

Come and Worship: Bring Your Gifts
August 12, 2018
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

Sing a new song to the Lord!

Let the whole earth sing to the Lord!

Sing to the Lord; praise his name.

Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.

O nations of the world, recognize the Lord;

recognize that the Lord is glorious and strong.

Give to the Lord the glory he deserves!

Bring your offering and come into his courts.

Worship the Lord in all his holy splendor.

Let all the earth tremble before him.

(Psalm 96:1-2, 7-9 NLT)

Presenting our gifts to the Lord is an act of worship. Whether we are referring to our physical resources, unique talents or even the precious commodity of time, returning even a fraction to God conveys our appreciation and adoration for the One who gave us everything. This week we are going to talk about what kinds of gifts we should be bringing when we come and worship the Lord and why the spirit in which we offer them is critical.

Digging Deeper

We worship the Lord when we bring Him gifts of our...

TREASURES.

- God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7) so sharing what He has given us should be a joy, not something we do out of guilt or so others will think we're "good Christians". As we read above in Psalm 96, "Bring your offering and come into His courts. Worship the Lord in all His holy splendor." When we consider our offering to be a form of worship, it reminds us of why we should do it in the first place. Have you ever thought of giving as an important piece of worshiping God? Has that impacted your level of giving over time?
- "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21 NIV) What do you think of when you hear the word treasure? For most people it conjures up an image of a large box overflowing with gold and jewels. Or in other words, it involves material things deemed valuable by this world. Fortunately, God has a whole different set of values! Have you ever considered a person to be a treasure? (And not in that southern "bless their heart" kind of way!) That is how God sees us! Once we start using His eyes to truly look at the world around us, our perspective on value tends to shift. A good way to perform a gut check on what you deem most valuable is to look at your bank statement. Try looking deeper into where you spend your money and you will find out what is really important to you. Are you bringing your treasure before the Lord?

TIME and TALENTS.

- Read Romans 12:5-8 (NLT). We all have something to bring to the table. The trick is getting everyone to take a seat and participate. Some fear what might be required, while others may hesitate due to a need to be asked or a lack of understanding on how and where they can best fit in as a joyful servant. If any of this sounds familiar, be certain of one thing - God wants you in His army! Have you ever taken a spiritual gifts assessment? It's a great way to see where you might plug into service and make the best use of your God given talents. There are many free resources available online to do this. For example, the UMC has a test you can take by visiting this page: <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/spiritual-gifts-online-assessment>. "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve..." (Matthew 20:28 NIV), so must we serve if we are to truly become followers of The Way.
- If you already know where your spiritual gifts lie, are you giving freely of yourself so as to make the best use of them to grow the Kingdom? Sometimes all it takes is a small step forward with a raised hand saying, "Here I am. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8 NLT)

TOTAL SELF.

- While giving of your time and money is wonderful, and is certainly an act of worship, the truth is God doesn't need anything from us in order to accomplish His work here on earth. So does that make you question why should we give at all? Read Romans 12:1 (NCV). The greatest gift we can give God in worship is the totality of our lives. God doesn't want one piece of us, He wants every broken shard! As Paul states in this verse, we should be offering ourselves as a living sacrifice. What does that term mean to you? How do you think your life would change if you truly gave your whole self to Christ? Our bodies were given to us to make visible the beauty of Christ. At the end of the day may He hear us say, "Lord, let my life song sing to You!"

Conclusion

No matter how great or small our talents, abilities and wealth, we are required to put them to good use. Have you made the decision to give the gift of your treasure as a way of saying "thank you" for God's blessings? Spend some time this week prayerfully considering how you can use your time and talents for God's glory and ask Him to reveal what part of your life you may be withholding. When we all do that we will be bringing our best gifts in worship every day.