

Lecture #18 – Refuting the Theology of Praise & Worship

I. Introduction

In this lesson we will look at the theological foundations on which Praise & Worship (which I will abbreviate as P&W). As will hopefully be made clear, these foundations are shaky at best.

I think the primary reason why P&W has spread among conservative and fundamental churches is because we were not prepared to counter it. Even books like Dan Lucarini's *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement* (published in 2002) that did well at countering some elements of P&W lack some understanding of the fundamental aspects of P&W theology.

Much of the basis for this lesson will be countering information from a few books: *How to Worship a King* by Zach Neese, *Worship Matters* by Bob Kauflin, and *Holy Roar* by Darren Whitehead and Chris Tomlin. These books were recommended to me as books that would transform how worship was viewed. I do think that they are good representations of P&W thought. However, these books are deeply flawed in their information.

II. Definitions (or lack thereof)

One observation to be made in most of the P&W material that I have looked at is a lack of clear definitions on terms like worship. The exact reason for this is unknown, but it could be so that the reader adapts the teaching to their own understanding of worship or to promote experience of settled truth.

Kauflin's *Worship Matters*, for one example, fails to define what worship is though he goes to great length to explain why it matters. On p. 17 there is vague statement that "Worship is about what we love." On p. 25 he states "worship isn't primarily about music, techniques, liturgies, songs, or methodologies. It's about our hearts." Neither of those quotes explain what worship is in the opinion of the author.

Neese's *How to Worship a King* on p. 53-57 does spend some time on the etymology of the English word "worship", but it is just to make a singular point about it (giving something worth). On p. 70 he asks, "What is worship?" and answers, "Jesus defined it in the Garden of Gethsemane as He faced His impending death: 'Nevertheless, not My will but yours, be done. That is worship.'" But it really is a portion of the idea of worship and not a definition of what worship is. On p. 4 Neese expresses his disdain for orthodoxy (or as he calls it, "denominationalism") by saying "Worship is the opposite of religion." Again, that is not a definition but a comparison (and a bad one at that). But we are still left to wonder exactly what worship is in the opinion of the author.

There is a striking difference when we instead open books by conservative authors. John MacArthur's *Worship: The Ultimate Priority* has an actual definition of worship on p. 10: "Worship is any essential expression of service rendered unto God by a soul who loves and extols Him for who He is." He then goes on throughout the book to develop a working definition that is fully given on p. 165:

“worship is our innermost being responding with praise for all that God is, through our attitudes, actions, thoughts, and words, based on the truth of God as He has revealed Himself.”

For another example, Scott Aniol’s *Worship in Song* gives seven definitions by other authors on p. 23-24. He then gives his own on p. 34: “Worship is a spiritual response to God as a result of understanding biblical truth about God.”

III. Word Studies

One of the most popular means of promoting P&W theology is through word studies on Bible words. These are typically on Hebrew words and sometimes with Greek words. Most of these studies are based on definitions from *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*. However, these studies are deeply flawed and do not hold up to any sort of scholarly analysis.

For this lesson, we will primarily follow the seven Hebrew words found in *Holy Roar* by Darren Whitehead and Chris Tomlin. The P&W definitions are gleaned from various sources.

Yadah – Strong’s H3034

Verb

Uses: 114x total, 67x in Psalms

KJV translations: praise (53x), give thanks (32x), confess (16x), thank (5x), make confession (2x), thanksgiving (2x), cast (1x), cast out (1x), shoot (1x), thankful (1x).

Strong’s definition: A primitive root; used only as denominative from yad; literally, to use (i.e. Hold out) the hand; physically, to throw (a stone, an arrow) at or away; especially to revere or worship (with extended hands); intensively, to bemoan (by wringing the hands) — cast (out), (make) confess(-ion), praise, shoot, (give) thank(-ful, -s, -sgiving).

A thorough P&W definition is “to use, hold out the hand, to throw (a stone or arrow) at or away, to revere or worship (with extended hands, praise thankful, thanksgiving)” and a concise definition is “to worship with extended hands.”

The primary root is “to cast with the hand”. That can be applied to shooting arrows (Jeremiah 50:14), throwing a rock (Lamentations 3:53), or expelling someone (Zechariah 1:21). However, the overwhelming majority of uses of this word have nothing to do with literally throwing anything. Instead, we find this word translated as “confess”, or “give thanks”, or “praise”. The connection seems to be in acknowledging one’s guilt by raising hands in identification or surrender (Leviticus 5:5, Numbers 5:7), in expressing thankfulness by pointing toward or marking its object (II Samuel 22:50, Psalm 92:1), or in raised hands to God in giving Him honor (Genesis 29:35, Psalm 33:2).

The issue we have in interpreting the correct meaning of the *yadah* is determining if the “casting with the hand” root is applied literally/physically, figuratively, or if it is even relevant at all. A similar case I came across a while back is *qavah* (Strong’s H6960), which implies twisting or binding (as in the strands of a rope), yet is generally translated as “waiting” in Isaiah 40:31. Many Hebrew words have “actions” in them that may be illustrative of the word’s meaning but not always applied in its definition. Sometimes there just isn’t a logical connection to be made.

Another question with *yadab* is whether the emphasis is on the hand or what the hand casts. Perhaps the emphasis is not on the raised hand in praising God but on the praises that are cast out to Him. An illustration of this is Psalm 33:2, where we find praising (*yadab*) God with an instrument. Is there literal hand-raising to God, a literal hand extended to the harp, or are the praises being figuratively thrown out towards God? I think this could also make sense in regards to confessing sins in that you are casting your guilt out before others.

I did find reference to Psalm 134:2 in regards to this word (“Lift up your hands in the sanctuary”), but the actual word *yadab* is not used here. Two other words are: *nasa* (Strong’s H5375) meaning “to lift” and *yad* (Strong’s H3027) meaning “hand”. On closer examination, this particular reference in Psalm 134 does not support the ideas of P&W. This is an exhortation to the priests serving at night time in the Temple, not to the congregation of Israel (vs. 1). Any study of nightly activities in the Temple will not show any times of exuberant praise. It must be also noted that in the language of Psalmsody that nighttime is a time of darkness and despair, not joy and happiness. The general understanding of the lifting of hands here and in general is that of prayer and not praise.

A deeper look at many of the proof texts of raising hands in joyous worship are actually in context speaking of something quite different. We actually see the lifting of hands as a sign of lamentation or desperation in places such as Psalm 28:2, 63:4, 141:2, and Lamentations 2:19, 3:41. A few other references like Genesis 14:22 and Deuteronomy 32:40 have the lifting of hands as part of taking a oath. While these references may not be the focus of our present study, it is important to note they fail to show the lifting of hands in exuberant praise.

Halal – Strong’s H1984

Verb

Uses: 165x total, 94x in Psalms

KJV translations: praise (117x), glory (14x), boast (10x), mad (8x), shine (3x), foolish (3x), fools (2x), commended (2x), rage (2x), celebrate (1x), give (1x), marriage (1x), renowned (1x).

Strong’s definition: A primitive root; to be clear (orig. Of sound, but usually of color); to shine; hence, to make a show, to boast; and thus to be (clamorously) foolish; to rave; causatively, to celebrate; also to stultify — (make) boast (self), celebrate, commend, (deal, make), fool(-ish, -ly), glory, give (light), be (make, feign self) mad (against), give in marriage, (sing, be worthy of) praise, rage, renowned, shine. The common P&W definition is “to praise, to make a show or rave about, to glory in or boast upon, to be clamorously foolish about you adoration of God”. I that find exact definition copied and pasted across multiple websites without acknowledging its original source.

I find a much truer emphasis should be placed on the ideas of “shining”, “focusing”, or “revealing”. It used to describe light sources emanating their light (Job 29:3, 31:25), revealing through action an inner madness or insanity (I Samuel 21:13, Jeremiah 50:38), boastful claims from a prideful heart (Psalm 10:3, Proverbs 27:1), and revealing outwardly an inner foolishness (Job, 12:17, Psalm 75:4)

There is no hint of “raving” or being “clamorously foolish” in the proper use of *balal*. Those that claim so misapply the connection with madness to the broader application of the word.

The best way I can describe the true meaning of *balal* is the idea of a spotlight. When we praise God, we are not focusing on ourselves but spotlighting His worthiness and greatness. When we boast, we are spotlighting our prideful self. When someone is foolish or insane, their actions are spotlighting their inward condition.

So when we praise God, we are putting all the attention and glory and honor onto Him. When *balal* is applied to praising God it has little or no focus on the one praising. When we praise Him we step into the shadows and so that He can shine.

Zamar – Strong’s H2167

Verb

Uses: 45x total, 41x in Psalms

KJV translations: praise (26x), sing (16x), sing psalms (2x), sing forth (1x).

Strong’s definition: A primitive root (perhaps ident. With *zamar* through the idea of striking with the fingers); properly, to touch the strings or parts of a musical instrument, i.e. Play upon it; to make music, accompanied by the voice; hence to celebrate in song and music — give praise, sing forth praises, psalms.

P&W definition #1: “Make music by striking the fingers on strings or parts of a musical instrument. When we play instrumentally to facilitate a holy atmosphere, it’s not just church cocktail music, it’s *zamar*.”

P&W definition #2: “‘*Zamar*’ means to pluck the strings of an instrument... *Zamar* speaks of rejoicing. It is involved with the joyful expression of music. *Zamar* means to sing praises or to touch the strings. It speaks of involving every available instrument to make music and harmony before the Lord. It is God’s will that we be joyful. Use *Zamar* when you are rejoicing after God has done something great for you.”

By itself, *zamar* means to play a musical instrument (Psalm 33:2, 144:9), but it appears to be a more inclusive word including instrumental and vocal music, probably together. It is interesting to note that *zamar* occurs in the same (and sometimes adjacent) verses with other praise or musical terms in 39 of its 45 appearances:

- 12x in the same verse with *sir* (Strong's H7891, "to sing") – Judges 5:3, I Chronicles 16:9, Psalm 21:13, 27:6, 57:7, 68:4, 68:32, 101:1, 104:33, 105:2, 108:1, 144:9
- 11x in the same verse with *yadah* (Strong's H3034, "to praise") – II Samuel 22:50, Psalm 7:17, 18:49, 30:4, 30:12, 33:2, 57:9, 71:22, 92:1, 108:3, 138:1
- 1x in close proximity to *yadah* – Psalm 9:2 (see vs. 1)
- 4x in the same verse with *halal* (Strong's H1984, "to praise") – Psalm 135:3, 146:2, 147:1, 149:3
- 2x in the same verse with *nagad* (Strong's H5046, "to declare") – Psalm 9:11, 75:9
- 2x in the same verse with *ranan* (Strong's H7442, "to rejoice") – Psalm 9:11, 75:9
- 2x in close proximity to *ranan* – Psalm 59:17 (see vs. 16), Isaiah 12:5 (see vs. 6)
- 2x in the same verse with *shachab* (Strong's H7812, "to worship") – Psalm 66:4 (2x)
- 1x in the same verse with *anab* (Strong's H6030, "to answer") – Psalm 147:7
- 2x in close proximity to *rua* (Strong's H7321, "to noise") – Psalm 66:2 (see vs. 1)

This leaves only the 5x it appears in Psalm 47:6-7 and 1x in Psalm 61:8.

Since the preponderance of uses seem to combine instrumental and vocal terms, I think it is safest to assume it will generally mean a combination of the two. I think the fact that so many other terms appear around it means it is a very generic word.

Examining the P&W definitions, once again the core is close: we are certainly talking about instrumental and vocal music. This is certainly not creating an "atmosphere": the worshippers here are active and not passive. It is also by no means glorifying "every available instrument": only specific ones that were acceptable to the Jews are mentioned. I realize this again touches on larger topics that are outside the scope of this study. But that is part of why I am doing this study, because these P&W studies are putting ideas and thoughts into the text (*eisegesis*) that are simply not there.

Oh, and seriously... "cocktail" music"??? That reference is so absurd. I did need that laugh though.

Today – Strong's H8426

Noun

Uses: 32x total, 12x in Psalms

KJV translations: thanksgiving (18x), praise (6x), thanks (3x), thank offerings (3x), confession (2x).

Strong's definition: From *yadah*; properly, an extension of the hand, i.e. (by implication) avowal, or (usually) adoration; specifically, a choir of worshippers — confession, (sacrifice of) praise, thanks(-giving, offering).

A P&W definition found here: “an extension of the hand, avowal, adoration, a choir of worshippers, confession, sacrifice of praise, thanksgiving”

We have in *todab* the noun form of *yadah*. IT SHOULD NOT BE TREATED AS A SEPARATE WORD. I will refer you to the previous examination of that word.

Honestly, you can tell some of the foundation for these lists of “Hebrew words for worship” just got the words from a Strong's concordance without really digging into them at all. Otherwise, words like *todab* and *yadah* would be classified together.

Barak – Strong's H1288

Verb

Uses: 330x total, 75x in Psalms

KJV translations: bless (302x), salute (5x), curse (4x), blaspheme (2x), blessing (2x), praised (2x), kneel down (2x), congratulate (1x), kneel (1x), make to kneel (1x), miscellaneous (8x).

Strong's definition: A primitive root; to kneel; by implication to bless God (as an act of adoration), and (vice-versa) man (as a benefit); also (by euphemism) to curse (God or the king, as treason) — X abundantly, X altogether, X at all, blaspheme, bless, congratulate, curse, X greatly, X indeed, kneel (down), praise, salute, X still, thank.

The common P&W definition is “to kneel or bow, to give reverence to God as an act of adoration, implies a continual conscious giving place to God, to be attuned to him and his presence”. This definition is also copied and pasted around the internet, including many with *attuned* misspelled as *atuned*.

This word carries the ideas of kneeling before someone as in homage or reverence (II Chronicles 6:13, Psalm 95:6), to acknowledge through salutation (I Samuel 13:10, II Kings 4:29), to pronounce a desire of goodwill and bountifulness upon (Genesis 12:2-3, 49:28), or to be specially granted goodness and favor (Psalm 5:12, Proverbs 3:33). In a negative sense, it can mean to denounce or wish evil upon (Job 2:9, I Kings 21:10).

When applied to our worship of God, we see the ideas of humility (kneeling down), acknowledgement, honor, and reverence. The primary targets of our blessing is either God Himself (Psalm 103:1-2) or His name (Psalm 113:2). This is a heartfelt reaction to God's glory (Psalm 104:1) and His great works (Psalm 28:6). I want to press the point of humility here: when we bless God, we are acknowledging His greatness in part by bowing (literally or figuratively) before Him. The focus is on God and not the worshipper.

Where the aforementioned P&W definition errs is in its application toward God's presence and in "giving place". There is no consistent connection with blessing God and being in His presence. The teaching of God's omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-18, Isaiah 57:15, etc.) greatly undermines any need to acknowledge His appearance. As to the idea of "giving place" or yielding, I see no connection at all to this word.

It is worth noting that on *barak* it appears Darren Whitehead literally makes things up in *Holy Roar*. He claims on p. 74 that the word appears "289 times in the psalms", which is wrong since it is 75 times. He then makes the following claim without sourcing it¹:

"Scholars of the ancient Hebrew provide additional insights into the word *barak*. They believe that in the original context, the term did not simply mean bowing down. Instead, it carried the connotation of bending low while keeping one's eyes fixed on the king. To *barak* is to be transfixed."

Not only is there no basis for this claim, it also is physically impossible.

Tehillah – Strong's H8416

Noun

Uses: 57x total, 30x in Psalms

KJV translations: praise (57x).

Strong's definition: From *halal*; laudation; specifically (concretely) a hymn — praise.

One P&W definition is "to sing hallal, a new song, a hymn of spontaneous praise glorifying God in song". Another includes: "Singing scripture to instruct and encourage".

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (p. 185) highlights four applications of the word. First, it may denote praiseworthiness (Deuteronomy 10:21, Isaiah 62:7). Second, the words or song used to express praise (Psalm 22:22,25). Third, a term for a song (see heading of Psalm 145). Fourth, deeds that are worthy of praise (Exodus 15:11).

I think this definition is clear if you have the definition settled for *halal*, which we covered before. This is basically the noun form of that verb. It is almost disingenuous to make it a separate word.

What is interesting to me are the two very different additions to the core definition of a song of praise we see in the P&W definitions. One says it is a "spontaneous" song and the other a "scripture" song. Honestly, I think the definition is broad enough to include both cases. I would take exception to the "spontaneous" song if I knew for sure it was used as an expression of prophetic worship (and I assume it is), but that is a whole other subject for another time.

¹ I am unable to find any basis for this statement.

An important appearance of this word is in one of earliest and most frequently used verses as a foundation for P&W theology: Psalm 22:3. Whitehead writes on p. 87:

“Psalm 22:3 (NKJV) is, perhaps, my favorite use of the word *tehillah*.... The notion of Psalm 22:3 is beautiful. When we offer new songs of praise, our spontaneous *tehillah*, the Lord steps from his heavenly courts and takes residency among the congregation. God inhabits their *tehillah*, is enthroned on it.”

Shabach – Strong’s H7623

Verb

Strong’s: H7623 – BibleHub – SudyLight – BlueLetterBible

Uses: 11x total, 7x in Psalms

KJV translations: praise (5x), still (2x), keep it in (1x), glory (1x), triumph (1x), commend (1x).

Strong’s definition: A primitive root; properly, to address in a loud tone, i.e. (specifically) loud; figuratively, to pacify (as if by words) — commend, glory, keep in, praise, still, triumph.

Note – an Aramaic form of the word (Strong’s H2624) is used 5x in Daniel and translated as “praise”.

A P&W definition is “to address in a loud tone, a loud adoration, a shout, proclaiming with a loud voice (unashamed), to glory, triumph, power, a testimony of praise”. This word does not make it onto all the word study lists, probably because of the scarcity of its usage, but it is the source for the title of Chris Tomlin and Darren Whitehead’s *Holy Roar*.

The primary emphasis that P&W supporters focus on is “loud” as expression of boldness in sound volume. This is interesting because not all dictionaries, lexicons, etc. agree on that emphasis. Strong’s definition shown above uses it, but the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon, New American Standard Concordance, and Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon do not mention anything about loudness. So far, Strong’s is the only language resource I have found that mentions loudness. The idea of loud volume actually contradicts the context many of the uses in the Scripture.

The consensus on the root definition appears to be “to soothe or stroke”. A much safer application to praise would be “praising in/through peace”, which is the complete opposite of the P&W materials I have examined.

When *Holy Roar* it presents *shabach* in chapter 7, it states with no reference or foundation: “Quite literally, it means to raise a holy roar.” (p. 99) It does recognize that word only appears 11x, “but each time, it has powerful effect.” (p. 99). It then goes on to only reference 3 of the 11. What about the other 8? Is there not enough “powerful effect” in them? The reason why other references are not used is because doing so destroys the presented definition and argument.

Here are the verses that are referenced:

Psalm 63:3 – “Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall **praise** [*shabach*] thee.”

NOTE – They wrongly identify the appearance of *shabach* on p. 99. They place it in verse 4, which is actually: “Thus will I bless [*barak*] thee while I live...”

Psalm 117:1 – “O praise the LORD, all ye nations: **praise** [*shabach*] him, all ye people.”

Psalm 145:4 – “One generation shall **praise** [*shabach*] thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.”

Below are the verses that the “powerful effect” wasn’t enough to include:

I Chronicles 16:35 – “And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and **glory** [*shabach*] in thy praise.”

Psalm 65:7 – “Which **stilleth** [*shabach*] the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.”

Psalm 89:9 – “Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou **stillest** [*shabach*] them.”

Psalm 106:47 – “Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to **triumph** [*shabach*] in thy praise.”

Psalm 147:12 – “**Praise** [*shabach*] the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.”

Proverbs 29:11 – “A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man **keepeth** [*shabach*] it in till afterwards.”

Ecclesiastes 4:2 – “Wherefore I **praised** [*shabach*] the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.”

Ecclesiastes 8:15 – “Then I **commended** [*shabach*] mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.”

So, maybe three more *might* could have been used to support their argument (I Chronicles 16:35, Psalm 106:47, Psalm 147:1). But where is the “powerful effect” of raising a “holy roar” in *stilling/calming* (Psalm 65:7, 89:9), *keeping/holding* (Proverbs 29:11), *praising the dead* (Ecclesiastes 4:2), or *commending mirth/pleasure* (Ecclesiastes 8:15)? You cannot claim the word means “holy roar” or has a “powerful effect” each time it appears when in half of it uses it cannot mean what you claim. If you do some digging it appears obvious that there is no basis for equating *shabach* with a “holy roar” other than taking Darren Whitehead’s word for it.

This is the only Greek word we will discuss. It is the primary Greek word used for *worship* in the New Testament and appears 60 times. Strong's defines it as "from G4314 and a probable derivative of G2965 (meaning to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand); to fawn or crouch to, i.e. (literally or figuratively) prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore):—worship."

How to Worship a King puts a lot of emphasis on this word, claiming a secondary meaning of "to blow kisses". However, the meaning is "to bow down or do homage". There is some etymological connection to the image of a dog licking its master's hand. That is not romantic or colloquial expression. If there is any sort of kiss suggested by the word (and I doubt it), it would be the picture of kissing the ring of a monarch.

IV. Physical Expression

Most promoters of P&W create a "straw man" of traditional worship and say that it does not allow for emotions, new songs, or is utterly boring. In reality, no defender of traditional worship that I know of does any such thing!

In *How to Worship a King*, Neese writes on p. 120-121:

"I propose that we unite behind what the Bible teaches about these matters and put the arguments of contrarians and self-styled 'theologians' behind us.... So here, in brief, are some of the biblical postures and expressions of praise. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, because very activity of our lives should be an expression of our praise and our worship of God. It is simply to quell some of the silly arguments between denominations. We'll let the Word decide."

Challenge accepted! We will use his list as a foundation for the following points.

Singing and Instruments

These two may have been debated in the past, but today are widely accepted. You will rarely find a Christian group that denies one or both. Well, unless you are Church of Christ and hate instruments...

Shouting

There are many types of shouts in the Bible, and most P&W proponents do not discern between them. Military shouts (such as in I Samuel 4:5-6 and II Chronicles 13:15) are not seen as different as a shout of praise. Essentially, shouting as seen in Psalms and most other uses is an expression of joy.

While some churches may frown on raising voices, not all do. Shouting in its proper place is fine. The problem comes when we equate shouting with praise and make it the only true expression of it. This is like the very flawed argument that says you should get as excited at church as you do at a

ballgame. The flaw in that argument is that it assumes the expression of excitement at the ballgame is correct and lack of it in church is wrong. Why could it not be the other way around?

Clapping Hands

Clapping hands is another expression of joy in the Bible. The problem is that only appears 9 times and 8 of those have nothing to do with praise. It is generally either an expression of joy in a good sense or derisive sense (such as the joy of an enemy in their victory).

In II Kings 11:12, the people clapped in joy when Joash was crowned.

In Job 27:23 and 34:37 people clap derisively to celebrate a victory

In Psalm 98:8, the anthropomorphic rivers clap their hands in joy.

In Isaiah 55:12, the anthropomorphic trees clap their hands in joy.

In Lamentations 2:15 the passersby clap derisively.

In Ezekiel 25:6 Ammon claps derisively against Israel.

In Nahum 3:19 people clap derisively at the fall of Assyria.

The only verse that might promote clapping hands is Psalm 47:1, which is contextually expressing joy at the coming global reign of the Messiah. There is a connection in Scripture between joy and clapping, but there is not clear connection between praise and clapping.

Raising Hands

Neese in *How to Worship a King* (p. 120-121) gives 10 verses to defend the practice of raising hands in praise. The problem is that at least 9 of them do not have any connection to praising or worshipping God.

Nehemiah 8:6 – Oath

Psalm 28:2 – Prayer

Psalms 63:4 – Blessing

Psalm 134:2 – Blessing

Psalm 141:2 – Prayer

Lamentations 2:19 – Lamentation/ Prayer

Lamentations 3:41 – Lamentation

Luke 24:50 – Blessing

I Timothy 2:8 – Prayer

This leaves only Psalm 119:48, but it is simply not clear in context if that is praise.

Dancing

Dancing, like clapping or shouting, is a common expression of joy (Exodus 15:20, II Samuel 6:14). In Ecclesiastes 3:4 it is seen as the opposite of mourning. The type of dancing is a folk dance, very different from the modern concept of dance.

The two most popular verses in Psalms used to defend dancing are 149:3 and 150:4. Since those two Psalms are addressed to the “congregation” and “sanctuary”, it is claimed that they describe Temple worship. However, those who claim so fail to take other verses so literally and bring their beds (149:5) or swords (149:6).

Scott Aniol writes:

“In other words, the point of the final psalms of the Old Testament are to encourage believers to praise the Lord in every aspect of life, whether they are participating in corporate worship, enjoying a social event that includes dancing and making melody on the tambourine, sleeping, or executing God's justice through war. As the final verse proclaims, ‘Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord’ (Ps. 150:6²)”³

“Therefore, dance in the Old Testament appears to be non-sexual, exuberant celebration typically during a national celebration of victory. It never appears in the solemn assemblies of Israel's worship.”⁴

But what about David dancing before the Ark? The Hebrew words here are different than those typically used for dancing, and literally mean to “leap” or “spin”. We might say that it means to “leap for joy”. David's personal expression of excitement about bringing the Ark to Jerusalem is never shown to be an example or command for us to follow.

Neese makes yet another fantastic claim in *How to Worship a King* on p. 124 by claiming that God Himself dances by referencing Zechariah 3:17. He claims that the Hebrew word for *rejoice* (*sus*, H7797) means to “dance with joy”. Only no dictionary I have referenced agree with that definition.

Bowing

² No, that is not KJV. sigh.

³ *Changed from Glory to Glory*, p. 44

⁴ *Changed from Glory to Glory*, p. 45

The last physical expression Neese speaks about is bowing. The idea of bowing or kneeling is fundamental to our understanding of what it is to worship God. Whether done literally or figuratively, there is little argument that bowing is a proper response to God.

Out of Balance

Let us pause for a moment and consider what we have seen in these physical expressions. Note that they are almost all “positive” expressions. There is no mention of tears, mourning, lament, complaint, groaning, etc., though these types of “negative” expressions fill the Bible (and especially Psalms) also.

V. Tabernacle Typology

What is Typology?

Lewis Sperry Chafer writes about typology:

“A type is a divinely purposed anticipation which illustrates its antitype. These two parts of one theme are related to each other by the fact that the same truth or principle is embodied in each. It is not the prerogative of the type to establish the truth of a doctrine; it rather enhances the force of the truth as set forth in the antitype. On the other hand, the antitype serves to lift its type out of the commonplace into that which is inexhaustible and to invest it with riches and treasures hitherto unrevealed.”⁵

He also notes there is a danger in its wrong use:

“Typology, like prophecy, has often suffered more from its friends than its foes. The fact that extremists have failed to distinguish between that which is typical and that which is merely allegorical, analogous, parallel, happy illustration, or resemblance may have driven conservative theologians from the field. When truth is tortured by faddists and extremists, an added obligation is thereby imposed upon conservative scholarship to declare it in its right proportions. It is obvious that to neglect truth is a greater error than to overemphasize it or to misstate it; and typology, though abused by some, is, nevertheless, conspicuous by its absence from works Systematic Theology. That typology is neglected is evident from the fact that of upwards of twenty works of Systematic Theology examined, but one lists this subject in its index and this author has made but one slight reference to it in a footnote.”⁶

The safest interpretation of types and antitypes is to only claim as Old Testament types that which is explicitly stated to have an antitype in the New Testament. For instance, Paul uses the first man Adam

⁵ *Systematic Theology* III p. 116-117

⁶ *Systematic Theology* III p. 116

as a type of Christ (I Corinthians 15:21-22 and Romans 15:14-17). Another is Melchizedek (Genesis 14) who in Hebrews 7 is used as a type to reinforce Christ's priestly role.

Yet, there are New Testament verses that apply typology very broadly. In Hebrews 9:8-12, we find that entire system of Tabernacle worship with its systems of sacrifices and varied ordinances points to the antitype of Christ's redemptive work. The details are not given of how this applies to every aspect of the Tabernacle's construction or the multitude of commandments in the Mosaic Law. It is clear that the Paschal lamb represents Christ, but what about the shewbread or the regulations concerning the differing types of sacrifices? We certainly know that the Bible is HIS story (Psalm 40:7, Hebrews 10:7). So then we are evidently left to discern these ourselves by the guidance of the Spirit.

But not every allusion to the Old Testament in the New Testament refers to a type. There are also illustrations, allegories, and analogies, to name a few. We must carefully discern among these.

So, let us develop of working theory of Typology.

First, it must be a connection of type and antitype, generally found in the Old and New Testaments respectively.

Second, the foundation for interpreting the relations of type and antitype must come from an emphasis on the antitype. We do not judge any truth about Adam on his typological parallels to Christ, but we do perform the opposite reaction.

Third, any supposition or hypothesis regarding the interpretation of a type and antitype must harmonize with the preponderance of clear Scriptural teaching. Just because a connection can be logically construed between two subjects does not give it the power to trump doctrine that is definitively and inarguably taught in Scripture.

Tabernacle Model

Lester Ruth and Lim Swee write in *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship*:

“The linchpin of theological development within the Latter Rain movement of this period was a liturgical theology based on a typology.”⁷

“Because the theology behind Praise & Worship was a typologically based theology, the identification of the key Scriptures and their interpretation as types was critical.”⁸

Neese writes in *How to Worship a King*, p. 133, “The tabernacle is a heavenly order for worship.” This is a common sentiment among P&W authors. The problem is that *how to worship* is not the primary application of Tabernacle typology – Christ's work in our salvation is!

⁷ *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship*, p. 46

⁸ *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship*, p. 46

The danger in using typology based on the Tabernacle to build a theology of worship is that there is no sure antitype to compare it to. To see worship, we are dealing with secondary or tertiary applications because the primary application is Christ.

Neese is practically bad in his typology, missing both historical and typological details. On p. 137, he talks about a “latch” on the gate of the Tabernacle, despite that it was a curtain and so a latch would be impractical. He then goes on to say that the latch is opened with thanksgiving by referencing Psalm 100:4.⁹ On p. 191 he claims wrongly that drink offerings were poured out in God’s presence, which is wrong because they were poured on the Brazen Altar¹⁰ and not in the Tabernacle itself. On p. 27 he uses very misleading diagram that makes it appear that the camp of Israel around the Tabernacle would have resembled a cross.

Neese’s worst application of typology concerns a prophetic timeline of the church. He develops an outline of history: 1st Century Church, the Reformation (1517), the Pentecostal Reformation (1904-1906), the Jesus People (late 1960’s – early 1970’s), the House of Prayer Movement (1999-present), and finally the Glory of God on earth. These claims are so ludicrous that they do not deserve a response.

VI. Tabernacle of David

Historical Account

When reading the Scriptures and arriving at II Samuel chapter 6, you will find King David’s desire to bring the Ark of the Covenant to his new capital at Jerusalem. To understand how this came to be, we need to examine the history of the Ark and the Tabernacle of Moses leading up to this point:

- c. 1150 B.C. – The Tabernacle of Moses and Ark are together at Shiloh, where they had been for over three centuries. – Joshua 18:1, Judges 18:31, I Samuel 1:3, 2:3
- 1122 B.C. – The Ark is removed from the Tabernacle of Moses and brought to the war camp of the Israelites at Ebenezer, maybe 18-20 miles west of Shiloh. This First Battle at Ebenezer was a terrible defeat of the Jews by the Philistines. The Ark was captured in the battle and in the rout that followed it is believed by some that Shiloh was sacked or destroyed. – I Samuel 4:1-11, Jeremiah 7:12
- 1121 B.C. – The Ark spends seven months in the hands of the Philistines. It is was moved among their capitals of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron. In each of these locations God cursed the inhabitants while they possessed the Ark. – I Samuel 5:1-6:1

⁹ Particularly the (awful) translation in *The Message*: “Enter with the password: ‘Thank you!’ Make yourselves at home, talking praise. Thank him. Worship him.”

¹⁰ Admittedly, the Scripture isn’t very clear on this point in places like Numbers 15:3-5. However, the authorities I trust on the matter never claim otherwise.

- 1121 B.C. – The Philistines send the Ark back to Israel by placing it on a cart pulled by two untamed milk cows. It arrives in Bethshemesh, where the Israelites there do not respect the Ark by opening it and God punishes their lack of reverence. – I Samuel 6:2-20
- 1121 B.C. – The Ark is taken to Kirjathhearim, where it stays in the house of Abinidab. – I Samuel 6:21-7:2
- 1065 B.C. – David flees from Saul’s court and arrives at Nob. He is given shewbread by Ahimelech, implying that at least some of the Tabernacle furniture and setup is present there. The large number of priests and the high priest himself also suggest something special about this site. Based on the evidence, we assume that some form of the Tabernacle of Moses (minus the Ark) existed at Nob when David visited there. When and how it came to be here from its last appearance at Shiloh is unknown. – I Samuel 21:1-9
- 1046 B.C. – David attempts to bring the Ark to Jerusalem by placing it on a cart. Uzzah is killed when he attempts to steady the Ark on the cart. The Ark is placed in the house of Obededom, where it stays for the next three months. – II Samuel 6:1-11, I Chronicles 13:1-14
- 1046 B.C. – David brings the Ark to Jerusalem, amid sacrifices and singing. It is placed in a specially constructed tent/tabernacle, the Tabernacle of David. – II Samuel 6:12-19, I Chronicles 15:1-16:37
- 1046 B.C. – David organizes the service of the Levites to serve in two locations: before the Ark in Jerusalem and at the Tabernacle of Moses which was now in Gibeon. It is assumed that the Tabernacle of Moses moved to Gibeon after the slaughter of the priests at Nob by Doeg in I Samuel 22:6-23 This separation remained until the completion of the Temple by Solomon in 1004 B.C. – I Chronicles 16:37-43, 21:29; II Chronicles 1:3

There are a few great questions that come to mind:

First, why were the Ark and Tabernacle of Moses not reunited? Some speculate that the Tabernacle of Moses was worn out, damaged, or incomplete and thus unable to be moved or possibly even to properly function. It has even been suggested that this was a move by David to force the other tribes to submit to his rule. Some even think that this was David’s self-will not part of God’s design. One person suggests that David kept the Ark like a petulant toddler because he was unable to go in the Tabernacle of Moses himself.

Sometimes, God chooses not to reveal His plans to us and we simply must trust in Him (Deuteronomy 29:29). That could very well be the case here, if it were not for a passage in Psalms that appears to explain God’s purpose.

In Psalm 78 is a rehearsal of God’s dealings with Israel as means of instruction of spiritual truths. I think A.C. Gaebelein summarizes it well:

“This historical retrospect needs no further comment. It is God speaking to the hearts of His people through their own history from Egypt to David. How graciously He dealt with them all the way! The crowning fact is His sovereign grace in choosing Judah, Mount Zion which he loved, building there His sanctuary, and choosing David His servant to feed Jacob His people and Israel

His inheritance. Here we may well think of the Son of David, God's Anointed in whom God's sovereign grace is made known and who will yet feed Jacob and Israel His inheritance."¹¹

Let's examine Psalm 78:56-72:

- 78:56-58 – The Israelites had turned their back on God. Even a casual Bible study of the events of Judges into I Samuel will show how the Jews continually turned away from God.
- 78:59-61 – God turned away from His rebellious people and sent judgment in the capture of the Ark by the Philistines and the fall of Shiloh.
- 78:62-64 – The judgment that fell on Israel is described.
- 78:65-66 – The judgment that fell on the Philistines is described.
- 78:67-68 – God rejected the Tabernacle and the powerful tribe of Ephraim that held it, instead choosing to lead through the tribe of Judah from mount Zion in Jerusalem.
- 78:69 – The temple at Jerusalem is described.
- 78:70-72 – The reign of David is described.

What does Psalm 78 teach us about the separation of the Ark and the Tabernacle of Moses? That it was a result of God's judgment on Israel's sin and that God was reforming their worship by establishing its new center in Jerusalem and the Temple.

Second, why did David place the Ark in its own new tent/tabernacle? Why not build something grander for it?

It appears that David saw this new tabernacle for the Ark (I am calling it the "Tabernacle of David" to differentiate it from the "Tabernacle of Moses") as only a temporary dwelling. We see in II Samuel 7 that David had every intention of building a grand Temple. Even though God did not allow him to build it, we see his concern and preparation for its construction (I Chronicles 22). David was anxious for the day when God's presence returned to Israel in a complete Tabernacle/Temple.

But David also realized that day had not arrived yet. The Tabernacle of David was a temporary structure that awaited something grander to replace it. Though they possessed the Ark and some blessing from their respectful keeping of it, God's presence was not upon it like the days in the wilderness. This is emphasized in the fact that God's presence fell in such a mighty way at the dedication of the Temple (II Chronicles 5:13-14) but no mention is made of any similar event for the Tabernacle of David.

Third, what actually happened at the Tabernacle of David?

¹¹ Annotated Bible by A.C. Gaebelein. E-Sword module.

Let's do a rundown of actions we see there:

- Sacrifices – II Samuel 6:17-18, I Kings 3:15
- Gathering of the people – II Samuel 6:19
- Corporate praise – I Chronicles 16:36
- Personal Worship – II Samuel 12:20
 - NOTE – I'm honestly not 100% sure "house of the LORD" refers to the Tabernacle of David instead of the Tabernacle of Moses. It makes sense that he would go to the former rather than the latter since it was closer, but the use of the phrase "house of the LORD" generally refers to the Tabernacle of Moses or the Temple.
- Music – I Chronicles 15:16-22, 16:42

Now, let's look at the roles of the priests that served there:

- Asaph and his family took care of day-to-day affairs – I Chronicles 16:37
- Obbedom and family were porters/doorkeepers – I Chronicles 16:38

Note that the names and positions that follow in I Chronicles 16:39-42 appear to be associated with the Tabernacle of Moses at Gibeon and not the Tabernacle of David at Jerusalem. It is interesting to find that this is the first reference to incorporating music in to the services at the Tabernacle of Moses.

The position of Asaph is interesting. If this is the same Asaph as in I Chronicles 6:39, 15:17, etc. (and there is little doubt that is the same person) then it is assumed that he must be exercising his musical abilities in this service. But Asaph could be acting in his position as a Gershonite. The Gershonites were the division of Levites charged mainly with carrying and caring for the decorative materials of the Tabernacle of Moses (Numbers 4:24-28). It is also interesting to note that Obbedom was a Kohathite (I Chronicles 26:1-5), the division charged with carrying the "most holy things" of the Tabernacle of Moses (Numbers 4:4-14). Regardless, the presence of Asaph suggests but does not prove a musical program.

Historical Inaccuracies

The information above is the most concrete information we have on the Tabernacle of David. I have been quite surprised to see other claims with no basis in Scripture or history. Let's examine a few:

1. The Tabernacle of David had only one compartment that corresponded with the Most Holy Place.

There is nothing mentioned in Scripture of the design or layout. This is pure conjecture.

2. There was unrestricted access for many/all into the presence of the Ark.

Again, no basis for this claim. It actually goes against the way the Jews revered the Ark, even covering it when it was moved (Numbers 4:5-6).

3. There was constant, 24/7 praise, worship, and music before the Ark.

The only basis for this claim is two assumptions. First, that Asaph and those under him were operating in a musical role. We simply have no concrete evidence of if or how music played a part in what they were doing. Second, that their ministry “continually, as every day’s work required” was 24/7/365. This can also be understood that they regularly did the requirements of each day. The similar language found in passages such as II Chronicles 8:14 and Ezra 3:4 supports this as a better interpretation.

4. David dwelt in his Tabernacle.

The references cited for this claim are Psalms 23:6 and 27:4. However, in both of these David is speaking longingly of something he desired but did not possess.

5. God’s presence was in the Tabernacle of David.

As we looked at before, there is no evidence for this claim. It is an assumption that God was present because the Ark was there. But God is not bound to one place or one piece of furniture. The strictest interpretation of Scripture would support the presence of God departing when the Philistines took the Ark (see I Samuel 4:21) and its return when Solomon dedicated the Temple.

6. The worship was marked by spontaneity.

No evidence for this whatsoever.

7. The worship was marked by dancing.

The only dancing that could be referred to was David’s dancing for joy before the Ark as it was carried to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:16). First, this is in connection with bringing the Ark and not with it resting in its new home. Second, David’s joyful expressions are wonderful in themselves but not a prescriptive command for others. Third, there is no reference to others emulating David’s action in that day.

8. The Tabernacle of David was open so all could see the Ark.

No evidence for this. The sacred nature of the Ark would have most likely inspired them to keep it covered.

9. David initiated a new form of worship marked by singing, physical expression, etc. [source]

This assumption is based on many other assumptions about the sort of worship that went on in the Tabernacle of David. David did in fact do much to reorganize the priesthood and prepare for an expansion of the services of the Temple. Part of this does appear to be the introduction of

music into the Tabernacle/Temple services. But to insinuate that dancing, spontaneous singing, etc. were integrated into worship at this time and place is without sound Biblical basis.

The Prophetic Element

Having examined the historical background of the Tabernacle of David, let us move on the prophecy that some claim is related to it.

The first reference we will look at is in Isaiah chapter 16. This chapter and the previous one are together one prophecy against the nation of Moab. In the midst of this message to Moab, we find a striking prophecy in 16:5: “And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness.”

The second reference is in Amos 9. This chapter deals with the fall of the kingdom of Israel into captivity with a promise that they will later be restored. We see in 9:11-12: “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.”

The third reference is in Acts 15. The Apostles and the church at Jerusalem debated whether or not Gentile Christians were subject to the ordinances of the Law of Moses. There is much debate with testimonies from Peter, Paul, and Barnabas with no resolution. James the delivers a speech, declaring that the God had declared that He would save the Gentiles and not just the Jews. James quotes the prophecy from Amos 9 as proof of God’s plan of bringing salvation to the Gentiles. Let’s read his speech in full from Acts 15:13-21:

“And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: (14) Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. (15) And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, (16) After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: (17) That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. (18) Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. (19) Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: (20) But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. (21) For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.”

A few observations:

First, it was assumed by some interpreters that this prophetic tabernacle must be the physical Tabernacle of David that held the Ark. However, on closer examination there is no relation between these prophesies and Tabernacle of David.

Someone will surely object at this: “But it says the ‘tabernacle of David’! What other tabernacle did David have?” I’ll answer that in the next point.

Second, the use of the ‘tabernacle’ here is figurative for the kingdom and household of the royal line of David. That’s why Isaiah said it had a throne, which the physical Tabernacle of David did not have. That’s why Amos speaks of it possessing or ruling over foreign people and lands. It is speaking of a kingdom and its authority.

Third, note that the three prophetic verses (Isaiah 16:5, Amos 9:11, Acts 15:16) that speak of the “tabernacle of David” are the only verses in the Bible that use that exact phrase. That term is never actually applied to the tent that house the Ark. To be honest, it is somewhat anachronistic and indeed inappropriate to apply the term to the tent David used since this name appears here in a very different context. [Please recall that I have only used term “Tabernacle of David” to describe David’s tent for the Ark in order to differentiate it from the Tabernacle of Moses and because that is what others have called it.]

Fourth, someone, I believe in the past century or so, conflated the prophetic “tabernacle of David” with the physical “tabernacle that David had pitched for [the Ark]” (II Samuel 6:17). I can understand how it could be easily done, but any contextual analysis should show that two very different meanings are found between the physical and the prophetic. This is essentially the same as confusing Noah’s Ark and the Ark of the Covenant. Two very different things that are called the same name (in English, at least).

Fifth, these prophecies do not apply directly to the church at all. When James references Amos he is not saying, “The prophecy of Amos is fulfilled!” Instead, he is saying, “This is like a greater truth I see in the prophecy of Amos.” He is saying that Christ intends to bring the Gentiles into His Kingdom, so who were they to deny their entrance?

Sixth, the prophecies are clearly pointing to Christ’s future kingdom. He will reign upon the restored house/throne/kingdom/tabernacle of David. See Psalm 132:11-12, Isaiah 9:7, Jeremiah 17:25, etc.

The Source of the Confusion

The fountainhead for the confusion about the Tabernacle of David is most certainly in Pentecostal/Charismatic theology from the mid-20th century. Yes, there are those that did relate the prophetic and physical Tabernacles of David previous to them, as seen in the Jamieson-Fausset-Brown commentary on Amos 9:11. But the propagation and proliferation of studies on the Tabernacle of David we see today come directly from Pentecostal/Charismatic sources and influences.

The claim that is made is that the Tabernacle of David is a true model for worship that was lost/forgotten/neglected for centuries upon centuries. That model of worship is said to have been loud, animated, spontaneous, and musical. This model is further proposed as the only true way of worshipping God.

The next claim is that the prophecies, seen especially in Amos and Acts, are of a restoration of this lost form of worship that will appear in the “latter days”. It is proclaimed that through this restoration of true worship and royal authority that will reach the nations and ready the Bride of Christ.

Yes, if you have never been exposed to these teachings (and there are many variations) some people out here are literally teaching that God withheld the method for true and powerful worship for over 3,000 years and just recently decided to give it back to His people. The first group to start making these connections was likely the Latter Rain movement (See p. 46-47 of *A History of Contemporary Praise and Worship*). Now these teachings are infiltrating mainline denominations.

How did this happen? I think largely because it began with such an obscure reference in Biblical history that there was not a good counter to their claims. There was not (and is still not as far as I can tell) a well-developed understanding of what exactly happened at that tent that David that can be used as a defense. From my study I find only miniscule references to the Tabernacle of David in older commentaries, dictionaries, and such. Even Jewish resources seem to gloss over it.

So they begin from obscurity, then start connecting dots to other re-interpretations of commands for terminology for worshipping and praising God. Through the use of typology or application of definitions (mostly redefinitions), these lines between the dots weave a facade of doctrine that appears formidable but is empty when examined. Before long it is difficult to tell if the Tabernacle of David is the legitimate basis for their beliefs or something that was reinterpreted based on other positions. Likely there are so many individuals with differing methodologies that we may never discern the actual roots.

VII. Sensual Worship

It is astounding the amount of sexually charged phrases and terms that make their way into P&W songs and theology. The cause of this is the promotion of “intimacy” with God through P&W. This is actually observed even among P&W supporters. For example: on February 14, 2022, Relevant Magazine posted an article on their website titled “Great Moments In ‘Is This Song About God or Dating?’”¹², which highlights such lyrics as:

“Your fragrance is intoxicating in our secret place / Your love is extravagant”

“Lay back against you and breathe, feel your heart beat / This love is so deep, it’s more than I can stand”¹³

One of the most widely known examples appears in the song “How He Loves” by Jesus Culture:

We are His portion and He is our prize
Drawn to redemption by the grace in his eyes
If grace is an ocean, we're all sinking (ha ha)
So heaven meets earth like a **sloppy wet kiss**
And my heart turns violently inside of my chest
I don't have time to maintain these regrets
when I think about the way

¹² <https://relevantmagazine.com/culture/music/worship-songs-definitely-started-love-songs/> - accessed 10-24-22

¹³ I wish I was making those up.

But it is not just the song lyrics, musical styles, or physical expressions that can be seen as sexually charged. As we will see in the following quotes from Neese's *How to Worship a King*, the foundational theology and philosophy has a sexual tinge to it.

p. 66 – “Just like a kiss, worship is an expression of intimate love.”

p. 67 – “Now, there is a type of kiss that I give my wife that is hers alone – it is reserved. I would not (and dare not) share it with any other living person. Why? Because of all of my human relationships, my relationship with her is more intimate. So our kisses are most passionate. The greater the intimacy of a relationship, the more passionately its love is expressed. The greater the intimacy of our relationship with God, the more passionate our worship will be.”

p. 182 – “But very few churches give time for Christ to experience intimacy with His bride.”

p. 214 – “Intimacy bears fruit and power. It is a natural law.... Put another way, you can't have offspring, or fruit, without communion. In the same way, we cannot bear the fruit of the Spirit without entering into an intimate relationship with Jesus.”

VIII. Charismatic Influence

When I was first asked about teaching this class, I asked on a Facebook group for book suggestions. Two of the books that were suggested were *How to Worship a King* by Zach Neese and *Worship Matters* by Bob Kauflin. I bought and read *Worship Matters* first. I had a chance to later interact with one of the people that recommended it to me. I told them that I was surprised they could recommend it because Kauflin was a Charismatic. The person denied it. I sent them screen shots from the book that proved it. They still denied it.

We must realize that P&W was born in Pentecostalism and propagated through the Charismatic movement. You cannot separate it from these. So many churches have introduced Charismatic doctrine and practice into their churches through the music they use and the worship leaders they follow.

Scott Aniol wrote, and I agree:

“My plea is this: If you're charismatic, then worship like it. If you're not, then don't use their music, not only because it's 'associated' with theology with which you disagree, but because it actually embodies a sacramental theology that aims at experiencing the presence of God through viscerally-intense music.”¹⁴

So, let us look at what Kauflin and Neese's own words to prove they are Charismatics and peddling Charismatic theology and practice.

¹⁴ <https://g3min.org/two-kinds-of-worship-music/> - accessed 10-26-22

Bob Kauflin

Bob Kauflin is the Director of Sovereign Grace Music and author of *Worship Matters*. He is well-respected in P&W circles and seen as an authority in the area. He tries to marry P&W to deeper, more sound theology but cannot escape his Charismatic roots.

In the first quote we will examine, we will see Kauflin does not like to be called a Charismatic even though he does believe in the use of Spirit gifts:

“Since that time, the term *charismatic* has sometimes been associated with doctrinal error, unsubstantiated claims of healing, financial impropriety, outlandish and unfulfilled predictions, an overemphasis on the speech gifts, and some regrettable hairstyles.

“Of course, many charismatics aren't characterized by any part of that list. However, it's not unusual for the term *charismatic* to be connected primarily with the gifts of tongues, prophecy, and miraculous healings, along with certain worship styles. But the Spirit's work isn't limited to particular manifestations. Scripture associates the Spirit's work with all aspects of the Christian's life.

“That's why I've started to identify myself more often as a continuationist¹⁵ rather than a charismatic. That means I believe that all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament have continued to the present day and don't limit the Spirit's work to specific gifts. Ultimately, I'm not nearly as concerned about the label as I am about cultivating an active dependence on God's Spirit as he works in and through us for his glory”¹⁶

Evidently, he has never read a dictionary because the very definition of a charismatic – “a member of a religious group or movement that stresses the seeking of direct divine inspiration and charisms (such as glossolalia or healing)”¹⁷

In our second quote, we will see he believes that spontaneous songs are like the gift of prophecy:

“For many years I've sung spontaneous songs during corporate worship that I believe are a form of prophecy. They're similar to a spoken prophetic impression from the Lord, only they're sung, they rhyme, and they are often sung ‘from God to us.’ I've never believed for a moment that the words I sing are ‘word for word’ from God. That's called Scripture. But these songs seem to consistently communicate in verse the Lord's heart for a particular individual, group, or situation.”¹⁸ [underlining added]

In our third quote, we will see him say that his group, Sovereign Grace Ministries, has Charismatic roots:

¹⁵ Tom-A-to, Tom-ah-to.

¹⁶ *Worship Matters*, p. 86

¹⁷ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/charismatic> - accessed 10-26-22

¹⁸ *Worship Matters*, p. 140

“Sovereign Grace Ministries, the family of churches I'm privileged to serve, has its roots in the charismatic movement of the 1970s. Much of what we did in our early meetings was a reaction to the formal liturgies we'd grown up in.”¹⁹ [underlining added]

He goes on to describe the meetings of that group, which includes Charismatic elements:

“Most meetings started with two fast songs, one medium song, then two or three slow songs. During that time (which lasted thirty to fifty minutes), people would contribute prophetic words or Scripture readings, and occasionally we'd pray for specific groups of people. After the ‘worship,’ we'd welcome guests, give announcements, and receive the offering. We might also dedicate babies or welcome new members. Finally we'd hear an hour-long message followed by a song and a time of prayer for anyone who wanted it.”²⁰ [underlining added]

In our last quote, he again speaks of prophetic impressions:

“But the horizontal aspect of worship can be even more direct. We might take time to pray for those battling life-threatening illnesses. Someone may share a prophetic impression for older saints. We might honor an individual or specific group in the church for their faithful service or godly example.”²¹ [underlining added]

Zach Neese

Zach Neese is (or was?)²² the Pastor of Worship Development at Gateway Church in Southlake, Texas. His book *How to Worship a King* is a terrible book²³ but a great example of P&W thought.

Things get weird quickly in *How to Worship a King*, as the preface starts with an account of a person (I think he is speaking of himself, using Paul's technique from II Corinthians 12:2) floating in the air:

“I know a man who walked to the edge of a field on a snowy day. As he stood in the pillowy silence and gazed out on the snow-muffled trees, the sun spangled off rolling hills of undisturbed white where corn used to grow. The sky stretched an endless soupy blue above him, and the field in front of him rolled like waves on a milky sea. The quiet was simply staggering. The man's heart was filled with bursting with the beauty of it, so he lifted his arms to God, closed his eyes, and worshipped.

“He was not alone. He cannot recall how much time passed nor describe the feeling he experienced as God stooped low. His soul resounded with unspeakable joy as he waded into wholeness. Wholeness? How can one explain the feeling of coming into unity with the living God? It feels like life electrified!

¹⁹ *Worship Matters*, p. 153

²⁰ *Worship Matters*, p. 153

²¹ *Worship Matters*, p. 178

²² He is not listed on the church's website, except for the *How to Worship a King* materials that are being sold. I have not been able to find much information on him from the past few years

²³ I will not apologize for this. It is the truth.

“He lost track of himself as he lost track of time. But at some point he became conscious of a strange, vertiginous weightlessness. Then he did something that he has since wished he could undo. He opened his eyes.

“Looking down, he found that his boots were three feet off the ground and he was turning in slow circles in the air. Like a little boy being twirled and lifted in the arms of his father, he was rising steadily upward.”²⁴

Moving on the Introduction, we see Charismatic practices:

“Evangelism begins as worship. Teaching and preaching begin as worship. Prayer and prophecy, healing and deliverance, discipleship and missions, charity and kindness, patience and everything else – when done God's way – all begin and end with worship. Without worship we are simply religious people working dutifully at religious tasks. Worship is the motivation that turns every task into a demonstration of our love for God.”²⁵ [underlining added]

Moving on a few pages, he claims to have had a vision:

“While I was praying, I had a vision. I was on the platform with the worship team, and the congregation was out in front of us worshipping God.”²⁶ [underlining added]

Next, he claims God (or something?) physically pushed him and spoke to him:

I'll never forget the day I was in a worship service at a small-town church. The musicianship was bad, the singing was bad, the leader. ship was bad, and the song selection was bad. Everything was bad. The people couldn't even clap on time. And as I stood there snarkily critiquing every aspect of the service in my mind, I felt a hand shove against my chest. It pushed so hard that it rocked me back on my heels. I don't like to be touched that way, and I took offense to it. So when I looked down to see whose hand was on my chest, ready to share some stern words with him, I was surprised to find that there was no hand. No one was touching me. Even so, I could feel the hand and all five fingers pressing against my chest. It was a strong, solid hand. Then I heard a voice inside me say, “That is not yours to judge. That is Mine.”²⁷

He tells a story about visiting a Charismatic revival:

“I was not saved long when the Brownsville Revival was in full swing. I don't know what your opinion is of that season, but I made the drive to Florida with a few church buddies to see what all the uproar was about.”²⁸

While there, he claims his feet moved of their own will to take him down the aisle:

²⁴ *How to Worship a King*, p. xv

²⁵ *How to Worship a King*, p. xvii-xviii

²⁶ *How to Worship a King*, p. 5

²⁷ *How to Worship a King*, p. 14

²⁸ *How to Worship a King*, p. 17

“But instantly my feet were, seemingly on their own accord, making tracks toward the front. I passed several buddies who gave me funny looks. ‘What are you doing?’ one said. Another said, ‘You aren’t a worship leader!’

“‘I know,’ I said apologetically. ‘My feet just started walking! I am not doing it!’”²⁹

Where his foot took him was before the pastor, Lindell Cooley, who he claims exercised prophecy concerning his future ministry:

“When I got to the front, Pastor Cooley was praying over the people who had reached the front ahead of me. My good ole feet pressed me right through the crowd to the front row. As he prayed, I saw him lay hands on a lot of people, but he didn’t say anything to them. When he came to me, he simply said, ‘You will lead, but you must lead in purity’”³⁰

He claims that God speaks to him in dreams, and in the story that follows that I will not include he claims the dream taught him to defeat demons/darkness with praise:

“When I was a new Christian, God began teaching me about the value of praise. God sometimes speaks to me in dreams. (Acts 2:17 said that He would, and as a young Christian I was just new enough in the Word that I believed it wholeheartedly.)

“‘(If you don’t believe that God speaks through dreams, you might want to skip this part – oh, also skip the stories of Joseph, Solomon, Job, Daniel, Ezekiel, Peter, Paul, and the Nativity. Those all involve God speaking through dreams. Well, you had better just skip the Book of Acts all together, because God does all kinds of strange things in there. Don’t even get me started on the Book of Revelation.)’”³¹ [underlining added]

He claims that God answered a prayer by making his wife glow:

“It happened because I asked God a metaphorical question and He took me literally. Jen and I had been fighting like betta fish, and I just couldn’t figure out how to stop. So one night before I fell asleep, I asked God to show me what she looked like through His eyes. I must have asked the right question, because that night He showed me something life-altering.

“Do you know the feeling of closing your eyes and turning your face up to the spring sun? You can see it through your eyelids and feel its warmth tingling on the skin of your face. That is what woke me up that night. The left side of my face had a bright, warm light shining on it. When I opened my eyes, the room was illuminated by a golden glow, and turning to my left, I saw why. Jen was made out of gold.”³²

He claims to have seen all sorts of miracles during the Lord’s Table:

²⁹ *How to Worship a King*, p. 18

³⁰ *How to Worship a King*, p. 18

³¹ *How to Worship a King*, p. 98. He hasn’t read I Peter 1:16-21.

³² *How to Worship a King*, p. 166. I leave the quote off because, frankly, it gets into the “intimate” territory.

“I have personally seen people healed of all kinds of sickness and disease during Communion. Perhaps more importantly, I have seen hearts and lives saved, healed, and set at liberty at the Lord's table.”³³

He claims to have seen all sorts of things during musical worship:

“Worship is like a lightning rod for the gifts of the Spirit. I am not exaggerating when I say that I have seen every gift of the Spirit manifested in the congregation during musical times of worship. Can people receive words of wisdom and knowledge and prophecy during worship? They sure can. The Holy Spirit speaks through praise and worship.

“Should you expect to see healings, miracles, and supernatural faith arise during worship? Yes, you should. And should you expect tongues and interpretation during praise and worship? I have already told you about the migrant workers who received the gospel, were convicted of sin, and were saved during worship. It happened because our language barriers do not hinder God. The Holy Spirit interpreted the truth right into their hearts”³⁴ [underlining added]

He again claims to have had a vision:

“...I had a vision. A vision is like a waking dream.”³⁵

One last one (I could show more...) in which he claims to have had God speak audibly to him:

“As I lay there crying, I heard the voice of God as clear as day and full of compassion and patience...”³⁶

How any non-Charismatic can read such things and still take him seriously is beyond me.

³³ *How to Worship a King*, p. 185

³⁴ *How to Worship a King*, p. 219-220

³⁵ *How to Worship a King*, p. 226

³⁶ *How to Worship a King*, p. 256