**Holy Habits- Worship....Week 7**

Hello everyone,

We are all very grateful to Tim and Glenn for sending round the weekly worship materials and enabling us to worship together, albeit at a distance. And now we have the Bents Green YouTube service. Well done to those who have prepared and delivered it. Thank you. What a blessing!

During these last few weeks, there’s been more time, for some of us at least, to pause and reflect about life, priorities, relationships, church and worship. In one of my moments of musing, I found myself thinking about worship and what it is we’re doing when we’re together. Is worship an end in itself, or is it a means to an end? Not surprisingly, I suppose, I decided that it’s both.

In John’s gospel, when Mary pours the expensive oil of pure nard over Jesus’ feet and then wipes it with her hair, that is an act of total devotion. She spares nothing in her adoration of her Lord. It is self-giving worship, for no other reason than to express her love. The fragrance of her worship fills the air. And Jesus receives and accepts it. It is right.

Then, in Luke’s gospel, Jesus goes to the synagogue gathering in Nazareth, and he stands up to read from the prophet Isaiah, chapter 61. It’s all about good news for the poor, release for the captives, sight for the blind, freedom for the oppressed and the year of the Lord’s favour. This is one of those glimpses into God’s ultimate reign, and Jesus has been empowered by the Spirit of the Lord to start to bring the vision to reality, and he does so within the context of worship.

This suggests to me that, even in giving all that we are to the Lord in our worship, we can’t do so without being moved into action in the rest of our lives. The whole of our life becomes an act of worship and devotion. We can’t simply leave our worshipping self at the church door and resume the other parts of our life, separately. We can’t be spiritual on a Sunday and secular the rest of the week. We too are called to anticipate God’s wonderful reign wherever we are and in whatever we do.

At the end of Matthew’s gospel, the 11 disciples come to the Risen Jesus and worship him. Then Jesus sends them out, even the ones who doubt, to make disciples of all nations under his authority and knowing his constant presence. Worship and mission are inextricably linked.

So...   even as we worship the Lord in spirit and truth (John 4: 23-24), may we together be inspired to go out in mission and service in the Name and in the strength of the Lord.

God bless,

Graham.

*Produced by Graham Wassell on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne and John Wilkins).  You can find more information on the Circuit Holy Habits Programme on the Sheffield Methodist Circuit website and also the Sheffield Methodist Circuit Facebook page.*