

# STAY TUNED.....

## Worship

Worship is, and probably always has been, a controversial issue.

Some prefer it hands high, music loud. Others get their kicks from heads low, knees bowed. Still others have service high, incense cloud.

The tragedy is that very few are prepared to respect the others' viewpoints. "They can't be Christians at St Etheldreda's because they all look so solemn" or "I know that God can't stand those loonies at that free church. They never shut up and listen to Him!"

At Twyford, and believe it or not even in *TFG*, we try to reflect the broad range of Christian traditions. I would like to suggest the following about different worship styles. It is only a suggestion, you may know better, but at least think about it!

All worship should have as its primary purpose Glorifying Jesus. He is the centre of our praise, our prayers and our very lives as Christians. Yet the various worship styles I suggest also reflect the Godhead:

*Sacramental (or Catholic or High-Church)* reflects God the Father. He is Majesty, He is King. As we worship in this way we approach a Holy and awesome God before Whom every knee must bow. We recognise, of course, as we do, that Jesus is also this God King. In many ways this style reflects too the OT practices in the Temple, where incense rose continually before the altar to symbolise the prayers of the people; and where the bulk

Our worship style gives us part of the picture of Jesus.

As if we were viewing Him through one particular lens.

of the sacramental duties were carried out by the one High Priest.

Whilst we are no longer in Old Testament times, the imagery and the reverence of God are still vital to us as Christians today. A lot of space exists for quietness to pray and to listen to God.

*Evangelical (or Free Church or Low Church...nb NOT 'evangelistic' but evangelical).*

Here we have Jesus more fully in view than the other members of the Godhead (in many evangelical churches, even today, the Holy Spirit is hardly ever mentioned). There is a strong awareness of Jesus' command to 'go...make disciples'. An emphasis on teaching the scriptures. The worship contains great hymns, but God is not so much seen as King but as Saviour. There is gratitude for what Jesus has done.

*Charismatic (or pentecostal).* The Holy Spirit is the lens through which Jesus is seen in such a

Father

Son

Holy Spirit



....THERE'S MORE TO COME!



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church. Many evangelical churches have moved towards, or become, charis-matic in recent years. There is an awareness of God's Power, but the overall impression is one of chumminess with God. Jesus said 'You are my friends....my brothers and sisters....' and that relationship with Jesus is the centre of the worship here.

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The point is...if we as individuals do not have ALL of these types of worship we are missing out! It is a shame that there are very few churches which are able to move in their worship (either in one service or over a period of weeks) comfortably from a recognition of God in His awesome Holy Majesty to one of seeing Him as Friend. How much more we realise God has done for us if we first picture Him as Sovereign over all.

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Show me a a high church with incense, solemnity, pomp, pageant *AND* charismatic worship too and I will join it!

In the meantime, the Communion service that follows aims to give us a sense of God's Majesty. As we follow it, try to capture a picture of God in the ThroneRoom of Heaven, in total control. (I have to confess the Lord's Prayer line 'Our Father in heaven' often gives me a picture of God in the Captain's seat of Starship Enterprise, with a large screen of the universe in front of Him. Ah, well, that's my problem I suppose....)

If you read the book of Esther you will see that nobody, *not even the Queen*, could just walk into the Throneroom without the risk of death. The King simply could kill anyone who disturbed him uninvited. Infact, they would be automatically be killed by the king's guards if he did not immediately hold out his sceptre towards them. Esther risked her life in this way to save the Jews.

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Jesus has made it possible for us to enter the Throne room of heaven time after time. So much so that it has become a trivial thing for us, since the Sceptre is always held out when we approach. It is good to remember that this is *ONLY* possible because of what Jesus has done, and not to lose sight of God in His Majesty.

Yes, He *IS* our Friend, but He is also King.

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Try in future not to 'put down' those who worship in a different way, even if you fail to understand it at all. Instead, try perhaps to see the view of God that they have....it will enrich your life as it broadens your view of God!

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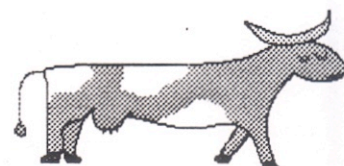
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*Read the Bible regularly yourself If you do, this is Spiritual meat that you are consuming...God speaking directly to you and you digesting His Word yourself.*

*Its good to hear sermons and read Christian books, but in these cases you are merely receiving God's Word as pre-digested by someone else. You are missing out on some of its goodness.*

*Sermons/Christian books should be your 'pudding', eaten only after the main course of the Bible.*



## ....THERE'S MORE TO COME!