

Rejoicing in God's Goodness: The Gift of Worship

The word 'rejoice' in the Bible typically refers to rejoicing in three areas: God's Goodness, God's Salvation, and God's Blessing. This month, we are going to look at what it means to rejoice in God's goodness.

The most obvious way Christians rejoice is through worship. But our understanding of worship is often limited to a certain *expression* of worship. We refer to the singing, dancing, clapping, and raising hands that we do on Sunday morning as worship. But when we limit worship to just this outward expression we miss the depth of what worship truly is.

Worship is reminding ourselves who God is and responding to that. True worship is when our hearts explode in response to the magnificence of God.

The reason we can 'rejoice always' as we discussed last month, is because of **who** God is. He is always good, always faithful, and always working in our lives.

The depths of God are beyond comprehension. He is bigger, more beautiful, more powerful, wiser, stronger than we will ever grasp. The angels, who have been with God for thousands of years, can't get past the word 'holy' (Revelation 4:8). Who he is, is enough to keep a continual worship service going forever. He truly is great 'and most worthy of praise' (Psalm 145:3).

And if we ever found ourselves needing more reasons to worship him, he has been revealing Himself since the creation of the world. He met with Eve and Adam in the garden, Abraham under the stars, Moses in the bush, and Shadrack in the fire. Ultimately he revealed Himself to all mankind in Jesus. And he is revealing Himself to His people today too.

Proverbs 25:2 says that it is the glory of God to conceal a matter and the glory of kings to seek it out. That is what worship is - it is seeking to know God and then celebrating with all our being what we discover. It's the greatest game of hide-and-seek ever played with the biggest party each time the treasure is found. And the amazing thing is, God allows Himself to be found by humans. In fact, He gives it as a promise, that if we seek, we will find (Matthew 7:7).

4. Is it possible to go to church, sing every song, pray enthusiastically, clap and raise your hands and not worship? Why or why not? If you agree, how do we make sure we are truly worshipping God when we are at church?

5. Paul (writing from prison!) says in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always." What are some challenges you face when trying to rejoice in the Lord in difficult times? How can focusing on God's unchanging goodness help you choose joy even when life is hard?

Can you think of a time when you chose to worship, when you did not feel like it? What helped you push through and offer God your worship despite your feelings or doubts?

6. If worship is not just what happens on Sunday morning, what does or could worship look like in your life
- At home?
 - When you are angry or disappointed?
 - When you are doing chores around the house?
 - When you are upset with someone?
 - When you are playing with your kids?

