

“I’m Bored!”

Joe Slater

“You also say, ‘Oh, what a weariness!’ And you sneer at it” (Malachi 1:13a). So said the Lord to the priests of Israel concerning their worship. They didn’t specifically say they were bored, but it’s rather obvious! Boredom occurs when one is uninterested, and Israel’s priests had virtually no interest in faithful worship.

Today folks may be more bold in declaring that worship is boring. Could that be because faithfully doing God’s will just doesn’t appeal to them? In many cases, yes – and in such cases repentance is the only cure.

But boredom may also result from repeatedly doing the same things. Sing; pray; observe the Lord’s Supper; sermon; contribution. The repetition **can** become boring, but it doesn’t have to! Self-discipline can keep us focused on **why** we’re doing what we’re doing, thus preventing boredom.

Others complain that worship is boring because it isn’t “fun”. That’s a loaded word. Should worship involve joy and praise? Of course! But “fun”? Where in Scripture do we find anything about worship being “fun”? Even children must learn that not everything is fun. We’ll never out-entertain Hollywood, nor should we try! That’s not the purpose of worship.

Those leading in worship should strive to prevent boredom. Whether it’s preaching, singing, praying, serving communion, reading Scripture, or whatever, let’s make it clear that we’re glad to be helping God’s people honor Him. An enthusiastic, positive attitude is contagious and will go a long way toward eliminating boredom.

An Anchor of the Soul

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:1-2 ESV).

I was going through some old photographs recently. These were made long ago, before the days of clear and crisp digital photos. Needless to say, many were grainy and some just plain out of focus.

Focus is defined as “the center of interest or activity and the state or quality of having or producing clear visual definition” (Oxford Languages). In our text, the writer of Hebrews urges us to “look” to Jesus. Some versions use the word “fix.” Other versions use the word “focus” as it relates to looking to Jesus. While I cannot say that “focus” is a strictly correct translation for the word “look” (in the Greek), I believe it does accurately describe what is required of us.

Let’s look at the circumstances with Peter on the occasion when he walked on water (Matthew 14). While focused on Jesus, Peter continued to walk on water. However, he lost his focus on Jesus and his way was blurred by the rising wind, and he began to sink. Jesus’ response was, *“O you of little faith, why did you doubt”* (v 31)?

As we go through life, we are urged to keep our focus on Jesus. But the reality is, like those old “out of focus” photographs, our focus on Jesus sometimes becomes grainy and unclear. There are times when the allurements of this world distract us and Jesus is no longer the center of interest. It’s times like these that Jesus might say to us *“O you of little faith.”*

Not wanting to hear Jesus say such to us, it behooves us to always be alert, aware of our surroundings,

maintaining our focus on Him. This requires constant effort. Though the winds of life come we must not be afraid, as was Peter, rather we must stay focused.

When we come to the end of our life on this earth, and look back at the old spiritual pictures, will the images be grainy, unclear, and out of focus? Or will they be clear and focused, indicative of a well-focused life in Christ? *“Therefore, if you have been raised with the Messiah, keep focusing on the things that are above, where the Messiah is seated at the right hand of God”* (Col. 3:1 ISV).

--Roy Allen Crutcher (Mount Carmel, IL)

YOUR CHOICE

In the Canadian Rockies is a stream called Divide Creek. At a point in its course the creek divides around a large boulder. Waters which flow to the left of the boulder rush on into Kicking Horse River and finally into the Pacific Ocean. Waters which travel to the right flow into the Bow River which courses into the Saskatchewan River, on into Lake Winnipeg, the Nelson River, Hudson Bay and to the Atlantic Ocean. Once the waters divide at the rock, there is no turning back.

How like life this is. Decisions are made daily. Like is a series of decisions. Some are very difficult, complicated, with far-reaching results. What we wouldn’t give sometimes to have an opportunity to make a certain decision again. It behooves all of us to weigh our decisions carefully. Things of seemingly immediate value will not necessarily be of ultimate value. Always take the long-range view!

We choose our priorities and lifestyles. Should we not ask, “What sort of person do I want to be?” Every person must accept or reject God’s commands and offers. “Choices are the hinges of eternity.” The option remains the same, *“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve”* (Joshua 23:15).

--Charles V. Cash (via *Bulletin Gold*)