



MESSAGE 1:

WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE JESUS

PASSAGE: JOHN 12: 20-21 ESV

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. 21 So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message is to emphasize the distinction between entertainment and worship within the context church. It seeks to highlight that while entertainment may aim to please people, worship is fundamentally about honoring and glorifying God. The message underscores the importance of directing our aim and focus towards God rather than towards entertaining the congregation, and it urges individuals to seek transformation and spiritual growth through genuine worship rather than settling for an emotional high, only, via entertainment. Ultimately, the message aims to reorient the mindset of the audience towards a deeper, more meaningful relationship with God through worship.

INTRODUCTION

We reside in a nation that “disciples” people to be entertainment oriented. This nation has produced the most entertainment-oriented people the world has ever known. We have more forms and vices of amusement and entertainment that has ever been known to man and woman, and as Pastor-Teacher H.B Charles Jr. puts it, there is the temptation for the church to be influenced by the world and not the other way around. Unfortunately, this temptation of people-centered entertainment for absorption, consumption, and inhabitation has crept into some of our churches, and must be addressed. Let me start by saying this is not a new phenomenon, for it was an issue in biblical times, and as recent as the nineteenth century, Pastor Charles Spurgeon said, “the devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people with a view to winning them. Now Interestingly enough, the goal for entertainment may be to win people, but the goal of worship has never been to win

people in the first place, and on that note, might I add that entertainment and worship has different aims, different focuses, and produces different results.

AIM OF ENTERTAINMENT VS. WORSHIP

Entertainment is defined as “an activity designed to give pleasure or relaxation to an audience, no matter whether the audience participates passively as in watching opera or a movie, or as in games; a show put on for the enjoyment or amusement of others. Worship is defined as giving to God what ultimately belongs to him in the first place. It is obedience in action in the form of an offering in response to the revealed nature and character of God.

The aim is different.

Entertainment is something offered to people for their amusement and enjoyment, yet worship is offered unto God for God and God’s glory.

The aim is different.

Entertainment is for the absorption, consumption, and inhabitation of people, but

worship is for the absorption, consumption, and inhabitation of God!

The aim is different.

Entertainment-driven worship is a variety show of praying, reading, singing, and preaching for the enjoyment of people, and the glory of the entertainer but True worship is praying, reading, singing, and preaching for the enjoyment of God, and the glory of God.

The aim is different.

The aim of entertainment and worship are different.

But also, the focus of entertainment and worship are different.

THE FOCUS OF ENTERTAINMENT VS. WORSHIP

The focus of entertainment is people, but the focus of worship is God.

The focus is different.

Entertainment is an offering for people, but worship is an offering for God!

The focus is different.

Entertainment draws spectators and participators, but there are no spectators when it comes to worship, only participants.

You see, in a God-centered worship service, there is no such thing as a spectator. If you come to church as a spectator rather than a worshiper in a service that is for worship unto God, you have fallen into idolatry because when it comes to worship, the only spectator there is in this worship setting, is God. This worship service is not for you, but this worship service is for God! This worship service is not for me, but this worship service is for God! This worship service is not for us, but this worship service is for God!

True worship is word-based, word-saturated, and word-driven. It is God-centered, God-ordained, and God-directed. We are to sing the words of God, read the words, pray the words, preach the words, speak the words, and see the words!

When the choir serves as worship leaders, their role is not to entertain us but to lead us in directing our worship unto God.

When the sermon is delivered, it is not for the purpose of entertainment, but it is for the purpose of delivering the word of God so that the people of God will direct their worship unto God!

When the deacons, deaconess, ministers, ministry leader, or anyone that may serve as worship leader through the reading of scripture, the praying of the prayer, or anything else that is part of the worship service, the focus is to lead us in directing our worship unto God.

Now as the Pastor and Lead Worship leader of this assembly, I want to make it clear: our focus here is not entertainment, but worship. Whether it be through praying, speaking, singing, dancing, ushering, serving, playing music, our focus is the same, and that is to glorify God and lead others to do the same! We are not here to entertain, but we are here to worship! We are not here to exchange God's glory for a spotlight unto ourselves! This gathering is not about us, it is about God! This gathering is not even for us, but it is for God!

The aim of entertainment and worship is different. The focus of entertainment and worship is different, and ultimately, the

results of entertainment and worship are different.

THE RESULTS OF ENTERTAINMENT VS. WORSHIP

When entertainment is the aim and focus, the result of worship is your satisfaction or dissatisfaction. But when true worship is the aim and focus, it has nothing to do with your satisfaction or dissatisfaction and everything to do with God's satisfaction or dissatisfaction!

When worship service is about entertainment, the result is for your satisfaction, but true worship is not for your satisfaction, true worship is for God's satisfaction.

When entertainment is the aim and focus of worship, God and God's people are robbed. God is robbed because all worship and glory belongs to God, but when entertainment is the aim and focus, all the worship and glory goes elsewhere!

When entertainment is the aim and focus of worship, the people of God are postured for God to entertain them, rather than being postured to truly worship God!

When entertainment is the aim and focus of worship, you get what people give you as they entertain you, but when true worship is the aim and focus, you get what God gives you!

When entertainment is the aim and focus of worship, the people of God are "disciplined" to come to worship to get something out of the service rather than to give something in the service unto God, such as an offering of praise, the fruit of your lips, the movement of your body, the control of your Spirit, and a portion of your financial increase.

When entertainment is the aim and focus of worship, God and God's people are robbed. God's people are robbed, because while entertainment can lead to refreshment of your mind and body, it cannot lead to transformation of the mind and the edification of the Spirit.

Entertainment cannot lead to edification. Entertainment can stir up emotions and give you an emotional high, but it is only in true worship that God can change you and your affections!

Worship

SERMON NOTES
STEPHEN L. HERROD

Ultimately, entertainment-driven worship is a rip off. It is a rip off to God, and it is a rip off to God's people.

But when the worship unto God is word-based, word-saturated, and word-driven; when It is God-centered, God-ordained, and God-directed, it offers much more than entertainment can, and ever will! When you truly worship God, when you worship God in spirit and in truth, you see Jesus and are transformed and conformed into His image! And until you worship God in spirit and in truth, you will leave here empty handed. But give of yourself and give of your resources as an offering unto God in response to the goodness and revelation of God, and when God has you in worship, God will give you more than entertainment-driven worship can. God will let you see Jesus.

JOHN 12: 20-21 NOTES

The Greeks had one request. When they went to Jerusalem to worship, they had one request, and that request was to see Jesus.

This request is deeper than it appears on the surface.

This request is one of the most courageous requests that has ever been made, and I will tell you why.

Jesus said if you have seen me you've seen the father, John 14:9.

So, to see Jesus is to see the Father!

And according to the Prophet Isaiah's vision recorded in Isaiah 6, to see the father is to see how sinful you are; to truly see how sinful you are is to see how gracious God is and how generous God is for restoring His image in you through conforming you to the image of Christ, so that you will be just like him, 1 John 3:2, "We will be like him, because we will see him just as he is."

To *truly* see Jesus is to see and become the transformed you, the repentant you, the sanctified you, the edified you!

This is why the aim and focus of worship can't be entertainment!

This is why the aim and focus of our worship services can't be entertainment!

The aim and focus can't be on the pastor!

The aim and focus can't be on the singer!

The aim and focus can't be on the choir!

The aim and focus can't be on the musicians!

The aim and focus can't be on the dancers!

The aim and focus can't be on the people!

Worship

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The aim and focus can't be on the seniors, young adults, middle-aged, or youth. We must get out of the way, along with our agenda, so that we can see Jesus.

Do you want to see Jesus?

Do you see Jesus?

Does that sighting not lead to confession?

Does that sighting not lead to repentance?

Do you see Jesus?

Do you really see Jesus?

Do you want to see Jesus?