

The Sound Room

By Dave Roberson

Let me tell you about the time God tried to lead me into extended times of private worship. I'm talking about the times when it was just me alone with God, worshipping and praising Him. And it took nearly a year before I finally yielded to Him in this area.

Back during this time, I had gone to see a passion play during Easter week, and it was obvious that a lot of money had been spent to produce this passion play. All the props were in the right place; all the actors were well-versed in their parts; not a note was off—not one note. Angels flew; hell was hot; everything was perfect. There was just one problem with the play: There was no anointing, and no Presence of God.

On the way home, I was musing with God in my spirit, wondering what it would take to bring the anointing of His Presence to a play like that. To my surprise, God immediately answered me. He said, "I'll tell you what will bring My Presence, Son. If you go home and spend the entire night worshipping Me in private, you'll find out what the Thema' Presence of God really is."

Then God gave me a vision. I saw a rock land in a pond, causing ripples to fill the pond. There wasn't one nook or cranny in the entire pond that escaped the ripples. And the Lord said, "This is how it starts. First, you'll begin to worship Me, and My Presence will fill your spirit. As you continue to worship, those ripples will eventually be pushed from behind by other ripples until your soul and your physical senses become saturated with My Presence. At that point, the ripples of My Presence will flow out from you to saturate the geographical location you live and work in."

So I returned home from the passion play with this new understanding regarding the nature of true worship. But at that moment, I accepted it only as a teaching from the Lord to file away for a future time.

About a year later, I was ministering in a service and it was time to pray for people. A friend of mine who carries quite an anointing was in that service. I knew his spirit was open to Heaven, so I told him, "Just come up and pray for these people." As my friend was coming to the end of the prayer line, the Holy Spirit spoke to my spirit, telling ME to get in line.

Surprised, I asked, "What did You say, Lord?"

God repeated, "Get in the prayer line."

So I obeyed, taking my place in line. But when my friend was still three people away from me, a wave of power like a wind came over me and knocked me to the floor!

The moment I hit the floor, I was in the Spirit, and the Lord started talking to me. He said, "Son, you don't know anything about worship." Then He proceeded to tell me how many hours He wanted me to worship every day.

I immediately protested. I was already spending up to an hour in worship every day, and I knew the fight I had with my carnal mind just to do that. At the time, I happened to be on a certain day of a fast, so I cried in my spirit, "How about the fasting, Lord?"

The Lord replied, "I didn't tell you not to fast, Son. But fasting cannot give you what worship can, nor can worship give you what fasting can. When a person builds his whole ministry on one spiritual

principle, such as worship or meditation, there will be other keys for his life that I won't be able to employ."

Immediately I felt guilty. You see, if I'm guilty of claiming any key to be the answer to everything, it is praying in tongues. However, God said to me, "Fortunately, Son, you settled on the revelation gift of praying in tongues as your primary key, and that's the source from which understanding comes to walk in the rest of the spiritual keys available to you."

When I heard that, I thought I was going to die and go to Heaven right on the spot! Well, I got up from the floor that day and said, "I have to do what God told me to do." There was no way not to do it short of rebelling, and I will not rebel against God. I had prayed myself in tongues up to the "worship key," and I couldn't continue to pray in tongues without entering into it.

That's the way praying in tongues works. You CANNOT pray in tongues and stay content to hold onto your strongholds or the "status quo." If you don't want God to deal with those strongholds and move you on to the next level in Him, you'll have to stop praying. That's the only way you can stay in the carnal state you're in.

The next day I went into the little sound room where I recorded my radio programs. I closed the door, turned out the lights, and laid down on the small couch. It was just me and God with no distractions. I started to worship God. I knew enough about worship to first offer myself to Him in my native language. I also knew I needed to pay attention as I worshiped the Lord so that my worship didn't become just lip service.

I could be sitting there saying "I love You" while the rest of me was walking off down the street, worrying about some problem from yesterday! During those first days in that little sound room, God only knows how many times I had to go retrieve my wandering mind and tell it, "You're in the Presence of a King, and you WILL pay attention! You show protocol, boy!"

I found that if I was going to keep my senses suspended and truly offer my soul up before God in worship, I had to empty my mind of all unnecessary Christian jargon and shorten the phrases I used to express my love for Him. There could be no more "Oh, Lord, I'd like to tell You how astounding I think You are. You are such an omniscient, self-contained, 'calm-the-troubled-waters-of-mankind' type of God."

Finally, I had reduced my words down to "I worship You, Lord. I glorify You. I magnify You." Little by little, I learned to gather my senses together and pour my whole being into every simple statement of worship.

The first hour was easy. It was just like any other hour I had ever spent worshipping God. But the three or four hours that followed seemed to drag on for several days! I went through times that seemed as dry as desert sand. I mean, when I'd say, "I love You, Lord," my throat seemed to be full of dry, chalky powder. I felt like an old, dried up Egyptian mummy trying to worship!

But God knew I'd keep coming to that little room day after day. He knew I'd worship Him the number of hours He had instructed me to, whether I thought I was in the Spirit or not. And I did stay in there and worship Him, hour after dry hour, saying over and over, "Oh, I really love You, Lord. I mean, I REALLY love You. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

My short, little statements of adoration seemed as flat as pancakes that fell splat to the floor. It seemed like I spent half of my time in that sound room using an invisible spatula to throw my dry, flat "pancake praise" up against a brazen Heaven! All the popular teachers led me to believe this meant I

wasn't in the Spirit, that I was doing something wrong, and I might as well stop. But I found out that those teachers were wrong!

Just because your soul isn't registering a sense of God's Presence during your time of worshiping Him doesn't mean your worship isn't being received on the highest levels. "Well, then, what is God doing during those dry times?" you may ask. He is letting your spirit build itself up past whatever it is in your soul that doesn't like God's Presence very much. Once you build yourself up above that hindrance, He will come to you in glorious fellowship!

That's what happened to me in that little sound room. Just around the time I began thinking, What am I doing? Is this really working? God showed up on the scene! The next day He came again and had sweet fellowship with me, teaching me more about worship. But that wasn't the end of my struggles. I still suffered through other dry spells as I continued to grow in my understanding of true worship.

But I'm telling you, there came a time when I quit having dry spells. And I don't have them anymore! God doesn't have to "show up on the scene" for me either because He is right here with me and in me all the time!

Later on, I taught some other people to enter into this new level of worship. One woman decided to give herself to an hour of worship every day. When she hit her first struggles with dryness, she pressed through them and went on about her business. She told me later, "I didn't feel the Lord at all during those times of worship. But then He followed me to my job! He manifested Himself to me all day long!"

You see, walking and living in the Presence of God isn't a sovereign, isolated experience He chooses to give His people once in a while. Now, it's true that at times God will show up in a worship service and touch everyone in a special way. Those are the services people talk about, saying, "Oh, you should have been there last night!"

But in those times when people have gotten so spiritually dry and parched, God, in His mercy, comes and whets their appetite again, hoping they will eventually grow to a place in their spiritual walk where He can show up like that all the time. But He doesn't want His manifest Presence to be a rare, sovereign event; He is available to manifest Himself to every individual believer and to every group of believers who gather together and desire His Presence in their midst.

Now, my experience with worship isn't worth two cents unless I can base it on the Word of God. So let me share what God showed me in the Bible that explains what happened to me in the arena of worship.

In John 4:14, Jesus said something profound and significant about worship to the Samaritan woman: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Now, Jesus isn't talking about the Holy Spirit in this verse. He is talking about you tapping into your born-again spirit and into everything God has FOR you and TO you and THROUGH you for all eternity! The only thing the Holy Spirit can do is come and enforce what is already there.

Jesus continues in verse 23: But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

But the hour cometh, and now is—it has arrived! Jesus was talking about the generation that was alive as He stood on the face of this earth. So He was saying, "Samaritan woman, it's here. The hour now

is." However, notice what He says will come in this hour: when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit [out of the nature of their human, born-again spirit] and in truth . . .

Jesus went on to say, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is looking for believers like these to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

So Jesus was saying, "Samaritan woman, this is your generation; this is your lifetime. The hour now is; it has arrived. There has never been another hour before this inheritance that anyone could worship God in spirit and in truth."

When Jesus said that God seeks such to worship Him, Jesus didn't mean God was hopping from church to church, looking for a good worship team to give Him what He wanted. Jesus meant God had waited out the dispensations of four thousand years, seeking and waiting for the first men to be born again so they could receive a new, spiritually alive nature like His own. Thus He would finally enjoy what He had always longed for: Fellowship with His people out of their new nature in spiritual worship and truth!

Remember, your Father has a weakness, and you're it! He created you for fellowship; He loves you. He has given you a new nature that can flow in divine communication and in fellowship with Him.

The worship of the Old Testament saints was limited to the mind and the soul. Back then God would come on His people in order to fulfill His purposes and plans. But He would have to pull up just short of the unregenerated human spirit because He couldn't go there. Therefore, the Old Testament saints were limited to quite an exterior form of worship. They couldn't give God what He longed for because they did not have His nature. They could only worship Him in soul and in mind through the atoning blood of animal sacrifices.

But not you! When you get past the flesh—when the ripples of your worship draw you close to God—you will sense His tangible fellowship and manifest Presence in return. He will go with you wherever you go. His joy will be your strength, and you'll wonder, How could I have worried about that, Lord? How could I have insulted You and Your provision with such a carnal attitude?

Jesus spoke of a positional truth when He told the Samaritan woman, "There is now an hour that has never been before—an hour when true worshipers will at last be able to worship God out of their new natures."

Old Testament saints couldn't do that, but you can. It's your position as one who stands before God in Christ.

When you tell the Lord, "I love You; I glorify You," you're saying it out of your standing in Christ. As you keep worshiping Him, He will eventually fill your spirit. Then, He will fill your house! Because of your position in Him, you can know that no matter how dry you feel, His power is working in you. Your vessel is filling up as you worship Him. IT IS WORKING!

So let the ripples of living water begin to saturate your heart, your mind, your soul, and every inch of your surroundings. Break through into this worship as you never have before! From glory to glory, God is changing you!

Your friend and co-laborer,
Dave Roberson