

A walk with Mr O (49)

Back to worship

Mr O, we've talked about this before, but can we please come back to the subject of worship?

Why? What's on your mind

Believe me, I don't want to re-ignite any of the worship wars that are dividing the evangelical world. But I am still very confused. And I need some help in thinking biblically about everything.

In the Scriptures worship is a very big theme – so big, in fact, in one way or another it interacts with every doctrine, practice, and incident that the Bible mentions.

It is all about serving, honouring, feeling and adoring God – a subject which is far too vast for us to explore in one brief walk.

I understand that, but could you perhaps give me a few pointers? That would at least stop me going off in the wrong direction.

Alright, A good starting point would be to realise that real worshippers don't talk much about worship. Worship as such, is not their greatest interest. What captivates them is the Object of their worship. Their magnificent obsession is the Beatific Vision.

The Beatific Vision? I honestly don't know what you are talking about.

When we are glorified in heaven we, through Christ, will gaze endlessly upon the glory of God and will enjoy perfect and sinless communion with him. We call this the Beatific Vision.

I can sense something of your awe and wonder, Mr O. But that is for heaven, isn't it? What about now?

God is wonderful! By means of the Scriptures we saved sinners can see that – not perfectly, not fully, not as we shall see in heaven – but we can see enough of his wonder to adore him now.

In the extraordinary hymn 'My God, how wonderful Thou art' there are a couple of verses missing from our modern hymnbooks,

One of them goes like this:

Only to sit and think of God,
O what a joy it is!
To think the thought,
To breath the Name;
Earth has no higher bliss!

Are you telling me, Mr O. that before we have the eternal Beatific Vision we can have, as it were, ‘mini’ beatific visions here and now?

I wouldn't put it like that myself, but yes! Certainly 'here' but not necessarily 'now'. There's a great deal in Scripture about waiting for the Lord. He is not at our beck and call. But he promises that if we seek him and wait for him, he will come in his own time to meet us.

The fact is that we can see things that lost people can't. That is because these things are spiritually discerned. We walk by faith, not sight. We can see the invisible. And if we prayerfully set out through Christ to contemplate God, we shall eventually catch sight of him! 'Earth has no higher bliss!.

I hope you don't mind me being a bit blunt, Mr O., but it all sounds a bit mystical to me.

It's not mystical. It's the working of the Word and the Spirit in the seeking heart. And it's for every believer. This is why Paul writes: 'Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord' (2 Corinthians 3;17-18)

So, why don't we hear more about this then?

One reason is that we are in so much of a hurry. For example, it's possible to rattle through the Lord's Prayer in 40 seconds. Countless congregations do that every Sunday. If the simplest believer weighed up each word as they said it, they would hardly get through the Prayer in quarter of an hour. They would see things that they have never seen before. The Lord would be both moved and glorified as their souls went out to him in adoring wonder, and they would find dimensions of joy they didn't even know existed.

Thank you, Mr O. I'm sorry our walk has ended so soon, but I think I'm beginning to understand.