

## Worship With Meaning - Teaching Notes

(Isaiah 29:9-16; 6/16/13)

**Introduction:** A key idea in today's lesson is that God wants heart felt worship from His people. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to make sure we are giving God heart felt worship.

### **Body:**

#### **Read Isaiah 29:9-12**

**I. People's Apathy.** The text starts off urging the readers to be stunned, blind, and drunk. These issues are to be the product of the Lord's bringing a deep sleep over His people. No one will read the scroll in the text. One group doesn't read because it is sealed, and the other doesn't read because they cannot read. Actually, the text is communicating a deep apathy among the people towards what God is saying to them through the prophet.

### **Applications -**

- **Disconnected from God.** Notice in vss. 9-10 that the people are to be stunned, amazed, blind, sightless, drunk, and staggering. The prophets and seers are without connection with God - eyes and heads are covered. One way of understanding this text is to think of what is stated as the condition of the people. In other words, they are behaving like this verse describes. In each of the cases, the people are not in position to hear and surely not in position to obey God's word for them. The idea that "the Lord did it" in vs. 10 may point to the fact that God is ultimately responsible for all that happens (and what doesn't happen). And it may point to God's allowing things to get like this because of what we will discuss in vss. 9-10. But at this point, we should agree that we don't want to be disconnected from God. We don't want to be like those who are blind, drunk, or sleep. *Let's strive to be engaged with what God is saying to us.* We can move in this direction by prayerfully studying and obeying God's word with the support of other disciples who are doing the same.

- **Passionate about knowing God's will.** Notice in vss. 11-12 that no one is reading the scroll, which contains God's vision and will for His people. One group excuses themselves by saying that it is sealed. The other group excuses themselves by saying they cannot read. In the former case, they could have broke the seal. In the latter case, they could have found someone to read. The over all idea is that no one is reading God's word. And the cause of a lack of reading appears to be apathy, indifference, and lack of initiative. This is so similar to many of our churches today that it is scary. There are too many people who make all kinds of excuses for why they don't know more and do more for the Lord. The root problem may be apathy. *Let's work on being passionate about knowing and obeying God's will.* Again prayerfully study and obedience with the support of other disciples will help you with this point. Thinking about how good God has been, is being, and promises to be should give us passion also.

## Read Isaiah 29:13-16

**II. God's Awareness.** The Lord is upset about His people's vain worship. Their worship is essentially lip service, not from their hearts. The Lord will astound them. The Lord talks about the unreasonableness of the creature thinking it is more intelligent than the creator.

### Applications -

- **Heart felt worship.** Notice in vs. 13 that God knows when our worship is from our hearts and when it simply from our lips or mouths. On one hand, we have too many who don't give God worship from their hearts, nor from their lips. On the other hand, when we claim to worship God but are uninvolved with working to make the vision for the church a reality, not actively loving those in and around the church, and not even tithing then our worship being from our hearts is suspect. *Let's work on worshipping God from our hearts.* Heart felt worship should not only be enthusiastic in the moment of worship, but it should also move us to strive to obey God's will for our lives.

- **The cross of Christ.** Notice in vs. 14 that God promises to respond to heartless worship with something that will astonish and cause human wisdom to perish. The commentator explains this to be a reference to the cross of Christ. Assuming that to be the case, first, God does something about vain heartless worship. He doesn't simply put up with it without a corrective response. Second, the cross of Christ is a grand demonstration of God's love and grace, not human wisdom on genius. *Let's worship God like we appreciate the cross of Christ.* Such worship should be enthusiastic and fuel for our carrying out God's will to love Him with all that we have and to love others, as we love ourselves.

- **Being honest with God.** Notice in vss. 15-16 that we cannot make things so confusing that God doesn't know what we are doing. There are some who always start an argument with an emotional tirade or the use of trigger words to distract from the real issue at hand, often their lack of dutifulness. This may work with people but not with God. God knows our thoughts, before we know them. *Let's work on being honest with God and strive to obey His will.* This is a much better use of our time and energy.

**Conclusion:** Let's work on giving God heart felt worship. God has much for those who obey His will.