

## 4.2 Can we worship without songs? If so, how?

Singing is a wonderful way to express corporate or individual worship, but it is not the only way. Since the essence of worship is recognizing and expressing God's *worth*, there are many different expressions of worship that can make our times of prayer more dynamic.

I was asked to facilitate a couple hours of prayer for a congregation on a Saturday morning. To start the second hour, I divided the large group into 5 smaller groups. I assigned each group one of the first 5 chapters of book of Revelation, reminding them that the full title of that book is not the "Revelation of Charts" but the "Revelation of Jesus Christ." I encouraged them to find out as much as they could about Jesus from their chapter. After a few minutes I invited them to come in silence, pick up a colored marker and write a word or short phrase on pieces of butcher paper that were on the walls. The words, "Jesus, You are..." were written near the top of the pages. They were to write only one word or phrase at a time, but they could come as many times as they wanted. I also asked them not to worry if someone else wrote *their* word or phrase. Just write it again.

As the words went up on the paper we began to see more and more of Jesus. After several minutes of writing, I invited the entire group to gather around the pages and speak to Jesus using someone else's words on the paper. For 15 to 20 minutes, we had a very glorious worship service even though there was no singing.

Several years ago, I was facilitating a Pastors Prayer Summit on the Oregon Coast. The nearly 20 pastors in the circle were enjoying a meaningful time of praise. During this time, the thought came to me that we should take some time individually and "write a psalm." As I pondered the idea, it seemed a bit risky to me, but I had a peace that this was our next best step.

After I gave a brief explanation that a Psalm was simply Scriptural truth run through our experience we went out. I soon began to see it was a very valuable time for me and I was praying (actually, hoping and praying) that it was the same for the others. I still remember some specific lines I wrote during that hour.

When we returned, I explained I was not taking nominations for Psalm 151, nor were we judging a poetry reading, but rather inviting them to read their psalm as an expression of their praise.

By the time the second person had completed reading their psalm, we were all spontaneously prostrate on the floor in deep worship. For about 30 minutes, we all had opportunity to be more in awe of His greatness and love. No music, just deep, heart-felt, carefully crafted expressions of individual praise that we were allowed to listen in on. Even with no music involved it was a wonderful time of deep worship.

The Spirit of God loves to use the Word of God in the children of God to focus our attention on the Son of God. When this happens, real worship happens. Music can be a great enhancement, but it is not a requirement.

- **Blessed by Doing** – Ask the Lord what Scriptures and activity your prayer group could use to engage in worship without using music. Suggest that activity the next time you have opportunity.