C. The purpose of unity is to produce that worship which is required by God, a unity of hearts together glorifying Him.

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 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.” Colossians 3:12-17

II. Accepting One Another for the Purpose of Praise (verse 7)

- A. Acceptance is linked directly to our praise to God
- B. Accept one another as Christ accepted us
 - 1. What does that mean?
 - 2. How can we do this?
- C. Other passages speaking to “accepting one another” for worship: Matthew 5:23-24; John 13:35; Philippians 4:2-4; Hebrews 13:15-16
- D. This means, in part, not coming to worship in a critical spirit

“It is common to hear criticisms of new musical styles being introduced in churches today... Unfortunately, we often become attached to the musical style we grew up with and resist anything new. But our study of hymnody has shown that, with each new age in church history, fresh musical forms have arisen spontaneously to give expression to the reviving work of the Holy Spirit in the church. No one style has been, or ever can be, sufficient to serve effectively as the sole and permanent church style.”

Larry Roff

- E. Unity in worship is not the same as uniformity in style and practice

III. Christ to the Nations for the Purpose of Praise (verses 8-12)

- A. Context is early church unity that is crucial to the Gospel going to nations
- B. Eschatological worship with its first fruits now
- C. Abrahamic promise fulfilled as Gentile nations blessed in Christ
- D. Evangelism to the nations is not an end in itself: the goal is more worshippers.
- E. Jesus leads in praise among Gentiles: Revelations 5:9-14; Rev. 7:9-10
- F. “One, Holy, Catholic, & Apostolic Church” - Nicene Creed

“Therefore, unless it can be shown to be inappropriate for worship, everyone’s music should be heard: old people’s and young people’s music; European, African American, and other ethnic music; complex music and simple music. This is how we defer to one another—serve one another—in the body of Christ.”

John Frame

Conclusion (verse 13)

- A. God of hope fill with joy and peace
 - Where there is no peace, how can there be joy?
- B. Fruit of Holy Spirit empowered worship

How do we help weaker brothers who have emotional attachment to particular styles of worship join in to the “heart –personality” of the local church?

What considerations must be taken into account for music in a corporate worship service?