

FIREPLACE 4 – Worship 2: Opening the Door Wide

3 ICONIC WORSHIP SCENES

1. Joshua & the Walls of Jericho (Joshua 6)

Three Observations

- i) They were OBEDIENT
- ii) They were POSITIONED
- iii) They were PREPARED

What would it look like for you to prioritise God's presence and direction rather than trying to make things happen yourself?

Are there areas where you're wanting God to bring down a wall, while He's first asking you to get yourself into position?

2. The Dedication of Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 5)

Three Aspects

- i) PREPARATION
- ii) DEDICATION
- iii) MANIFESTATION

What might change if we came to worship not primarily asking, 'What will I get from this?' but 'What can I give to God?'

How might our worship change if we genuinely believed we were making room for God's presence?

3. Paul & Silas in Prison (Acts 16:25-34)

- i) Worship LOOKS BEYOND circumstances
- ii) Worship TRANSCENDS circumstances
- iii) Worship TRANSFORMS circumstances

What are the circumstances, preoccupations or feelings that tend to prevent you from worshipping?

What does it look like to worship 'despite' the circumstances?

HOW do we BECOME that PLACE?

1. Come READY

- * Clear principle: CONSECRATE, POSITION, READY yourself.

HOW?

- i) PRAY beforehand
- ii) WORSHIP on the way
- iii) Come ready to PARTICIPATE rather than CONSUME

And a stage further:

iv) USE me, Lord, today

What might it look like practically for you to come to church more spiritually prepared?

What do you think it means to pray 'Use me, Lord, today' when we come to worship? What might change if we genuinely came with that prayer?

2. BE EXPECTANT ... Stay WIDE OPEN

- * What we BELIEVE about worship SHAPES what we EXPECT when we gather.
- * Expectation can be a SHAPER or a LIMITER.
- * EXPECTANT = God, I BELIEVE You HAVE something for ME.
- * WIDE OPEN = God, WHATEVER You want to do, HOWEVER You want to do it, I'm AVAILABLE.
- * So, what to do? Give Him SPACE ... Give Him INVITATION ... Make ROOM.

What expectations do you think we bring with us when we come to church, either consciously or unconsciously?

What is the difference between being expectant: 'God, I believe You have something for me' and being wide open: 'Whatever You want to do ... I'm available?' Which comes more naturally to you?

What can make it difficult for us to give God space, give Him invitation and make room when we worship? What might 'making room' look like in practice?

3. RADICALLY RESPONSIVE

- * The Scoop: The MORE you RESPOND to the Holy Spirit, the FURTHER & DEEPER you'll go.
- * We've got as FAR as we've GOT by being as responsive as we've been, so far ... & if we want MORE, then we need to start to become RADICALLY RESPONSIVE.
- * Challenge: Not why SHOULD I respond, but why WOULDN'T I?

What do you think it means to be 'radically responsive' to the Holy Spirit in worship? What might that look like without becoming forced or performative? "The more you respond to the Holy Spirit, the further & deeper you'll go."

Can you think of a time when responding to a prompting or leading from God took you somewhere you wouldn't otherwise have gone?

Of the three challenges – COME READY, STAY OPEN & EXPECTANT, RESPOND RADICALLY – which one is God particularly highlighting to you at the moment? What could taking one step in that direction look like this week?