

Psalm 96:1-9 (English Standard Version)

Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth!
Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.
For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.
Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts!
Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!

“Passionate Worship” is receiving a lot of attention these days, mostly because of Bishop Schansee’s book, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. How passionate is your worship?

Discuss the following questions. If you are in a larger group, you may want to divide into groups of three for this discussion. You may then decide to report back to the larger group or to move directly to prayer time.

1. How often are we more passionate about evaluating a worship service than we are about the worship experience itself?
2. How can styles, methods, and techniques enhance worship? How can they hinder worship? Why can the church sometimes be more passionate about debating those styles, methods, and techniques than they are about glorifying God and bringing others to know Jesus Christ?
3. Do you ever view worship as an obligation rather than an opportunity? What things get in the way of your worship experience?
4. For many, passion is an emotion. How do we move from wanting to “feel” a certain way in worship to wanting to be in the presence of Christ, whose “passion” brought us into a right relationship with God?

Prayer:

O God,

I cast away all those things that interfere with my worship of You, particularly ...

I cast away all of my expectations of what I will get from this worship experience, particularly...

And I devote myself totally to you. I worship You and You alone, for You indeed are great and greatly to be praised. Amen.