



Second Quarter Newsletter



The Essence of a Worship Service Pleasing to God

Pastor Henry Mak

Scriptural reference: 2 Samuel 6:5

2 Samuel chapter 6 recorded the attempt of King David to bring the ark of God back to Jerusalem. David has been established as king of Israel. Since the ark represents the presence of God, David wanted to move the ark back to his place in order to honor God. On the way from the house of Abinadab, the entourage consisted of three thousand elders, nobles and officials, accompanied by throngs of people. The ark was set on a new cart, carried by oxen. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab escorted the ark. They are most familiar with the ark since it had stayed in their home for quite some time.

“David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals.” 2 Samuel 6:5. Suddenly, the oxen stumbled. Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God to stabilize it. God’s anger burned against him and struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God.

When we come to this part, we are perplexed. Weren’t the people celebrating the ark of God with great enthusiasm? Weren’t they wholeheartedly worshipping God? They were not crazily dancing out of physical instinct, but focused on welcoming the ark of God. What went wrong? How come God rejected them and even took somebody’s life.

First and foremost, the ark should never be carried on a cart driven by oxen following the way of Philistines. It should have been carried with poles on the shoulders of Levites. Even though Uzzah was a Levite, according to the rules listed on Numbers 4:15, he should never touch the ark, thereby committed a mortal sin. King David must have been aware of this mistake later. Therefore, it was recorded on 1 Chronicle 15:13, David told the people, “It was because you, the Levites, did not bring it up the first time that the LORD our God broke out in anger against us. We did not inquire of him about how to do it in the prescribed way.”

God wanted to instruct His people that the right intention could not compensate for the wrong action. The worship that seems right in our eyes may not be the proper one. God has well defined requirements and procedures for worship and praise.

1. First of all, our praise must be through Jesus Christ. Otherwise, we have no relationship with God. We must realize that every good deed, all learning of submission, all our prayers and songs of praise will not be acceptable or pleasing to God unless they are presented through Jesus Christ. Christ brought us the blessings of Gospel. We are reconciled to God through the death of Christ in our place. God no longer condemns us for our sin, but accepts us as holy and blameless children. Our relationship with God is founded in Christ Jesus. Christ is our high priest, our sin offering and our righteousness, fulfilling all the requirements of law. Jesus is our mediator, intercedes for us.



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Through Jesus Christ, all our offerings will be accepted and please God. Therefore, when we worship and praise God through Christ, we do not concern ourselves with imperfect singing or performance. God will accept all of our presentations. All hymns and praises will become offerings with pleasant aroma.

2. Secondly, we must be aware that praise is an offering in itself, offering something valuable to God. In the book of Malachi, God rebuked Israelites for their contempt of His name. Yet they asked, "How have we defiled you?" The first thing is offering detestable food on the altar of God, sacrificed blind, crippled and diseased animals (Malachi 1:6-8). As suggested by G. Campbell Morgan, contempt for the sacred things implies blasphemy of God through things belong to Him. As depicted in the book of Malachi, contempt for the sacred items is demonstrated by offering to God those things we consider useless. Mathew Henry further elaborated on this issue. If we worship God with ignorance, totally unaware of what we are doing, this is equivalent to offering blind animals to God. If we do not put our heart into what we do, we worship with aloof, disinterest, lifeless attitude, we are offering defective sacrifice. If we worship not with our heart, but instead with a totally blank mind, easily distracted, lack concentration in our worship and praise, we are presenting crippled offerings to God. The admonishment is undeniably heavy, but

serves to remind us to honor and fear God. Are there times that we sing hymns with an absent mind, say prayers with undue repetition, come before God with an apathetic heart? May God enlighten us, so that we can present the best praise and worship to God in spirit, soul, mind, truth and enthusiasm.

3. Finally, "the fruit of lips" represents the praise that is pleasing to God. This is the evidence of a close relationship with Christ and a fervent heart. As pointed out by William Temple, worship is the offering of our souls to God, our heart is touched by the holiness of God, our mind is irrigated by the truth of God, our thoughts are cleansed by the magnificence of God, our heart is opened by the love of God, leading to complete submission of our will to God. All these constitute the true worship and adoration.

The preparation and response to worship

- A. Prepare our heart to worship: We must try our best to rest early on Saturday nights; let our heart be well prepared to worship God. This way, we can prevent the exhaustion of body and mind caused by lack of sleep, dozing off and loss of concentration during the sermon. As we enter the sanctuary, we must calm down, take up a prayerful heart, seek God's pardon of our transgressions, including hidden sins. We then ask for the guidance and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. When the presidor calls to worship, leads prayer and scripture reading, we have to respond



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appropriately in one heart and one voice, say “Amen.”

- B. Ask the Holy Spirit for a heart receptive to God’s message: We should constantly ask ourselves these questions when listening to sermon. What are the scriptures mentioned in sermon? What are the main messages? What does the sermon teach us about Christ and Gospel? What does God call us to do through this week’s message? Does God rebuke me, make me aware of my sins through this sermon? Does this sermon bring me joy and hope? Do I have questions about this sermon or the quoted scriptures? Have I received the word of God with a joyful heart and clear conscience? Alternatively, are there sins and distraction preventing me from receiving God’s word with a cheerful heart?
- C. Respond to inspiration of Holy Spirit: We must confess our sins and repent when rebuked. Renew our commitment to follow Christ in response to comfort and exhortation. Act promptly when motivated. For instance, if the Holy Spirit reproaches me today for dragging my feet to the worship service, dozing off during sermon, I should resolutely repent. I will rest early starting this Saturday night, pray for the help of Holy Spirit to follow through my resolution. Alternatively, I determine to be attentive to the sermon, receptive to the word of God.

May God help us, renew our mind set, our attitude and our heart toward worship.



Sweet and Warm Women Fellowship

Kathy Wong

“I extend my wings in early morning, flying to the farthest end of the sea ...” introduced the March theme “Praises Aerobic Exercise”. With the music and dancing, we performed aerobic exercise together. We made different gestures for different hymns. We sweated a lot with uplifting spirit. Our God is great and we praise for Him. We experience the joy all over our bodies, hearts and souls. Afterwards, it was our annual tea tasting event with our seniors. A great crowd headed to the restaurant. We had a great fellowship time and ate many our favorite dim sum. What a joyful day!

For April, we had “expressive little fragrant bag”. Thank God for having an artistic and talented sister with us. She prepared for us different types of dry flowers, colorful ribbons, and silky cloth, accompanied with beautiful and colorful materials. She dedicated to teach us to complete making this little fragrant bag so that we can bring it home to enjoy its beauty and aroma.

Through different theme of activities each month, all sisters chattered and learned together. In addition we have our spiritual devotion which promotes our spiritual growth. We really enjoy such sweet and warm time together as we stay close to God in this big church family. I sincerely extend our invitation for you to join our Women Fellowship. Don’t miss it!



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Grotonwood Camp

Emily Chow

When I first heard that the English worship group was going to go to a camp, I was very excited. Before I knew, I was packed up and ready to go. After a long car ride, we arrived and started to explore the camp. It had a gym, playground, and a nice big room in our cabin for worship. Pastor Michael Dean was very friendly and enjoyed playing basketball with us, and a good preacher. He explained that we have to make wise decisions in order to make everything go right. Another thing that was fun at camp was the free time. We could go to the playground, or to the gym, where there was a big basketball court and the upstairs had football and ping-pong. Once, we were walking back from the gym with flashlights in hand. It was very dark, and then someone yelled BOO! We all screamed! Thankfully, none of us broke a bone from walking around in the dark. After midnight snack (cup noodles, chips, and brownies), we climbed into our bunk beds and drifted off. Unfortunately, we had to wake up at seven. Grabbing some breakfast, we went to the living room and listened attentively to Pastor Michael Dean. After his sermon and prayer we had free time and some lunch to munch. Finally, we headed back home, exhausted and happy.



Youth Retreat

Jennifer Li

From April 23rd to April 24th, fourteen of the youth at church held a youth retreat at Grotonwood retreat site. Luckily, God provided us with sunny and warm weather during our stay. Our first exposure to the camp was a very remarkable one. The first thing we noticed was that the location was held in an area surrounded by many trees with a rocky ground. A big and colorful playground set was located right outside our cabins. After exploring outside, we entered the cabin and started exploring even more. There were several rooms inside, each containing bunk beds. Later on the first day at Grotonwood, everyone gathered together to meet our speaker, Rev. Michael Dean. We took turns introducing ourselves and got to know each other better. Then the youth teamed up and played a round of "Family Feud". The game brought our energy up while teaching us to work together as a team. We had some free time later that day where we went to the gym. The basketball court was surprisingly carpeted, something we have never seen before. Yet it was supplied with many sports equipments that kept us occupied for hours. Around dinnertime, most of us were pretty hungry from the exercise. The food at the retreat was very satisfying.

The next morning we started our day with a big delicious breakfast buffet. For the first half of the day, Rev. Michael Dean gave us his message about being a survivor. He was a very good speaker who the youth could relate very



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well with. His lesson was very inspiring and helpful. Afterwards, we broke into smaller groups, with an adult leading each group, to discuss questions on the topic. We had some more free time after that which most of us spent in the gym. After eating a fulfilling lunch, everyone packed up and headed back to Quincy. I think that the experience at Grotonwoods was a memorable one. The youth learned many things such as depending on each other and got to keep traveling on God's path even with obstacles along the way. These two topics would be very helpful later on. Surely, God will provide us all with a situation in the future; where we can use the knowledge we gained at the retreat to direct others to him.



God's Grace

You Qun Song Lo

Lord! I thank and praise you.

You are:

Safeguard of happiness,
Springhead of joy,
Hope of eternal.

When I was a baby:

My parents brought me to your home -
Church,
Then I slept safely in your bosom.

When I was a child:

I learned to sing hymns to praise you,
Then you sow your seed in my heart.

When I was a youth:

Billowing historical tide,

Pushed hot-blooded youths towards one
goal - opposition of Japan to save the
nation,

I joined in the Sino-Japanese War,
In the treacherous fighting,
With the protection under your wing,
I was unharmed.

When I was in midst of the Chinese
Communist Party anti-right movement:

Cold wind blew across the earth
intermittently,

Big character posters swept through the
whole nation,

My husband was divided into the right
wing,

Forced into the labor camp for eighteen
years,

Bitter winds of pain, destitution pressed
in, aimless roads ahead,

I looked up to the Lord, Lord, save me,
Your glory shined upon me,

"God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble." Psalm
46: 1

You enabled me to stand on my own
two feet,

Nurtured my four children to grow in
health,

Got through difficult times.

When I was in the midst of the Chinese
Communist Party Great Cultural Revolution:

Stormy seas, sanguinary winds,

I was falsely accused causing me to be
interrogated and victimized,

Your spirit was in my heart,

Enabled me to be strong and triumph
against evil and cleared my name.



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When I was old:

Startling news of ill health - Rectal
Cancer,

I prayed, petitioned!

I confidently gave my life to the Lord,

You helped me defeat the illness,

regained my health.

Lord, your mercies are long and deep.

I thank and praise you.



“Come Love the Father Together” Father’s Day

Irene Ho

How did you spend your Father’s Day this year? Did you bring your father to Dim Sum or to dinner? Or went shopping with him to get a gift for him? You probably tried your best to make him happy and be a good son. How then did you express your regards to the heavenly father? A group of brothers and sisters came on the eve of Father’s Day to enthusiastically participate in “Come Love the Father Together” coordinated by the Evangelical Department, first using hymns and prayers to praise the Heavenly Father of His love, then through actions to express our willingness to be taught, applied ourselves to learning the skills to spread the gospel.

Evangelical Department invited four members from the Boston Local Mission to provide basic evangelization training. Boston Local Mission was established in December 9, 2006, is a cross sect Christian organization. Everyone serving in the Boston Local Mission comes from different Greater Boston area churches who are intent on spreading the gospel. They are

willing to go to churches and help in evangelization training.

These four young brothers and sisters patiently explained in detail many rich materials to us, approximately as follows :

- How to overcome difficulties in spreading the gospel
- Methods in approaching individuals and matters to pay attention to
- How to switch the topic of conversion to the gospel
- Testimony of salvation
- How to follow up

They took a curriculum which normally takes one week to train and introduced the main points to us in 2 hrs. The content was extremely practical and interesting. They also encouraged us to practice often so that our confidence will increase. We were extremely inspired after listening, hoping that before the musical evangelical meeting in September, we can practice what we’ve learned, bravely spread the gospel to people and invite friends and families to attend the musical evangelical meeting. After the class was finished, we enjoyed a nice lunch together and sharing time!

In truth, spending Father’s Day in the love of the heavenly father and with brothers and sisters is very meaningful. Next time when we have another one of this evangelization training, hope you don’t miss it. Let everyone put more effort into spreading the gospel!



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Church News

Our events during the second quarter:

- 4/10/09 – Good Friday worship held at Youth Center.
- 4/23/09 to 4/24/09 – Youth retreat held at Grotonwood camp site.
- 6/06/09 – Sunday School Department hosted a Sunday school teacher training in Nursery.
- 6/12/09 – Jacob Fellowship hosted a Cambodia mission sharing in the Sanctuary.
- 6/20/09 – Mission Department hosted the “Come Love the Father” gospel training at Youth Center.

Upcoming events in next quarter:

- 7/4/09 – Church picnic at Hopkinton State Park.
- 8/10/09 – 8/14/09 – Vacation Bible School.
- 9/19/09 – Musical Evangelical meeting, please invite relatives and friends to attend.

Pray fervently and share the mission:

- For 2009, our church theme is “Equip to Advance the Gospel.” Let us encourage one another and support our church.
- For 2009 Bible Reading campaign, our goal is to complete reading Old Testament from Genesis to First Chronicles and Psalms in a year. Please be steadfast to read the Bible daily.

- 2009 Church Building Offertory goal is \$13,000. We have the “A dollar per day. The whole family work together” campaign to encourage everyone to save one dollar per day for our church building goal. We should voluntarily support the offertory for our church building. For the first quarter 2009, we have collected \$3,101.78. Keep up with the work for church building.



Prayer Requests

1. The choral music evangelical meeting will be held on September 19, Saturday evening. Ask God to provide us with truth seeking attendees among our friends and family members. Pray that they are receptive to the Gospel.
2. Intercede for the Vacation Bible School to be held from August 10 to 14 this year. Ask God to help the ministering brothers and sisters, attract children to the Lord so that they can learn about the good news.
3. Pray for the church building project. Pray that God would provide a suitable site, grant us a unified vision, and motivate all brothers and sisters to contribute maximum effort in the process.
4. Intercede for the Mandarin ministry and ask God to bring Mandarin speaking families into our congregation. Pray that God would establish the Mandarin fellowship in which brothers and sisters can learn to serve and care about each other.
5. Intercede for our church members:
 - i) Mrs. Grace Yuen has to continue regular hemodialysis. Ask God to



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- grant her peace and ease during the procedure.
- ii) Ask God to care for Sister Kun Wan Chow-Wong who is suffering from arthritic pain.
 - iii) Remember Deaconess Irene Chan in your prayer for complete recovery after the second surgical operation.
 - iv) Remember Sister Polly Kwan in your prayer for complete recovery after neck surgery.
 - v) Sister Sau Ying Hou-Yeung has pelvic fracture, pray for God's cure of her ailment.