

Being Fruitful: Practicing Passionate Worship

Study/Reflection sheet for Week 2: Oct. 24, 2010

What You'll need: A Bible; A Copy of the book **Five Practices of Fruitful Living** (available at the Maritime Christian Book Room); A Pen; And 15 minutes a day!

What You'll need to do: Read these passages aloud. Take the time to look them up and place them into context. Then spend a minute or two reflecting on what you've read: write down your thoughts if you need to; ask questions of the text – or of yourself and current practice; then let these thoughts percolate through your mind or heart for the rest of the day.

Reflection Texts:

“How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! / My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD; / my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God . . . / For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.” (Ps 84:1-2, 10)

“This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24)

“I am the vine, you are the branches.” (John 15:5a)

Read Psalm 139. After each verse recite verse 23 as a refrain. As you read the Psalm focus particularly on how you feel about the God who created you: then ask yourself does your “worship” reflect the depth of your love for Him?

Reflection Statement: *“Passionate Worship expresses our desire to put God at the centre of our lives. ...The path to fruitful living, to discovering the riches of the spiritual life, involves practicing worship seriously and with committed consistency, rather than attending worship haphazardly, infrequently, and without enough consistency to feel at home and confident about worshipping God. Truly cultivating a relationship with God requires a conscious effort to make the practice of worship a life-long priority ”* P. 52 (**Five Practices of Fruitful Living**; Robert Schnase)

Our worship is meant to be the expression of our relationship with, our love for, and our gratitude to God; it is to be all about our loving God in return for all that He has done for and given to us: the question is; is it for you? Do you have a vital and alive – a fruitful – worship life? Do you, as Jesus commanded each of us, “love God with all your soul, strength, and mind?” through Radical Hospitality we learn to receive God’s gracious love for us; through Passionate Worship we learn that worship is not about us but is about how we can love God in return. Worship connects us as branches to the ‘vine;’ it serves to connect us to the source of life, and helps us grow in Christ – more fruitfully.

Focus questions (Answer one a day or as time allows):

1. How would you define or explain *worship*? What happens to us when we worship—as individuals and as a community of faith? How would you describe Passionate Worship? How does it change us and impact our lives? What happens when worship lacks passion?
2. What are your earliest memories of worship? What about it made the greatest impact on you and your worship life?
3. Do you enjoy worship? What causes you delight? What sustains you in worship? What impacts you most and what interferes with it most?
4. If it is important to engage both our hearts and minds in our worship – and if worship isn’t about us but we are the ones who come encumbered with burdens and needs: how do we free ourselves to focus on God? What are some ways we can do this?
5. When was the last time you felt connected to God in worship? What aspect of worship creates for you the greatest sense of connection to God and with others: would it be the prayers, music, singing the hymns, listening to the Word, the silence?
6. Think of an experience of Communion that particularity moved you. How does Communion shape your connection to God and God’s people?
7. How fruitful would you say your worship life is? Would you say it’s “passionate?” If not, what more can you do to grow in faith? What would it take to make your personal worship life (both within and beyond our corporate worship experience) more of a priority?

Closing Prayer: *Jesus, we acknowledge that you are the Vine and that we are the branches; alive only through our connection to you. Help us to remain open to your presence, and once connected to you, may we be able to show our thankfulness through lives lived in passionate worship of you. O God, may all that we say and do express our passion for you: may our very lives sing our praises to you Lord of our lives. Amen.*

If you have any questions that might have been raised by this study, please feel free to contact me – Rev. Geoff Ross – by phone at 892-2839 or by email at geoffrey.ross@pei.aibn.com.

Starting Wednesday, October 27 there will be a Being Fruitful Brown-bag Lunch Discussion group in the Parlour from 12:00-1:00 – all are welcome!