

You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit. By James K. A. Smith: Brazos Press, 2016, xii + 210 pp.; ISBN 9781587433801 (cloth); 20.00 USD.

A new book published by James K.A. Smith with a wide range of English-speaking readers in mind. It stresses the importance of worship, and also challenges our understanding of its nature. The book is written in a reasonably understandable language accessible for a broader audience, even though it has references to a rich variety of theological and philosophical literature. Smith builds his narrative on Aristotle's statement that love is the driving force of the world, it is one that attracts and moves us to the Creator (although perhaps Aristotle thought of another creator, Smith sees this phrase in a biblical context). Thus, the book tells about the power of desire, about worship and its place in human life and about spiritual practices (mainly in the sphere of our thinking and daily practices).

Smith published a series of books on the theology of public space and the role of worship (for example, "Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works", "Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation", or "Awaiting the King: Reforming Public Theology"), and this book plays an important role in this series. Smith considers our cultural and daily activities to be shaped by our practice of worship, and vice versa, our daily practices influence our worship of God. In this regard, Smith pays attention (and expresses personal gratitude) to the ideas of Robert E. Webber (whose book "Worship old and new" is available in Russian translation).

The main challenge that Smith challenges with the evangelical Christian reader is the idea that believing and following Christ do not necessarily relate to the knowledge of the Bible and the right doctrines and the acceptance of God's existence by reason alone. As an alternative, he suggests paying attention to the one whom we love, and around which our desires are formed (2). He links the formation of desires with the formation of habits (5-6, 15-16). He also suggests that forming habits is based on the "purpose" of our existence (telos), making Christian worship teleological (10-14).

Smith also presents the main challenge of contemporary culture for a Christian - the idolatry. He emphasizes that one can practice "orthodox" theological views, but practice "unorthodox" attachment and desires (23, 29, 61). As an example, we could notice the influence of the consumer philosophy on contemporary Christians. For Smith, the goal of worship is not to "inspire" and inform, but to form certain habits, with attention to the form of worship, and the priority not of one's spontaneity, but of the action of God during our worship experience.

As always, Smith presents perfectly interwoven examples from feature films and serials, whether it is Star Wars (176-177, when he talks about hope and love) or the True Detective (105, when he talks about the importance of confession at the service).

The weak part of the book is its variety of topics and directions that are covered. Because of this, it is more like a package of ideas associated with worship rather than clear direction of where to move with our practices, so this package still needs to be developed. It is obvious that Webber has a strong thematic influence on the book, that is why Smith's main proposals boil down to strengthening liturgical worship. That should form our habits of listening and loving God. Of course, both authors are accurate that the evangelical tradition often lacks respect for the action of God beyond spontaneity, or rationality, but idealizing the action itself is also a little bit overdone. We can see the other side of the problem practiced in many historical churches.

Perhaps the most important topic on which Smith focuses on, and what makes his book involved in aesthetic theology, is the development of the idea of attraction by God, and to God (186). It is also that worship is the formation and teaching of the heart to see and follow God in His beautiful glory. It is the attentiveness to an effective love for God, which should be

cultivated and developed in our worship and what makes this book useful and unique for the evangelical context.

Denis Kondyuk
Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary
Kyiv, Ukraine
ORCID: 0000-0001-9890-2069