

FROM THE SERVANT GENERAL

ON WORSHIP (Part 1)

COMING BEFORE THE KING OF KINGS

*“The Lord is king forever”
(Psalm 10:16a)*

Jesus is the King of kings, and we are his subjects. When we in CFC-FFL worship, the situation is similar to a people coming before their king. What happens during the time of worship can be described and understood in terms of a sequence of events in such a scenario.

The people are invited to have an audience with the king.

The king wishes to be accessible to his subjects. He meets with them regularly, speaking and listening to them.

In CFC-FFL, we have our weekly household meetings and monthly prayer assemblies, as well as other times when we worship. We are a people who have been invited to enter into the presence of our King, so that He might interact with us.

Pastoral note: We need to realize what a great privilege it is to be invited into the presence of the King of kings. As such, we should prepare ourselves spiritually whenever we have these blessed times.

The people enter into the throne room of the king.

The people assemble prior to the arrival of the king and are ushered into his throne room.

In CFC-FFL, we should be seated prior to the announced time of the start of the prayer assembly. When alerted by the prayer leader as to the imminent start of the assembly, all conversation and moving around should cease.

Pastoral note: People should not be late in arriving, since it would be a big insult to arrive after the king. In addition, the people should look forward to what is to happen with excitement and anticipation.

The leader exhorts the people to welcome the king upon his arrival.

It is the leader's task to prepare the people for the arrival of the king. In a way, he is the cheer leader who hypes up anticipation and excitement for the king's arrival.

In CFC-FFL, this is the nature of the opening remarks of the prayer leader. It is an exhortation to worship.

Pastoral note: The prayer leader is not there to give a talk or to do a sharing or to tell stories, unless these are necessary in his task of exhorting to worship. The exhortation is normally short, because it is just an introduction to the main event.

Upon the arrival of the king, all stand. At this point, the people either praise or sing a song. As the king enters his throne room, the people continue to sing and praise.

When the king arrives, the people stand, as a show of respect and giving honor. Then they burst out in greetings of joy through shouting and singing. They cannot contain their excitement. They wave and clap their hands, they cry out in loud voices.

In CFC-FFL, we normally sing two praise songs followed by simultaneous praising. The brethren, in jubilation, raise hands and shout and clap and dance.

Pastoral note: By the very nature of the situation, the worship songs should be fast. The mood is joyful and exuberant. There is no room for inhibition.

When the king reaches and mounts his throne, the exuberance gives way to a more subdued and solemn adoration.

The people have been exuberant as the king walked to his throne. Now having reached his throne, he turns to face the people, and they become subdued, bowing their heads and even kneeling.

In CFC-FFL, we sing our worship song, followed by singing in tongues.

Pastoral note: When we sing in tongues, our “spirit is at prayer” (1 Cor 14:14). After interacting with the King with our mind and our body, now we enter into intimacy with Him with our spirit.

The people fall silent before the king, waiting for him to speak.

There is now total silence in the throne room, as the people await the king’s words.

In CFC-FFL, the singing in tongues is followed by a period of silence. The brethren are connected to the King in spirit. All await His words.

Pastoral note: This is a time to listen to God in our hearts. He will speak to each one of us. And if His word is not just for us but for the others as well, we should be open to being used by God as His mouthpiece in speaking to His people.

The king speaks.

The king uses this time to speak to his people. At times he commends them, at times he chastises them, at times he directs them, but at all times he encourages them and expresses his love and care.

In CFC-FFL, God speaks through prophecy or inspired Scripture readings.

Pastoral note: We should listen attentively to such words spoken, while at the same time being discerning whether the words are truly from God.

The people, individually or through the leader, respond.

Now it is the people’s turn to be heard. This is their audience with the king. They either express their admiration for the king, beg his indulgence for shortcomings, give thanks for some favor or good done for them, or place their requests before him.

In CFC-FFL, these are the prayers of adoration, repentance, thanksgiving and petition. In a prayer assembly, this is done by the prayer leader. In a household meeting, these prayers are done by the individual members.

Pastoral note: Because we are one body, we make everyone’s prayer our own by some verbal affirmation, such as saying “Amen” or “Yes, Lord” or some other.

The leader speaks the final word on behalf of the people.

Knowing that the time of audience is ending, the leader makes the closing remarks.

In CFC-FFL, this is the ending prayer done by the prayer leader. He may also include a closing communal prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer or the Glory Be.

The king dismisses the people and leaves the throne room.

Once again the people are on their feet with great joy, having spent such a privileged time with the king. Once again they are exuberant in their praise of their king who is exiting from the assembly.

In CFC-FFL, we usually have, in a prayer assembly, an exuberant closing song, followed by a big round of applause at the end.

Pastoral note: For this closing song, it is very appropriate to sing songs that reflect on our being sent off on our mission after our time with our God. This might be about our worldwide mission (e.g., Shine Jesus Shine) or our being an army (e.g., We Will Fight) or the like.

Additional pastoral notes:

1. When we worship, we are a people led by the Spirit of God. Thus, while the above describes well what is happening during the time of worship, the sequence and activities will not necessarily be similar all the time. For example, the Lord might speak through prophecy at different times during a household meeting, or the congregation might be led to kneel in repentance.
2. In a prayer assembly, the dismissal and closing song happen not after the time of worship but at the end of the whole prayer meeting. Between the worship time and the closing are the sharings, prayers of intercession, announcements, etc.

(Note: I have slightly rehashed what I first wrote in 2000)