

Reading and Reflection

Why does the author say that worship is the ultimate goal of the church rather than the glory of God? What is the relationship between worship and the glory of God? (pp. 203-207)

From a biblical perspective, what is the essence of worship (pp. 206-207)? What are some biblical texts which demonstrate this (try to think of others besides those mentioned by the author)?

Why does love for the glory of God necessarily include love for missions (pp. 207-208)?

In as many ways as you can think of, describe why the motive of passion for the glory of God and the motive of compassion for people might seem to be in tension. How are these two motives united in the cause of missions? (pp. 208-213)

In chapter 7, the author argues that the New Testament displays “a stunning degree of indifference” to the outward forms of worship. Why is this assertion significant for the cause of missions and the aim of this book? (pp. 215-216)

Imagine you are having a conversation with a close friend who considers worship as simply singing or something that happens on Sunday morning during the church service. Using the biblical texts mentioned on pages 216-221, or other passages that you can think of, write out an explanation of the meaning of true worship as internal and pervasive rather than outward and localized.

Reflect on the quote by John Calvin on pages 221-222, especially the final two sentences: “I admit that we ought not to charge into innovation rashly, suddenly, for insufficient cause. But love will best judge what may hurt or edify; and if we let love be our guide, all will be safe.” Try to describe why it might such counsel be wise, even though the New Testament speaks of worship as a radically inward experience which may have very diverse outward expressions.

What might constitute a sufficient cause to cultivate new expressions and forms of worship, as opposed to an “insufficient cause” which Calvin speaks of? How does love function as our guide in knowing the forms worship might take in a particular context? (pp. 221-222)

Describe the line of reasoning which leads the author to say that the essence, the defining heart, of worship is “the experience of being satisfied with God in Christ” (pp. 223-227). How does this understanding of worship show us that worship must pervade all of life rather than be limited to some particular outward and localized expression (such as singing or church services)?

In a few sentences, write out your own description (and supporting biblical texts) for why all of life is to be an expression of worship, and how this relates to the cause of mission and the pursuit of God’s supremacy among all the peoples of the world.

Becoming World Christians

Read conclusion as a distillation of the themes and Scriptures you have encountered in this study of God’s purposes and the church’s task in missions. Spend time reviewing the book and the questions you’ve answered through the course of this study. Note any questions you still have about anything that has been covered, and write down any personal reflections that you have about what you’ve learned. Be prepared to share these with the group when you meet.

Pray for your adopted missionaries, the places and people groups you’ve learned about, and the cause of missions worldwide. Spend extra time this week prayerfully reflecting on the ways in which God might be directing you to your place in the missionary task. What gifts might you have which could be utilized in the roles of going or sending? What particular and unique passions have been stirred in your heart for an area of the world, a people group, or ministry/missionary? Consider ways in which your church might become more deeply committed to the missionary task.

