

Worship: See and Be Seen!

What type of corporate worshipper are you?

Do you arrive at church early to get a good seat, worried in case someone else sits there? And when you praise God, listen to the readings and sermon, and pray, do you thank God that you are not like those other people who for example cannot control their children or who talk whilst people are receiving communion?

Or are you the person who comes in hurriedly, head down, and sits at the back or sides, not wanting to catch anyone's eye? - who focuses intently on all that goes on, then leaves right at the end so you do not have to face anyone?

Most Christians are probably somewhere in between in their approach to worship.

Some Christians profess all the good works that they do and how much they contribute to church and charity; in other words saying, 'Look what a good Christian I am!' They focus on the rituals of worship and comment when something is not done 'quite right' and then self-righteously criticise others as they leave. They wear an outward badge of virtue, like the Pharisee in Jesus' parable in Luke chapter 18.

Yet many people come to worship searching for something. They feel unworthy to receive any blessing and long for something to take away their low self-esteem, guilt, sadness or fear. They find comfort in the unity of corporate worship, even without understanding the rituals. These too are the people, like the tax collector in the parable, whom Jesus came to save.

And somehow this experience of one hour a week of being together at the feet of Jesus has to set the pattern for all the other hours we spend. An experience of blessing as well as forgiveness; an experience to share, a way of life to live.

**Elizabeth Goodridge and Ian Yearsley of Southwark Diocese
continue a series on worship.**

**Lord, grant me a simple, kind, open, believing, loving
and generous heart,
worthy of being your dwelling- place.**

John Sergieff
Russian priest, 1829 – 1908