

**July 13, 2020**

*God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 1 Corinthians 12:18-27*

Today's podcast is about the spiritual discipline of worship. It's difficult to talk about worship when our worship currently looks so very different. But maybe this is the time we need to reflect upon how we worship.

Bishop Curry alludes to worship as something that takes us from our comfortable, sometimes self-centered individual lives (my world) to a bigger world (a community of believers) where God is the center of a universe; not a human being.

Since I was a child, I saw the church as a place of acceptance and love. As a child, I basked in the attention I received from my many adopted grandparents. As a teenager and young adult, I saw church as a place where everyone was somewhat equal in God's eyes. As a priest, there are times that church is a place of tension -- differences of opinions sometimes make it uncomfortable to worship.

The greatest spiritual growth seems to occur when we "show-up" for worship even when we would prefer to stay at home drinking coffee and reading the paper. God has a weird way of speaking to us during worship. Sometimes we hear scripture like we've never heard it before. Sometimes we are forced to have a conversation with someone we've been trying to avoid. Sometimes we kneel at the altar rail and receive Christ's body and blood next to someone with whom we've been feuding.

As an impartial observer, I've smiled as I've seen God bring people together despite every attempt they've made to remain separated and at odds. I've seen good friends, separated by petty disagreements, attempt to sit on opposite sides of the Church many rows apart only to have to walk to the altar side-by-side when one side of the Church went faster than the other. Remember on Saturday I said that when I'm dreading "something" I know that something great is getting ready to happen. Maybe that's how we need to look at worship when we're apprehensive about attending.

Ultimately, we celebrate worship because it is a reminder that we are not the center of the universe and we don't have to be the center of the worship. We celebrate worship when we need the praise of an adopted grandparent or place of equality in God's eyes or a place to resolve our differences.