

Echoes of Worship

I was working at my desk when it happened. I suddenly heard in my head a portion of a melody, and as I stopped to contemplate it, I found I couldn't get rid of it. Not that I really wanted to, but the more the music resonated within me, the louder I got as I began to sing it out loud. I know that my co-worker neighbors could not possibly appreciate me being "in the spirit" like that.

This wasn't a unique occurrence; it happened fairly often. Many times it was an echo of one of the worship hymns that we had been led in singing on Sunday! It was as though a great object plunged into a deep pool and the waves washed back and forth until they slowly settled out. The eventual calm is why we need constant refreshing when it comes to worship.

I remember Tommy, our song leader, saying once while teaching us a new song that we would hear it later and come to like it. I should have known that he was right, and indeed that song came back and played in my mind at the oddest moments. Perhaps it happened when a vacuum occurred in my mind; it was a good thing that something positive flowed in (at least some times). These events could also be triggered by stresses of some kind.

Our minds are designed to hear and/or see patterns that show some kind of structure or meaning. The reason that music inspires us is because each of us is an instrument tuned to be resonant with God. This is part of the reason that God gave us music; but it is for us, not for God. We may be tone deaf, but He has an infinite capacity for appreciating even our lowly human patterns. You might say that He is tone-infinite. We enjoy certain discrete musical intervals (perhaps analogous to laws and our obedience to them), though sometimes a certain amount of discord is good. God reads our hearts with His perfect ear: He hears of our all intervals and can discriminate between them for Good or Evil.

It isn't only music that bounces around in our heads, but bits and phrases of scripture as well. As you know, worship songs are scriptures or scriptural ideas put to music. The recurring "play" helps us solidify our relationship with God.

I am somehow reminded of the man who lay waiting for the "troubling of the waters" so that he could somehow enter in and be healed¹. This is one of the most interesting miracle stories in the Bible, but the point to be made here is that we may be like that man who was waiting for the Spirit to move him. We know his physical movements were limited, but spiritual movements are not. Rather than wait for an echo to return to us, perhaps we need to constantly stir the waters deep within our souls. "Do not quench the Spirit"² is reactive, but to breathe in the Spirit³ as deeply as we can should be our proactive approach. Then it will not just move in us, it will move us to be in contact with God "without ceasing"⁴.

In this life, though, we will always be subject to the echoes or waves and their limitations. This should give us a sampling of what worshipping God in His presence will be later: it will be all of the time (day and night⁵), not just in waves, with their valleys and troughs. There will be no lulls: it will be a full-time activity.

1. John 5:1ff
2. 1 Thessalonians 5:19
3. Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is God breathed," so don't just read it like any other inspirational or instructional text. Inhale it! Moore, Beth (2004-09-01). *Believing God* (Kindle Locations 1499-1500). B&H Publishing. Kindle Edition.
4. 1 Thessalonians 5:16 (KJV)
5. Revelation 4:1ff