

It•takespractice

NURTURING FAITH AND VITALITY THROUGH SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

THE PRACTICE OF WORSHIP

in preparation for Sunday June 19, 2011

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

MON: John 4: 1-26

TUES: Isaiah 6: 1-8

WED: Psalm 150

THUR: Acts 17: 16-34

FRI: Colossians 3: 1-17

- What does it mean for you to worship in "spirit and truth"?
- Which aspects of worship, as described in the readings, are most outside your own experience?

PRAYER

GOD OF LIFE, WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE WERE CREATED TO WORSHIP YOU. HELP US TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES. OPEN OUR EYES TO SEE YOU IN THE SACREDNESS OF EACH DAY AND MOMENT. AMEN.

IT'S TIME TO PRACTICE

1. Write a description of a time when you have keenly sensed the presence of God, or the sacredness of a moment or place. Consider whether there are aspects of this experience you could seek in everyday life.
2. Go to a place where the grandeur of God is apparent to you. Another way of thinking of this might be to find a place where you are aware of something more significant than yourself. Eg, the ocean, a place with a grand view, the church sanctuary or another worship space, your own garden, a place where you can see the busyness of the city. Take the time to prayerfully connect to the God who created this place.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"To worship is to experience Reality, to touch Life. It is to know, to feel, to experience the resurrected Christ in the midst of the gathered community. It is a breaking into the Shekinah* of God, or better yet, being invaded by the Shekinah of God.

God is actively seeking worshippers. Jesus declares, "The true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him" (John 4: 23). It is God who seeks, draws, persuades. Worship is the human response to the divine initiative...

Worship is our response to the overtures of love from the heart of the Father. Its central reality is found "in spirit and truth". It is kindles within us only when the Spirit of God touches our human spirit. Forms and rituals do not produce worship, not does the disuse of forms and rituals. We can use all the right techniques and methods, we can have the best possible liturgy, but we have not worshipped the Lord until Spirit touches spirit...

As a result, we need not be overly concerned with the question of a correct form for worship. The issue of high liturgy or low liturgy, this form or that form is peripheral rather than central. We are encouraged in this perception when we realize that nowhere does the New Testament prescribe a particular form for worship. In fact, what we find is a freedom that is incredible for people with such deep roots in the synagogue liturgical system. They had the readily. When Spirit touches spirit the issue of forms is wholly secondary."

from Richard Foster, *The Celebration of Discipline*.