

# The Doxological Life: Worship From the 'Marrow' of the Soul

by Bryan Anthony

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*The sermon emphasizes that true worship is a comprehensive, God-centered lifestyle that transforms every aspect of our lives.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:16, John 4:23, Romans 12:1, 1 Corinthians 6:19, Colossians 3:1

**Topics:** "True Worship", "Living Sacrifice"

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## Description

Bryan Anthony preaches on the profound call to worship, emphasizing that true worship goes beyond surface-level expressions of radicalness and religious boasting, leading us to be awe-struck at the majesty of God. He highlights the need for worship to be restored as a God-centric part of the Church's identity, not just a performance in meetings, echoing Paul's cry to the churches in Rome. Anthony stresses the importance of offering our bodies and minds to God as living sacrifices, enabling us to discern and resist the influences of this age, living a God-conscious life in all aspects.

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## Transcript

"Brothers, I call upon you because of the compassion of God to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy, pleasing to God as your reasonable/logical worship, and not model yourselves on this aeon [age], but be transformed by the renewal of mind, for the determining of what the will of God is- the good and pleasing and perfect." -Rom. 12.1-2 (translated by Ben Witherington III)

The call to worship is far more thoroughgoing than our greatest claims of how radical and "on-fire" we are for the Lord. Worship, as expressed throughout the Biblical line of saints, is all-encompassing, touching our lives down to the marrow of our souls. We think ourselves radical because we fast for a day, or place a bold bumper sticker on our cars, or engage in a lively form of praise in a Christian gathering. But true worship leaves no room for religious boasting, for it leaves the soul awe-struck at the majesty of God, and it converts us from self-conscious spirituality to a God-conscious, God-suffused, God-focused mode of being.

The call to worship is so much more profound than surface-level expressions of radicalness. It is so requiring that it behooves us to move forward "because of the compassion of God," for on any other grounds we would wilt and be blown away. At the same time, in light of His great mercies, the revelation strikes us that we are but dust, and that the One who is preeminently worthy of the highest adoration has

redeemed us unto a life of obedience and communion with Him. This is most staggering, beyond comprehension, but the Christian life has everything to do with being swallowed up in that great reality until our very lives are offered up in a totality that God receives as worship.

It is remarkable to me, and quite unfortunate, that we have reduced the glory of worship into an industry for those who would have successful religious careers. I appreciate true psalmists, both ancient and modern, but worship needs to be restored as a God-centric and quintessential part of who the Church is, and not so much as something She performs in a given meeting. This was the cry of Paul's heart to the churches in Rome, and it is the cry of God's heart for us today.

Those who have presented their bodies to God as a sacrifice belong no longer to themselves but to God. The offerer no longer has the final say over his behavior. He or she is God's property and must behave according to God's dictates. But God does not want a dead human sacrifice but a living and lively one. He does not want something from us; he wants us.

Worship is where the creature recognizes that he or she is a creature and God is the Creator. It is an act of submission or ordering oneself under the Divine. It is also by implication a denial of one's own divinity, a denial that one is lord of one's own life. If one does what this verse says, then it follows that one has committed himself to obeying the commandments and exhortations that follow. But, more than this, Paul is suggesting that all of life should be doxological, an offering up to God, an act of worship.

(Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary, Ben Witherington III; Eerdmans, 2004; pp. 284-285)

As I like to say, this touches everything, right down to the marrow of our souls. To offer our "bodies" is not some ascetic and ethereal concept, but a very down-to-earth and nitty gritty call. In light of the compassion of God, and by the renewing of our minds, we are blessed with the gift of discernment regarding the influences and ways of this present evil age. When at once we surrender our bodies and minds unto Him, we are enabled and empowered to live in Babylonian places, and amongst men of unclean lips, without conforming to their patterns at all.

Has our American Gospel brought us to this remarkably glorious place? Or are we conforming to this age?

It touches the way we handle our money (Are we greedy, irresponsible, or materialistic?), the way we treat strangers and familiar faces (Do we have humility and love towards all men?), the manner of our choices regarding food and entertainment (Are we gluttons, addicted to overeating, and given to compromised entertainment- or excessive 'clean' entertainment?), and the way we view life altogether (Have we got a God-centered and God-conscious life, or are we still trapped in a self-absorbed mode of being?).

Right down to the 'marrow' of our thoughts and affections, we need to be asked: Are we living a 'doxological life?' Are our minds being offered up as a worship unto Him? Are we presenting ourselves to the Lord, or are we circumventing the totality of worship and presenting a portion of our lives that we consider to be the Christianly segment? We cannot offer only a supposed Christian portion to Him, for "He does not want something from us; He wants us."

Most encouraging to the saint is that God has graciously given His Son, to redeem and cleanse us, and to take us through the morass and mazes of this age, right into the clarity and soundness of "the will of God," "the good and pleasing and perfect."

No wonder Paul urged us in this manner. To be conformed to this world is to be ensnared and entrapped on every side. To be "transformed by the renewal of the mind" is to see the nature and character of God Himself, and that is most chiefly to be desired. Paul doesn't give us an imperative that can only be met by spiritual superstars and famous reformers. He issues the call to every child of God, for a life of authentic worship is the inheritance of all the saints, and a "doxological life" is the delight and privilege of all who have been called by His name.

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