

Calvin Symposium on Worship 2006; Calvin Institute of Christian Worship
D3 Ephesians: A Model of Integral (Holistic) Worship
Dr. Mariano Avila

Paul's letter to the Ephesians demonstrates that worship is an excellent way of expressing the deepest theological teachings and also of integrating them to everyday life. Actually, Ephesians shows that life is an act of worship. This session will open up this compelling book not only for preachers and teachers, but for all who long for a deeper biblical perspective on worship.

The Liturgical Character of Ephesians

A. Worship as a grateful response to the Triune God's Redemption 1:3-3:21

1. Salutation and Benediction 1:1-2

2. Adoration: Blessing to the Triune God 1:3-14

3. Prayer of Thanksgiving: Gratitude for the faith and love of the Church. 1:15-16

4. Prayer of Intercession: Triple petition for believers 1:17-19a

5. Revelation and Proclamation: God's redemptive work in history 1:19-3:13
of God's Power manifested in Christ's Exaltation: 1:19b-23
of God's power manifested in our resurrection and exaltation 2:1-10
of God's Reconciliation and Creation of a new humanity 2:11-22
of the Mystery of the Gospel: Jews and Gentiles are one 3:1-13

6. Prayer of Intercession 3:14-19

7. Doxology: Full Assurance and total Adoration 3:20-21

B. Everyday Communal Life as an Act of Worship to God 4:1-6:20 (especially 5:1-2)

1. Using Fruit and gifts of the Spirit in the ministry of the church 4:1-16

2. Avoiding sins that damage the unity of the body 4:17-5:2

3. Pleasing God in everything we do 5:3-14

4. Filled with the Spirit in marriage, home, and work 5:15-6:9

5. Putting on the full armor of God 6:10-20

6. Final Greetings and Benediction 6:21-24

Central Elements in Christian Worship

- 1. The highest goal of our salvation is to glorify God.** These are liberating good news. They free us from a life centered in the self, in work, money, in other persons, things, or idols.

We are free to serve God.

Notice carefully all this verses:

*to the praise of his glorious grace, 1:6
in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be
for the praise of his glory. 1:12
to the praise of his glory. 1:14
in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable
riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in
Christ Jesus. 2:7
His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold
wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and
authorities in the heavenly realms, 3:10
to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all
generations, for ever and ever! Amen. 3:21.*

- 2. The main and only reason for worship is God's amazing grace:** His wonderful and indescribable gift in Jesus our Lord.

*In love...
in accordance with his pleasure and will...
his glorious grace...
in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on
us...
according to his good pleasure...(1:3-10)
because of his great love for us...
God who is rich in mercy...
it is by grace you have been saved...
expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace
you have been saved ...(2:5-9).*

Life as an Act of Worship:

We must glorify God in ***all areas of life***: We must worship him as a church and when we live a life worthy of his calling in all places, at all times, and under all circumstances **Ephesians 5:18-6:9**.

The main point of this long section is that the kind of life that the Lord demands from us in family relationships is a result of a life filled with the Spirit. At the same time, a Spirit-filled life is characterized by worship; worship that comprehends all areas of life: Communal worship and everyday life style as a form of worship, especially at home in family relationships.

Some aspects of v. 18 should be noted:

1. ***The contrast***: filled of wine – filled with the Spirit. ***Who or what controls your life?***

2. ***The nature of the command***:

Plural – to all

Present – continuous action

An order – not an option

Passive voice – The agent is God, Jesus, or the Spirit.

3. ***The structure***:

Be filled in/with the Spirit (and then, shows its meaning indicating three of its results):

Speaking...

Singing

Giving Thanks

Submitting to one another

Wives - husbands

Children - Parents

Slaves - masters

These verses show clearly the different areas or marks of a life filled with the Spirit:

a. **An exuberant Communal Worship, in Spirit and Truth:**

***speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;***

b. **A Constant and Sincere Gratitude to God in all circumstances of life.**

always giving thanks

for all things

in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

to God, even the Father

c. **Mutual and loving submission in family relationships.**

and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.