

When All Is Said and Done, Worship!
Nehemiah 12:27-47

I. Acknowledging success

A. Culture

1. Hollywood - Academy Awards
 - a. The first Academy Awards presentation was held on May 16, 1929, at a private dinner function at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel with an audience of about 270 people.
 - b. The post-awards party was held at the Mayfair Hotel.[7]
 - (1) The cost of guest tickets for that night's ceremony was \$5 (\$70 in 2016 dollars).
 - (2) Fifteen statuettes were awarded, honoring artists, directors and other participants in the film-making industry of the time, for their works during the 1927–28 period.
 - (3) The ceremony ran for 15 minutes.
2. Campaigns - Book deals, speaking engagements
3. Graduations - ceremony and celebration

B. God's people

1. What happens when God's people experience His grace, favor, and support in a ministry to which He has called them?
2. **God's people worship God.**

C. Nehemiah

1. 52 days from start to finish
2. Do not celebrate themselves, their accomplishment
3. The dedication of the wall, as recorded in Nehemiah 12, is a worship service honoring and exalting God
 - a. Choirs performing antiphonal praise
 - b. Dignitaries and worshipers offering praise and thanksgiving

Transition: Four insights into worship we can gain from Nehemiah's account of the dedication of the wall.

II. Four Insights into Worship

A. Worship acknowledges the Person and promise of God (v. 40 "gave thanks")

1. God
 - a. Sent the people into exile
 - b. Set a limit on their exile
 - c. Promised to bring them home and reestablish His covenant with them
 - d. And here they are!
2. God gives people, even sinful, rebellious, wicked people, a second chance
 - a. **Exodus 34:6-7 (ESV) ⁶ The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means**

clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

(1) Merciful and gracious

(2) Slow to anger - patient, willing to give opportunity for repentance

(a) **Romans 2:4 (ESV) ⁴ *Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?***

(b) **2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) ⁹ *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.***

(3) Abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness

(4) Keeping steadfast love for thousands

(5) Forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin

(6) Maintaining justice

b. Worship acknowledges the very glory of our gracious heavenly Father.

3. What does your worship reveal?

a. Is worship just one option among many entertainments in your life?

b. Is worship more about your expectations and preferences than God's person and promises?

c. Have you invested your whole self in exalting God or merely offered a cursory nod in pursuit of your own glory?

4. Worship, first of all acknowledges God's person and promises.

B. Worship engages ordinary people in extraordinary joy.

1. Who?

a. People, leaders, choirs, women and children

b. Singers and musicians and teachers and preachers and governors and all kinds of ordinary, everyday people who have seen with their own eyes the power and goodness of God on their behalf and their response is glorious!

2. **Nehemiah 12:43 (ESV) ⁴³ *And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. And the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.***

a. Their gratitude exceeded social prohibitions

(1) They didn't care that their enemies might here

(2) They didn't care that their neighbors might here

(3) They didn't care they might be disturbing the peace.

(4) What they cared about was that God is great, God is good, God is gracious, God loves, God forgives, God restores

b. Their gratitude swelled in proportion with their experience of

God's grace.

3. There are moments when awe should move us to silence, but there are moments when silence should be shattered by joy!

C. Worship denies the lies of the enemy.

1. Lies
 - a. Tobiah claimed their work was so faulty that if a fox walked on the wall it would fall down.
 - b. Nehemiah took the entire congregation and sent half one way and half the other along the top of the wall.
2. Worship stares in the face of the enemy and dares them to speak lies in the presence of God.

D. Worship includes acts of integrity, sacrifice, and generosity

1. The Levites had no inheritance of land in Israel
2. Their livelihood prescribed by God was derived entirely from the people they served in the temple.
3. As an act of worship, acknowledging the person and promises of God, the people commit to the gracious upkeep of the temple and the temple servants
4. That's why we call our time of giving in our service an act of worship, because it is.
 - a. The money you give pays bills and salaries and commitments for missionaries
 - b. But every dime you give, can be, should be an act of worship, an act of integrity as you honor God by upholding His intent for the ministry you benefit from.

III. Reasons to worship

A. Reasons

1. God's person and promises in your life
 - a. God has loved and saved you, presenting you with the gospel and the faith to believe, to receive forgiveness, to advance in eternal life and the establishment of His kingdom
 - b. God is present in the course of your life offering grace and mercy and strength and wisdom, both in what you face, and in what he withholds from you
2. God's joy
 - a. God shares His delight in being God with you
 - b. God sent His Son that His joy might be in us and our joy complete
3. God defies the lies
4. God gives you a mission and role in ministry and in his Kingdom

B. Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the Lord our God our maker.