



Reason for Worship

Luke 7:37-50; Luke 10:17-24

During Jesus’ time on earth, he often referred to the spiritual blindness and deafness of those who surrounded Him. More than once he talked about the hidden, buried, or simple aspect of the Kingdom of God. His ministry was designed to point to one Truth: He was sent from God, our Father, to reconcile us to Himself. While He healed many people with a simple word or touch, His emphasis was on faith, on having people recognize how He could change their hearts, rather than on what He could do for them physically. If we want to truly worship, we must understand this absolute “first thing first.” In Luke 10, Jesus warned the seventy He had personally sent out to minister when they returned, joyfully reporting on their successes: “I saw Satan fall like lightening from heaven...do not rejoice ...that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke10:18-20). He again emphasized the necessity of faith in God when he forgave the woman, identified only as a sinner, who bathed his feet with oil and dried them with her hair. We have no recorded spoken words from this woman, but we recognize her true worship of Jesus Christ. He did too, as he declared her forgiven and instructed her to “Go in peace” (Luke 7:50).

*Choose one of the Gospels to read, paying attention to the recorded stories and parables of Jesus. As you read, place yourself in the stories or crowds that surrounded Him. What is your response to Him?*

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Corporate Worship

John 4:7-26; Amos 5:21-24; Psalm 96

Our weekly worship services at Schweitzer are made up of elements that have been passed down through the traditions of the church: scripture reading, prayer, singing, preaching, and offering. Our staff and lay people spend many hours each week planning for these worship times because they understand the value of corporate worship, first to God, the object of our worship, but also to the well-being of our congregation. Those involved in planning cannot, however, control how each person participates in worship. That is a personal choice and must be accepted by each individual in attendance. Notice the contrast of the descriptions of worship in Psalm 96 and Amos 5: While “strength and beauty are in His Sanctuary” (Psalm 96:6) for some worshippers, God demands through the prophet Amos that “...the noise of your songs [be taken away] and [He] will not hear the melody of ...stringed instruments” (Amos: 5:23). Jesus explained clearly to the woman at the Samaritan well that “true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth...” (John 4:23). In the song “Adoration” (p. 289 Celebration Hymnal) we are told how to worship: “Worship the lord in the beauty of holiness/With gold of obedience and incense of lowliness/Bring truth in its beauty and love in its purity/ These are the offerings to lay at his throne.”

*To worship in the way of the Psalmist and the writer of the song “Adoration,” this act can’t be reserved for weekend services. What do you do during the week to prepare yourself for weekend worship at Schweitzer?*

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Integrated Growth

Matthew 19:16-30; II Timothy 3:10-4:8

Every aspect of our lives has spiritual significance. Every decision we make affects our relationship with God. The Episcopalian minister Henry Hancock summed it up when he remarked that “out of our beliefs are born deeds; out of our deeds we form habits; out of our habits grows our character; and on our character we build our destiny.” Try as we might, our lives cannot be compartmentalized—everything is interconnected. Consequently, as Christians we must commit ourselves to lifestyles that nurture our faith in God and bring us closer to Christ. Matthew tells us of a rich young man who came to Jesus wanting to know the way to eternal life. Although this man had kept the Ten Commandments, Jesus realized that his wealth was the one thing he valued more than God. The Bible tells us “he went away sad” when Jesus called him to give away his riches because he could not bear to recognize the lordship of Christ over all areas of his life (Matt. 19:22). Later, Paul urges Timothy to immerse himself in the scriptures and to be unafraid of persecution.

As the leaders of our church seek to gain 20/20 vision in looking inward to determine the path for spiritual growth, that same responsibility falls on each person who attends Schweitzer. Pastor Bob owns the church’s responsibility in communicating avenues of growth opportunities. Each person, however, must choose, as did the rich man and Timothy, whether to walk away or become immersed in scripture.

*In what areas of your life do you feel God calling you to greater surrender and a deeper trust in Him? Where do you connect at Schweitzer to help this happen? If you don’t have a connection other than weekend worship, what keeps you from that? Talk to someone at SUMC about your connection, or lack of one, this week.*

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Your Spiritual Diet

Hebrews 5:11-6:12, 10:24-39

A baby wouldn’t know what to do with a twelve-ounce steak, giant baked potato, and a garden fresh salad (except play with it)! And most adults would be sorely disappointed if they were served a bottle of bland formula and a teething biscuit for dinner when they were looking forward to a satisfying dinner. The writer of Hebrews uses this example of people moving on to more complex foods as they get older in order to urge his readers on to greater spiritual maturity. It’s natural for a one-year-old to drink from a baby bottle, but a twenty-one-year-old doing the same thing would draw stares and raised eyebrows. Christians should not be satisfied with being spiritual babies their whole lives. Instead, they should strive to grow in the faith and experience the joys of spiritual maturity. The writer of Hebrews further warns that if too much spiritual stagnation and apathy set in, it is possible to fall away from God’s grace entirely. We are also encouraged to grow in community, “meeting together,” spurring each other on “toward love and good deeds,” and encouraging one another (Heb. 10:24-25). Growth in Christ requires forward motion, while sin asks us to slowly creep backwards. The victorious Christian is “not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved” (Heb. 10:39).

*Whether your diet is baby formula or steak, there is a place for you to grow. Watch the Sunday bulletin for offerings such as the Spiritual Gifts class, Alpha, or other on-going groups. Ask at the information desk for locations of current devotional booklets such as “Upper Room,” “Upper Room Disciplines,” “Weavings,” “Alive Now” or “Devo” (for youth). Above all, take action!*

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**SIGN UPS**

**I will serve at VBS**  
\_\_\_ Daytime \_\_\_ Evening

**Usher**  
8:30 a.m. service

**Interested in being a Children’s Sunday School Helper**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Guide Book & Directory advertising interest**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Business: \_\_\_\_\_

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**ALTAR FLOWERS**

From Alma Wilson in honor of Alex Gutweiler and Micah Gutweiler’s birthdays.

**PRAYER REQUESTS / MESSAGES TO STAFF**

Prayer Requests:  
 Pastors only  Congregation prayer list

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