

GOD BLESS AFRICA - WORSHIP FOR A TIME LIKE THIS

Ekklesia Worship Conference: March 2015

Participating in Missional Communities

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I. INTRODUCTION - YOUR WORSHIP CREATES YOUR LIFE

A. Missional Churches Cannot Ignore worship:

1. Too many churches, when thinking of mission, turn their sights away from the sanctuary.
2. We long to get our people involved in mission projects & in living a “missional life.”
3. Yet, we ignore the power of worship to shape our lives according to the values, priorities, and mission of Christ.

B. But, the way you worship becomes the way you live.

II. Worshippers Becoming Missioners:

A. The Role of Worship - Not an end in itself:

1. Worship is meant to (James K.A. Smith):
 - a) Give us a vision of God’s Reign - the divine vision of the “good life.”
 - b) Capture our hearts with this vision so that we begin to, automatically live toward it.
 - c) Teach us the habits that will enable us to embody and realise, in some way, in our lives, the vision of God’s Reign that has captured us.
2. But, worship fails to do this work when:
 - a) It is shaped more by the values of society than by God’s Reign.
 - b) Or it leaves people as passive spectators of a liturgical performance.
3. When worship does it’s work, the impact reaches way beyond the sanctuary.

B. Worship Teaches Participation in Mission:

1. Everything we do and say in worship is designed to align our lives with Christ’s mission, and teach us how to live it out in our daily lives.
 - a) In worship we learn the vocabulary of Christlikeness.
 - b) In worship we learn the habits of Christlikeness.
 - c) Then, we just need to continue to live this way out in “the world.”
2. If our worship is doing its job, we will automatically view our lives in the context of God’s Mission:
 - a) We will be increasingly shaped by the values, priorities, practices, attitudes, and behaviours of God’s Reign.
 - b) We will increasingly seek to give our lives for the sake of God’s Reign.

C. Participation is a Key Feature of this Equation:

1. We learn by doing - not as much by watching.
 - a) Worship is not a spectator sport - although it often becomes one.
 - b) To be shaped by our worship requires us to become active participants in the act of worship.
2. As we grow in our participation in worship, so we will (should) automatically grow in our participation in mission.

III. To Become Participants We Must Become Like Children:

A. Participation requires a willingness to release our control, our defences, and our “knowing.”

1. All great spiritual traditions work from the “beginner mind.”

- a) But, it's also a "beginner body" - learning new habits, attitudes, and perspectives cannot be done as an "all-knowing" adult.
- b) That's why Jesus calls us to become like children.
2. So, to become participants in worship & mission we must become open, teachable, vulnerable, experimental and creative like children.

B. To Become Like Children, We Need Children to Teach Us:

1. Unless we have children around us to teach us, we will never learn to become like children.
 - a) We need to "sit at the feet" of children.
 - b) This is equally true in our worship.
2. To learn to participate, we must learn to become like children, and to learn this, we need children in our worship, and we need to actively share in child-centred worship.
3. Here's the equation:
 - a) We need children to teach us to become like children.
 - b) We need to become like children in order to learn to be participants, not spectators, in worship.
 - c) We need to learn to be participants in worship in order to learn to be participants in mission.

IV. Conclusion - An Experience of Participation Through Becoming Like Children:

A. Short Facilitated Worship and Kid's Message with Participation.

B. Reflection and Q&R.