

March 25, 2021

Read Isaiah 2

Key verses: Isaiah 2:17

*The haughtiness of people shall be humbled,  
and the pride of everyone shall be brought low;  
and the Lord alone will be exalted on that day.*

### **When Our Attention Is Finally Focuses on God**

I have a hard time worshiping God. It's not because I don't find *reason* to worship God; I know God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of all life, as One who loves me and forgives me, guides me and strengthens me. I know all these things, but on Sundays my mind is focused on *presenting* a worship service to God, so even as I pray prayers of adoration and thanksgiving, my mind is usually on what's next in the worship service.

But I have experienced true, undistracted worship – though only for a very short time and quite by accident. As a youth minister I led a ministry to the homeless in Manhattan. My youth group would spend months collecting and sorting used clothes, raising funds to buy toiletries and food items, then preparing hot food, bag lunches, and beverages before twenty or more of us would head to Manhattan on a Friday evening to distribute everything to people who were homeless on a venture known as a *Midnight Run*. We would stop at five or six locations (often churches) before making the final stop where we would serve the greatest amount of people.

You can probably imagine now busy my mind was – driving, parking, supervising the kids, instructing them where to put items. I had a lot of great help, but my mind was still racing as we moved from stop to stop.

But I remember one night at our final stop, when everyone who needed clothes and toiletries had received them, when everyone had been served hot food, when there were no more stops scheduled for the evening. I surveyed the scene looking for issues to address, problems to solve, and all I saw were kids and grownups of different races, genders, and nationalities, the haves and have nots, all talking with one another, sipping coffee and hot chocolate, smiling, sharing, enjoying the moment. And at that moment I felt God's pure presence. What I saw brought such joy to my heart. I believe that I truly worshiped God at that moment.

Isaiah speaks of a day when “the Lord alone will be exalted.” I can imagine such a day when that moment of true worship that I experienced stretches into eternity.

**Prayer:** God of community, God of fellowship, we praise you at this moment, and pray that our worship could continue undistracted beyond this moment. We know that's not likely; there are so many things that distract us. But help us, Lord, in the midst of our busy day, to breathe in and know your calming, loving presence. And may the peace that you give to us be shared with everyone we meet today. Amen.