**Meditation: *“Worship – it’s not about us!”***

Over recent weeks I have been speaking with a number of colleagues about ministry in general. Strangely, the subject revolves around the worship services. They are not only interested in attendance figures, but more importantly they want to know what we do as a leadership to ensure that the people gathered are actually engaged in worship. True worship of our God involves our hearts, our minds, our emotions, our feelings and even our wallets.

Now I am not suggesting for a moment that we should contrive some soft, gentle music to set the mood, or dim the lights, or even sing repetitive choruses, to solicit some response. However, I would hope that people leaving a worship service may say, “It was good to be at worship and amongst God’s people today.”

I also think it is right and proper to expect people to be changed by their worship experience, hopefully positively. Perhaps they have been convicted of their sinfulness and need of Saviour. Perhaps they have been given new insights into the depth of God’s love for them in Christ. Perhaps they have been given some new ways on how to reach a neighbour with the gospel. Perhaps their troubled mind has simply been comforted with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Having said the above, I just wonder whether the alarm bells aren’t ringing just a little? As much as you may appreciate all the above, something isn’t quite right. I say that for worship is first and foremost about giving glory and honour to our God. Sadly, so often people will come to worship expecting something - and although that is not bad, surely it must first be about God’s glory and how our worship can enhance that when we come together.

Sometimes it is good to be reminded when we attend worship that it is not in the first place about us or how we feel or how our children feel. So often when people ‘leave’ the church, or do not come regularly to worship, one of the excuses given is, “I don’t get anything out of it” or “my children are bored.” Again, I am not suggesting that our worship services should be ‘boring’ or that we shouldn’t expect to be encouraged and challenged in our walk with the Lord. However, the first thing is to give glory to God.

So how does one gently remind someone that worship in the first place is not about us or about what we can get out of it, but how does our worship give glory to our God?

Understanding this basic principle, also makes us think about what we do during worship. How does our appearance, our behaviour, our contribution or lack thereof, our conversations, contribute or take away from God’s glory? With that in mind, how does it add or take away from our fellow worshipper?

The task of any church leadership is to ensure that worship services are just that – an opportunity to worship our marvellous God and delight in him for all the good things He has done for us, especially through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Rev. Dr John Piper penned a phrase which really marked his ministry over several decades. It goes like this: “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”

Perhaps the reason for worship is a good thing to remind ourselves of when we come to worship. Perhaps before you come you could pray, “Lord, may our worship today bring glory to Your name and if it pleases You, may we also be blessed by You and make us a blessing to others.”

*“You are worthy, You are Worthy, You are worthy O Lord.*

*You are worthy, to receive glory, glory and honour and power: For you have created, have all things created, for You have created all things, and by Your pleasure, they were created; You are worthy O Lord” (BoW 527).*

We could and perhaps should add *“You are worthy to receive glory and honour, for You have redeemed us through Your precious Son.”* Have a blessed day of worship this Lord’s Day. *JZ*