

Worship Matters Video Intensive with Bob Kauflin
Session 9: Healthy Tensions, Part 1
(From Chapters 18-22 of *Worship Matters*)¹
Outline & Discussion Questions

I. Healthy Tensions

“There is only one worship war, and it is between God and Satan, each the supreme object of someone’s worship, either redeemed or lost. We are self-absorbed when we use the “war” word as a working term for the petty and overly self-indulgent skirmishes that we enter, almost always over transient, not eternal, things.” - Harold Best²

“There is no reason for individual churches to change everything they have been doing; but there is every reason for all congregations to evaluate everything they are doing to see how they can do it better.” - Allen Ross³

II. God’s Transcendence and Immanence

A. God’s Transcendence

“Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.” - 1 Chronicles 29:11–12⁴

B. God's Immanence

"For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.'" - Isaiah 57:15

C. The Gospel Ties Them Together

III. Our Heads and Hearts

A. Our Heads

*"Great are the works of the LORD, **studied** by all who delight in them."*
- Psalm 111:2

"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable." - Psalm 145:3

B. Our Hearts

“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!” - Psalm 100:1–2

“Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!” - Psalm 32:11

C. Emotions and Affections

*“Truth without emotion produces dead orthodoxy and a church full (or half-full) of artificial admirers (like people who write generic anniversary cards for a living). On the other hand, emotion without truth produces empty frenzy and cultivates shallow people who refuse the discipline of rigorous thought. But true worship comes from people who are deeply emotional and who love deep and sound doctrine. **Strong affections for God rooted in truth are the bone and marrow of biblical worship.**” - John Piper⁵*

IV. Internal and External

A. Internal

B. External

C. Questions about Physical Expressiveness

1. **Heart-engagement is more important than physical expressiveness.**

2. **The Bible encourages bodily expressions of worship to God.**

3. **Physical expressiveness is just one factor we can use to determine how engaged people are in a meeting.**

4. **Engagement is often caught more than it's taught.**

5. **Focus on God and the gospel, not external expressiveness.**

V. Vertical and Horizontal

A. Vertical

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”
- Revelation 4:11

B. Horizontal

C. The Place of Edification

“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” - Hebrews 10:24–25

“What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.” - 1 Corinthians 14:26

D. Ways to Strengthen the Horizontal Pole

- 1. Keep your eyes open.**
- 2. Do more than sing songs.**
- 3. Don't view non-singing elements as interruptions but as opportunities to glorify God by building others up.**
- 4. Seek to include more “we” songs in the songs you sing.**

Session 9 Discussion Questions:

1. How is God's transcendence communicated in worship gatherings? How is God's immanence communicated in worship gatherings? Why is important to maintain this tension?

2. Do you tend to put more weight on the "head" or "heart" when it comes to worshipping God through song? What are some ways to grow in a healthier balance of the two?

3. Few people disagree on the importance of the internal component (heart engagement) in worship. Discuss your view about the role of physical expressiveness.

4. What benefits do we experience as we worship God and give him glory together?

5. Ask the other people on your team about whether you tend to keep your eyes open or not.

6. Besides singing God-centered, edifying songs, what are other things we can do/say to strengthen the horizontal dimension of our worship?

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