
Understanding Worship Part 11

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Heartfelt Devotion

Are you an offering to God? Has the Christian faith impacted all of you, who you are as well as what you do?

1 Chron. 22:19; Isa. 26:3; Psalm 1:2; 34:8; Matt. 6:24; Rom. 6:13; 12:10; 14:7- 8; 1 Cor.10:31; Col. 3:1-3, 17, 23

Real heartfelt Devotion is being devoted to Christ because He is our all in all. It is aligning our personal desires, our plans, our worship, and our hope with God and His principles. It is an attitude more than an act, a pursuit to be offered to God to give Him glory through our pious, fervent, discipline to His Truth. Devotion is bringing our mind, our will, and our heart to God so our whole life is about seeking Him and His will. This is not about feelings; it is rather who we are to be. It is not about what is around us—our circumstances and stresses; it is about who He is in us and our response to Him with our passionate pursuit.

What are the opposites? Neglect, Disregard, and Indifference!. These bad characters will line us up with the wrong ideas and precepts in life. Our lives will be all about chasing trends, following the crowd, or seeking our desires and not the immutable precepts of our Lord. From a pastor who chases trends instead of feeding his sheep to a businessman who does not honor God in his dealings, all are disregarding what the Christian is built and called to do. This behavior shows an indifference to His Word and a negating of one's duties, thus indicating a devotion to one's own misguided ideas.

When we think of this, our minds may quickly go to the act of "doing our devotions." Perhaps you see the character of devotion as personal acts of pious devotion such as personal Bible study or reading a devotional book each day— such as my favorite, *My Utmost for His Highest*. These things do not represent the character itself; rather, they are a means of pursuing the character. A consistent, devotional life, and/or pledges and promises are not just to show that we are committed Christians. They are the applications of our consecration to God. They are about who and what we are—not just what we do. They are to line ourselves up to God's ideas and precepts so we will become more committed and mature in our spiritual formation.

Real Devotion is rooted in how we react to what Christ has already done and continues to do for us. It is the commitment to "*keep the law of the LORD your God* (1 Chron. 22:19)." It is the application of our faith with discretion and understanding. We have to keep His laws and His precepts *now* in order to be devoted, heart and soul, to Him. He is the noun and object of our devotion. We are to be the verb (the action), and our distinction and function in doing so is the adjective (accomplishments of trusting and obeying Him). We have to have something tangible upon which to place our devotion. If not, we will fill that need with other things that will slowly choke us from His most wondrous plans and opportunities!

Are you an offering to God (Psalm 1:2; Isa. 26:3)?

Has the Christian faith impacted all of you—who you are as well as what you do?

To mature in spiritual formation, we must have a desire to be impacted and then impact others with Christ who lives and works through us. This is not about certain times, places, or jobs, nor is it a doctrine; rather, it is an attitude that transcends from an idea to a lifestyle. An attitude of true devotion will glorify God. It will not seek any personal gains, or to be seen by people so as to bask in their accolades. For a minister of the gospel, this is a necessity. If we seek to run our churches for popular reasons, for trends, or for personal or political agendas, we greatly neglect our Lord and forsake His Church. The Christian life is not about selfishness or chasing our own interests; rather, it is to be a means of promoting Christ. Our motives and influences are gauges to make sure we are on track. If His Word and percepts are our influencers and His glory our motives, we will do well. If not, we are in deep trouble as we have been distracted from His will and used by Satan to influence others for his ways!

If you want to be an effective, growing Christian, you must be solely devoted to Christ—not to a doctrine, an idea, or a cause—but to Him and Him alone! Neither are we to see Him just as a Friend without accepting Him as our LORD. We are to see Jesus as who He is, not who we want Him to be. Devotion comes from being touched by the Spirit and then responding to the supreme love and affection of God. Devotion is set by our confidence and faith in Christ (Heb. 11:6); it sees the hope he has for us. As a result, all that we do in life, *whether we eat or drink—at all times—in all places—and in all things—we are to do all for the glory of God.*

Real heartfelt devotion will help us apply His love first to our own life and then to the lives of others. This applies to all of our relationships so we are willing to be devoted to our family, friends, and especially our spouse. Finding new ways to please and surprise them will further fuel your relationship.

Questions

1. How would you define Devotion? To what are you devoted?
2. How would the desire to live for God improve your relationships? What part does Devotion play in your relationships with church members, friends, co-workers and family?
3. How does Indifference to God and His call impact the attitude of Devotion? What is the cost to others (God, family, friends, neighbors, church family, co-workers, etc.) when you are a person who is focused on selfish interests?
4. What happens to your relationship with God, with others, and with the opportunities God gives you when you fail to glorify Christ?
5. When have you been filled with Devotion for Christ the most?

6. In what situation did you fail to have an attitude of Devotion when you should have?
7. What issue is in your life that would improve with more of a Devotional attitude?
8. Think through the steps you need to take to put Devotion into action in a specific instance, such as, *where is Devotion lacking in my Christian walk and what can I do about it?* What would it take to have a revival in your heart so you become a person who lives for God? What does your church need to do to become seekers of Christ, placing Him first rather than the ideas and agendas of people?

Is heartfelt Devotion working in you?

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