

The Dwelling of God

by David Ravenhill

This sermon emphasizes the importance of creating a dwelling place for God in our lives, transitioning from visitation to habitation. It explores the nature of God's desire to dwell among His people, the specific requirements He has for His dwelling place, and the need for a holy environment, an atmosphere of worship, and a heart of thanksgiving. The sermon draws parallels from Exodus chapter 25 to Revelation, highlighting the throne of God, the atmosphere of holiness, the act of worship, and the significance of having Jesus on the throne of our lives.

Scripture: Exodus 25:8, Revelation 4:2, Psalms 29:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Job 1:20, Romans 12:1, Hebrews 4:13

Topics: "God's Presence", "Creating a Holy Dwelling"

Description

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Transcript

I realize many of you have had a long day. But you can ask God for strength for one more hour. The book of Revelation talks about the everlasting gospel.

And so we're just getting you ready for that. It also talks about the man that will come and wear out the saints of the Most High as well. But the enemy will come and wear out the saints of the Most High.

I want to speak to you tonight about the habitation of God. The dwelling place of God. If you have your Bible, we can begin in Exodus chapter 25.

And let me just take you back to verse 1 so we see who is speaking here. This is the Lord speaking to Moses. It is not Moses at the end of 40 days and 40 nights of prayer and fasting begging God to come down.

Instead, it's God begging Moses to come down. But it is God begging Moses to do something for him. He says in verse 8, I want you to construct a house or a dwelling place for me, that I may dwell among you.

I believe that's the eternal desire of God. He wants to dwell with his people. After all, he is the ultimate father.

And just as any father wants to be with his family, God is no exception. And so he says to Moses, build me a house because I want to dwell among you. And so he says to Moses, build me a house so that I may dwell among you.

And I believe God wants to take the church from visitation to habitation. I've been a part of some wonderful visitations. But there is a difference between a visitation and a habitation.

I have been a visitor here for the last two days. Tomorrow night we fly over to Wales. We'll be there for about four days.

But again, I am just visiting Wales. On Friday, we will go back to America and I will go back to where I dwell. And on Friday, we will go back to America and I will go back to where I dwell.

And God doesn't just want to visit us, he wants to dwell with us. And here in verse 8 we see God expressing his desire. But then in verse 9 we see God's commandments.

He says, according to all that I will show you, a design of the tabernacle and a design of all its objects. This is how you must make it. In verse 8 we see God's desires and in verse 9 we see God's commandments, his commandments.

In verse 8 the request of the lords. In verse 9 we've got God's requirements. And so we immediately learn something about the nature of God.

He is particular about where he dwells. You know the story how Moses was summonsed into the presence of God. And there's over 60 chapters in the Bible devoted to the building of the tabernacle.

But the bottom line is, he says, I want to dwell among you. But if I dwell among you, I have certain requirements. I need a certain environment, if you like.

I'm going to use a few words interchangeably for a moment. We talk about the environment. The environmentalists, thousands of them now in America, I'm sure you have them here.

They are fanatics when it comes to preserving certain components out in the country, trees and so on and so forth. And they will tell you that if you change the course of a stream or cut down certain trees and so on, you will destroy the future life of a bird or a butterfly or a plant or whatever it is. And they try to make people aware that if you remove something from the environment, a tree or a certain plant, it has consequences for a certain animal or a certain being.

In other words, certain components need to be present in the environment to allow certain animal species to live. And God is saying, I need a certain environment. Certain things need to be in place.

And then we have the word atmosphere. The atmosphere is when you take the outside and bring it inside. We have a certain atmosphere right now in this room.

We could change the atmosphere. We could open the windows. We could turn up some loud music.

Maybe with a militant theme. And we could feel very patriotic. Or we could bring our sister up and have her play the violin.

Or we could ask our sister to play the violin here. And we could turn up the lights. And then we create a very romantic atmosphere.

We can change the atmosphere. And God is also looking for a certain atmosphere where he lives. And then there is the word habitation.

That someone or something is found. Years ago, when our children were young, we took them to a famous zoo in America, the San Diego Zoo. And I remember walking around, looking at all the enclosures with these animals from South Africa.

Lions and tigers and hippos and giraffes. The weather was about 35 degrees Celsius. And then I came to another enclosure and there was a polar bear.

And my heart went out to that poor critter. It was never designed to function in 35 degrees Celsius. Maybe minus 35 and it would have been happy.

That is not the usual place that you find a polar bear. But the word habitation means the usual place someone or something is found. God has a habitation.

There is a place where you can find God. And then there is the word culture. Culture is the way in which we are raised.

I am sure you have your culture just as we have our culture in America. You have your Dutch culture and we have our American culture. And when I was 15 years old, I became aware of culture when we moved from Ireland to America.

My parents went to a Bible school to work there and the emphasis was on sanctification. After a few days I made friends with some of the staff kids. And every once in a while they would shock me with their language.

They were swearing. Terrible swear words. And I began to question whether my father had made the right choice.

Then every once in a while they would look astonished at something I said. But I realized we had a cultural difference. Swear words in England are not necessarily swear words in America and vice versa.

And so we have cultural differences. I was talking to Chris today. And I said in America we wear our wedding ring on the left hand.

But I said in Germany they wear it on the right hand. And then he told me here the Catholics wear it on one hand and the Protestants wear it on the other. Cultural differences.

When my wife and I were in New Guinea we had a good friend translating the scriptures in a very remote area of that country. New Guinea has 4 million people. And 700 languages, not dialects, distinct languages.

And our friend was translating the scriptures to one of these remote villages. And he had hired the help of one of the locals. And after a few days the local asked him a question.

He noticed that the missionary would take out his handkerchief and blow his nose. And then he would fold it up and put it back in his pocket. He'd never seen a handkerchief in his life.

And so he grew curious. And he said to the missionary, why did you save that stuff and what did you do with it? We have cultural differences. Our oldest daughter is a missionary in China.

She came home a few years ago with some slides of the marketplace. She was in the meat market. And here were all the dogs that were ready to be eaten.

Now, you know, something within us, if you have a little Fido at home or a little pet dog, you sort of recoil eating it. It has a whole new meaning to hot dog. In some cultures it's appropriate to belch in the middle of your meal.

It's your stomach giving thanks to the cook. In our culture, mother nudges us. And reminds us as company.

And please don't behave like that and embarrass us. Now, if you take the word culture and you spiritualize it, it becomes the word ways. Teach me your ways, oh Lord.

Why are your ways so different than our ways? You see, the thing is about culture, you can offend somebody if you don't understand their culture. And we can offend God by not understanding the ways of God. Because what is acceptable many times to us is not acceptable to Him.

And so we're going to look into the ways of God. Now, you can tell a lot about a person by visiting their home. I believe that when Moses was called up in the mountain and a cloud came down so the children of Israel could not see him that another cloud sort of parted.

And God brought Moses into his eternal dwelling place. And he says, Moses, this is where I dwell. I want you to replicate this atmosphere.

I want you to copy this on earth. Because the Bible says it was shown to him on the mountain. In other words, the earthly tabernacle was a copy of the true tabernacle, the Bible says.

In other words, all the essential elements were there. Granted, not as a vast scale, but necessary. But nevertheless, all the essential elements.

And so we're going to look at God's house tonight. Like I said a moment ago, you can tell a lot about a person by visiting their home. The person may not even be at home.

But if you're given the freedom of having the key and walking in, the moment you step inside, you can tell if they're rich or poor. If they're clean or unclean. If they're neat or sloppy.

If they have children or no children. All you have to do is observe where they dwell. Maybe the type of furniture tells you about the person.

Maybe you look at the walls and you see the artwork. Maybe some of the fine Dutch artists. Or maybe it's modern art.

So-called art. All you've got to do is look around. Maybe you walk down the hallway.

You look in a bedroom. And there's a baby's crib. You think this is a young couple.

Either that, or they're grandparents and they have their grandchild once in a while. But just observing the house tells you what sort of person lives there. You can tell the things they like and the things they dislike.

Just by the things that they bought. Turn with me, if you will, now to the book of Revelation. And we're going to visit God's house.

Not the copy, but the genuine house. Remember, the earthly tabernacle was a copy of the true tabernacle. We're going to visit the true tabernacle.

And we're going to gain something about the nature and the character of God. You know the story how John is in the Spirit on the Lord's day. And all of a sudden he's caught away in the Spirit.

And so he tells us in verse 1 of Revelation 4. After these things I looked, and behold, a door was standing open in heaven. So God's house has got a door. I'm sure it's not literal, it's figurative, but nevertheless, there is a door.

John gains access to heaven. And John gains access to the presence of God. And he says, I heard a voice.

Like the sound of a trumpet speaking to me. And that voice said, Come here, John, and I will show you what will take place. And verse 2, and immediately I was in the Spirit.

And behold, there was a throne in heaven. And one sitting on the throne. The very first thing that John becomes conscious of when the door of heaven opens and the Spirit of God says, Come on in.

And he says, immediately I was confronted with a throne. And there was one sitting on the throne. Wherever you find God, he's always on the throne.

Heaven is his throne, the earth is his footstool. Swear not by heaven, it's the throne of God. What does the throne represent? Supremacy.

Total authority. Being in control, in charge, government. In other words, God is always in control.

He is the supreme authority. He's not just the king. He's the king of all kings.

It's the place from which he rules and reigns. Where he extends his scepter and says, Rule in the midst of mine enemies. And he says to Moses, Make it exactly the way I tell you.

Now, when we make the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant, we find that God no longer dwells in temples made with hands. This is not the church. You and I are the church.

We now are the dwelling place of God. In John chapter 14, Jesus made the promise. We will come and we will make our abode in you.

In other words, Jesus is saying, We want to make our home in your life. In James chapter 4 and verse 5, it says the Spirit with a capital S. The Spirit that God has made to dwell in us, jealously desires us. In other words, when God created you and he created me, he created us so the Spirit of God could dwell in us.

We are his temple. We are his earthly home. And just as he said to Moses, I believe he would say to you and to me, Make sure you make it exactly the way I want it.

And the first thing we find out is he sits on the throne. We talked about that last night in detail. Jesus Christ is not just Savior, he is Lord, he is Master, he is King.

And if we are going to have a habitation for God, if God is going to dwell in your life and my life, he demands a throne. He won't just sit anywhere. You can't say, Welcome into my house, Jesus.

But let's get one thing straight. This is my house. I'm in control.

You're welcome. You can sit anywhere else. But remember, I'm in control.

It doesn't work that way. If Jesus Christ is to make his abode in you, he demands the throne of your life, where he has absolute control over every facet of your life, where you bow in submission and acknowledge him as King, Lord, Master. The next thing that John becomes aware of is in verse 8. And he sees the living creatures.

It says they are full of eyes around and within. And day and night they do not cease but to say, Holy, Holy, Holy. John now becomes aware that he has stepped into an atmosphere of absolute holiness.

What is holiness? One of the basic meanings means to be healthy. In other words, spiritual health. When it comes to natural health, we are fanatics.

In America, we spend billions of dollars a year on health-related products. You know, vitamins. Machines for doing juicing.

All sorts of athletic equipment. All of those things, wanting to keep healthy. And if we get a pain in some part of our body, it doesn't take us very long before we're making an appointment to see the doctor.

If it's very severe, we'll go directly to the hospital. We think that thing may be life-threatening. We could die as a result.

So we want somebody to examine us. We need an operation. Or some medication.

Whatever will get rid of the pain. And yet, when it comes to the disease of sin, we will allow pride and anger and lust and resentment and unforgiveness to fester away in our lives, sometimes for years and years and years. And never go to the great physician for the cleansing blood of the Lamb.

And so holy means to be healthy. There's an old hymn that says, Nothing between my soul and the Saviour. In other words, I can look God in the eye without having to drop my head when I was a little boy and I did something wrong.

My mother would ask me, David, did you do that? I had two brothers. I say, no, it was Paul or Philip. And she said, are you sure? And then she'd say, look at me.

That was all it took. I could not look her in the face. We need to be able to look God in the face.

Again, God is looking for a place of holiness. God is always found in a holy place. If you're Moses on the backside of the desert, he's herding the sheep one day.

And all of a sudden he sees a burning bush. And it wasn't just the fact that the bush was burning. that caught his attention.

It was the fact that it kept on burning. It didn't just go up in smoke. And he makes his way towards it.

And the Spirit of God says, Moses, stop. The place you're standing is holy ground. Or whether you're Josh or outside of Jericho.

And the angel of the Lord appears. And he says, remove your sandals. The place you're standing is holy ground.

In the tabernacle, of course, you've got the outer court, the holy place, and then God dwelling in the holy of holies. In Peter, he says, be ye holy as I am holy. After all, it is the Spirit of God that dwells within us.

In the Old Testament, we have the story of Noah. And after the rains had ceased, Noah has to determine whether he can open the doors and let the animals out and so on. But if I understand it correctly, there were no portholes in the side of the ark.

The only light was from above. And so he can't look out of the window and say, you know, it's been dry now for over a week. And so he releases a raven.

But the problem with a raven is, it's an unclean bird. It will settle on any sort of environment or any sort of debris. Maybe there's a big bloated carcass floating on the surface of the deep.

And the raven is happy to perch there. And so Noah could not determine whether the waters had abated. And so he releases a dove.

And the dove flies around. And it comes back. And the Bible says, because there was no place for the dove to rest.

The dove will not settle where the raven will settle. One is an unclean bird, one is a clean bird. And so he waits for a period of time, seven days.

He releases the dove again. And at the end of the day, the dove returns with a freshly picked olive leaf. And the Bible says, Noah knew that the waters had settled.

It's interesting that in the Hebrew, it's referred to as a she, the dove. Women have a tremendous sensitivity. That can be good and bad.

But I think in the Godhead, please don't make this into a serious doctrine. But the Bible says you can blaspheme the Father. And there will be forgiveness.

You can blaspheme the Son and there's forgiveness. But if we blaspheme the Holy Spirit, there's no forgiveness in this life or the life to come. The Holy Spirit is very easily grieved and quenched.

If you like, there's almost a feminine aspect to the Holy Spirit. And it is the Spirit of God that dwells in us. Oh, I know we teach our children, you know, God is, Jesus is knocking at the door of your heart.

But Jesus is resurrected, seated at the right hand of the Father. And our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. That same sensitive Holy Spirit.

Some translations turn it around and say the Spirit of Holiness. That's the nature of God. He is a holy God.

And imagine what it's like when the Holy Spirit comes in to dwell and He finds all sorts of uncleanness. My wife and I raised our three daughters in New Zealand. We lived there for 15 years.

And one of the problems we had there was we had no relatives. And so when the children had a break from school, we could not go visit Grandma and Grandpa. Our aunts and uncles.

We didn't have anybody. And so it was always a dilemma. What do we do now for the next two or three weeks? And we heard about a farm holiday.

New Zealand has about 5 million people. And between 25 and 75 million sheep. And so there's sheep everywhere.

And we were living in the South Island where you have the Southern Alps, beautiful mountains. And somebody told us about a cabin that we could rent. And they described that it was in a beautiful valley, a remote valley.

And they described it to us as follows. It's in a small village. And it's a beautiful remote valley.

And there's a beautiful, but a long winding path through the mountains to that cabin. And a beautiful stream, a river that flows through there. And so we booked a holiday there for eight or nine days.

And we packed our luggage together, put the children in the car. We drove two or three hours. And we went over that beautiful winding path straight through the mountains.

And we did indeed see such a beautiful stream. And then we arrived at that farm. And the lady there, the hostess, said, here's the key.

You can't miss it. It's just a little further away. So we drove down.

Sure enough, here was a house. Jumped out of the car, put the key in the door. And the moment we stepped through the door, I realized we'd made a mistake.

It was filthy. It was just a bare, the carpet was all worn. There were springs coming up through the couch.

I looked in the kitchen. It was a wood-burning stove. And around the bottom of the, on the floor there were dozens and dozens of dozens of alcoholic bottles, beverage bottles.

Empty, of course. We went into the first bedroom and it was the only one with a double bed. And my wife looked at that mattress.

She said, there is no way we're going to sleep on that. It was a multicolored mattress. But not when it came out of the factory.

I'll let you fill in the blanks. But I said to my wife, listen, we're not going back. It's too far.

And so we took some newspaper and put it on that mattress. And then we put a blanket on top of the newspaper. In fact, we may have put two blankets.

And then we brought our own bedding and so we put a sheet over all of that. We got the children settled and we went to bed. And I said to my wife, well, you know, it's a beautiful environment around us outside.

It's gorgeous. We don't have to spend all the time in the cabin. We can get outside and go swimming or fishing in the river.

And so we fell asleep. I woke up early in the morning and I could hear the pitter-patter of rain. And all the old homes in New Zealand have corrugated tin roofs.

And so it began to echo with the rain. A long story short, four days of torrential rain. We could not get out of that house.

And every time I sat down, I thought I was going to get the plague. And I was raised on a farm. I've spent seven years with YWAM, Youth With A Mission.

I've slept in grasshuts and banana sheds all over the creation. But there was something about that place. I said to my wife, let's go home.

She agreed. We turned the key in and told the lady the weather was terrible, we're going home, we didn't want to embarrass her. When we got back, when we got back to our home, I felt like the pope getting down, kissing the ground.

My wife's German background. She's German background. So she's got that Dutch-German, you know, everything has to be perfect.

I could literally eat off the ground. And I remember sitting down and thinking, I'm home. This is my house.

This is my abode. We created it. It's got my sort of artwork, our sort of furniture.

This is where we live, this is where we dwell. You know, God wants to feel that way in your life and my life. He wants the throne.

But He wants a place of holiness. Oh, not a self-made holiness. But the holiness of God that only He can impart.

The next thing we find is there in verse 9. And it says the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sits on the throne. In other words, everything in heaven glorifies God. And the Bible says, whatever you do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God.

We should glorify Him even in the menial things. I remember listening to Jack Hayford. Some of you may know that name.

He was speaking about a little verse that says, is this not the carpenter of Nazareth talking about Jesus? And he underscored the carpenter. He said, I believe if you wanted a good job done and you were living at the time when Jesus was a young man. He said, I believe that in the time of Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth was Jesus.

If you wanted in the village of Nazareth to have a good job done. And you began to make inquiries. I need a new table or I need this done or that done.

Who would you recommend? And he said the response would be the carpenter of Nazareth is Jesus. He's not just a carpenter, he's the carpenter. And he says you should be the school teacher.

The accountant. The plumber. The whatever it is that you do.

Whatever you do in word or deed do all to the glory of God. That's the atmosphere that God lives in. But you notice also it says they were giving him thanks.

John becomes aware not only of a holy place but an atmosphere of thanksgiving. You see the Bible says that God dwells in the praises of his people. That's where he lives, that's where he dwells.

He dwells in the midst of thanksgiving in the midst of praise. That's why the psalmist says we enter into his gates with thanksgiving. The psalmist had a revelation that God dwells again in this atmosphere of thanksgiving.

The Bible says in everything give thanks. The Bible says in Romans chapter 1 when they knew God they honored him not as God neither were they thankful therefore God gave them over to a reprobate mind. It all began with a lack of thanksgiving.

One of the reasons the children of Israel never made it into the promised land because God says below these ten times you have murmured against me. They were always complaining. The opposite of being thankful.

God says you cannot go into the promised land because of that. If we are going to have the Spirit of God dwell within us we have to be singing and making melody in our heart to the Lord. Again God derives pleasure for that.

It reminds him again of his heavenly home. And we need to cultivate that if you're not used to it. And then the final thing.

Notice in verse 10 it says the 24 elders will fall down before him. And they will worship him. Now we find that God's house is a place of worship.

Worship is something that I believe is very, very rare in the church. It's different than our praise. My father used to say that prayer is preoccupation with our needs.

Praise is preoccupation with our blessings. And worship is preoccupation with God alone. In other words many times in our prayer it's God bless me, God heal me, God provide for me, God, God, God.

And then our praise is thank you Lord for healing me, thank you for forgiving me, thank you for this or that. But worship is a preoccupation with God himself. We have a famous dictionary in America called Webster's dictionary.

He was a godly man. I don't know if he was born again but he was a godly man. And many of his definitions are based in the word of God.

And his definition of worship is this. To honor with extravagant love and extreme submission. You see God is looking for that honor.

His worship never changes. It isn't dependent upon our circumstances. Because his worship never changes.

And we've got to learn how to cultivate worship. My father traveled as I do and he would speak at various Bible colleges and he says I love to look through the curriculum and look at the sort of classes that are being taught in the school. And he says I've been doing that for many years and I've never found a class on worship.

And then he would very quickly add plenty of classes on music. You see worship does not deal with your ability to play an instrument. It doesn't deal with your vocal ability.

It has everything to do with the attitude of your heart. I believe there are three great acts of worship in the Bible. You can disagree with this if you like.

The first one is Abraham. In fact the very first time that worship is ever mentioned in the Bible it's mentioned in conjunction with Abraham. And you know the story how Abraham has met all God's requirements.

He's left his father's house, his relatives, his nation. And then God gives him a son, Isaac. And as that son began to grow the bond between father and son were inseparable.

And I think God looked at that relationship and he says I know Abraham loves me more than his mother and father because he left them. I know he loves me more than his relatives he was able to leave them. I know he loves me more than his nation he was willing to forsake that to.

But I'm not sure if his love for me surpasses the love of his boy. And so God tests him. And he says Abraham I want you to take your son, your only son whom thou lovest and put him on the altar.

And the Bible says Abraham rose early the next morning. And you know the story he went on a three day journey. He took his servants along and they reached the area Mount Moriah and he says to his men stop.

You stay here. I and the lad will go yonder and we will worship. Not I will, we will worship.

There's the extravagant love and the extreme submission. And he binds that young man places him on the altar and he's ready to plunge that knife into his throat or his chest. And God says stop.

Now I know. Now I know that you love me, you respect me, you fear me. Because you've not withheld your son.

Your only son. And God does not add whom thou lovest. Because Abraham proved his love for God was greater than the love of God.

There's no choir. No musical instruments. Just radical obedience.

Extreme submission. That's the very first mention of worship in the Bible. And then I think possibly the next greatest act was in the life of David.

Now David was extravagant in his worship. When he brought the Ark of God back. Remember he was doing cartwheels down Main Street.

His wife was highly embarrassed. David invented all sorts of instruments to praise and magnify God. Much of our worship today we trace it back to Davidic revelation of worship.

But it's easy to worship God when you've brought back the presence of God. But David's greatest act of worship I think was after one of his greatest sins. His sin with Bathsheba.

Nine months later she gives birth to a little boy. And like any parents I'm sure they were anticipating the arrival of this child. The baby is born and then all of a sudden that baby is stricken with a sickness.

And David goes into his room and it implies that he was praying and interceding. And at the end of seven days he's notified the baby's dead. And we find David going and washing himself.

He puts on new clothes. He goes right back into the presence of God. And the Bible says he worshipped.

Or he could have been angry. He could have argued his case before God. God, I've confessed my sin.

Psalm 51, against thee and thee only have I sinned. Purge me with hyssop, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. And God, you were the one that said we shall no longer use this proverb in Israel.

That the children's teeth are set on edge because of the father eating sour grapes. In other words, every man is responsible for his own sin, not the child. I'm the sinner.

I've asked you for a cleansing. And yet you have taken the life of an innocent child. He could have mounted his case against God.

And yet he bows in submission. God, that child will never come back to me. But one day I'll see him again.

Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? And he bows in absolute submission to God's lordship. And then to me, the greatest act of worship in the Bible is the story of Job. We're introduced to Job in the first chapter.

He's an honest, upright, God-fearing man. He's got incredible integrity. And the devil comes to announce to God what he's been up to.

And after talking for a while, God brings up the story of Job. He says, by the way, devil, see that man way back there on the back row? The devil says, yeah? You recognize him? No. But he sure looks happy.

God has a big smile on his face. Look again. You sure you don't recognize him? Well, I thought I knew everybody.

I go around looking who I may devour, but I don't know how I escaped him, but he sure looks happy. Big smile on God's face again. That's Job.

No. You mean Job? Job, the alcoholic? The drug dealer? The child molester? That Job? No. He's too happy.

God says, yeah, that Job. You said, what Bible are you reading, Adam? The same one you have? You see, Job was not born righteous. Because there's none righteous, not that one.

Somewhere, Job was a product of the grace of God. We don't know when, but we can guarantee he was. Nobody is born with that sort of perfection for all of sin and comes short of the glory of God.

The Bible says we are his workmanship. And God delights in his workmanship. And when the devil says, boy, he sure looks happy, God says, yeah.

That's my workmanship. I took him from your gutter because I lift the beggar from the dunghill. And I make him a prince with God.

And the devil says, you know what? He's still the same lousy, rotten sinner. When I corrupt, I absolutely corrupt. And God says, devil, when I cleanse, I absolutely cleanse.

The devil says, you made him a multimillionaire. And because you made him a multimillionaire, he's playing up to you. But you remove that hedge and I'll show you that he's the same filthy sinner that he always was.

And God says, are you doubting my grace? Okay, I'll remove the hedge. Now, there's only one thing you can't do. You can't take his life.

Apart from that, you can have full sway over him. And blow number one. Ten children destroyed.

Seven sons and three daughters. How's that for a blow? And imagine, according to Job chapter one, they were married. Job, you recall, would rise up early in the morning and offer sacrifices lest his sons had sinned.

The winds and the fires came and destroyed their homes. And there you have all these caskets, coffins. Children grieving over the loss of a mummy.

Husbands grieving over the loss of a wife. Wives grieving over the loss of a husband. Other children grieving over the loss of a daddy.

Can you imagine ten from one family? And then Job wakes up and he's covered in boils from the top of his head to the sole of his feet. And his whole body is just tormented. And he's sitting on an ash heap.

Why does a multimillionaire sit on an ash heap? I would say to you that that's the remains of his mansion. Possibly a multimillion dollar mansion for a multimillionaire. And the devil has destroyed it completely.

And as he's looking at those ashes he sees a piece of pottery. And he thinks, thank God, that's my wife's favorite little piece. It survived the fire but when he picks it up it's just a broken shirt.

And he takes that piece of pottery and he begins to try and get some relief. And his wife sees the torment. And she says, curse God and you'll die.

Your pain will be over. You'll be out of your suffering. Just curse God.

And the Bible says before that Job worshiped. No choir. No musical instruments.

Just a man on his face before God. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? That's worship. Notice something as we close.

Verse 10 again. The 24 elders that will fall down before him that sits on the throne and will worship him. Worship is given to whatever is on the throne.

Seven or eight or nine times in this one chapter you can underline it the word throne. Throne. Throne.

Throne. And they are worshipping the one who sits on the throne. If Jesus Christ is not on the throne of your life whatever is on the throne of your life is the object of your worship.

You see God said to Abraham Abraham because you didn't withhold the thing that you withhold from God. It may be your reputation it may be your boyfriend your girlfriend your finances something else. The thing that you withhold from God is the object of your worship.

This chapter begins with the throne it ends with the throne. See to it you make it exactly according to the pattern. If God is going to make his abode in you he has a deep deep desire but he has also got demands.

Make it according to the pattern. Let's close in prayer. Father you alone are worthy worthy to sit on the throne the great king of all kings lord of all lords master of all masters Father we recognize your headship your lordship again your kingship and we would bow before you tonight.

Father I pray for those that cannot worship you because there is something else that has taken your place some other affection some other desire you are no longer the first love of their life somehow they have left their first love other things have come and crowded in and now they wonder why I don't feel the presence of God because you have been grieved and wounded and hurt because we've got another God beside the living God Father forgive us I'm going to ask you to take a moment the bible says all things are naked before the eyes of him with whom we have to do in other words God knows you inside out and he wants you to be honest is there some other thing that has replaced your affection for Jesus Christ something that thrills you more something that excites you more the thing that you gravitate to then that's idolatry and we'll never have revival we'll never really sense the moving of the spirit of God until we build it according to the pattern so I'm going to give you a moment maybe you'd like to kneel but let's take a moment just to come into the presence of God maybe you're one of those that you find it very hard to give thanks there's more murmuring and complaining that comes out of your mouth than thanksgiving maybe some of you are dabbling in areas of sin and God knows that you know it or maybe you've never really surrendered the throne and tonight you say Jesus be the Lord of all the kingdoms of my heart reign in me Lord whatever is required of you tonight don't put it off in the next few moments we're going to let God be God let the Holy Spirit bring that conviction not condemnation conviction and once we respond there comes the joy the sense of the peace of God the Bible says be still be still and know that I am God you're sensing the presence of God tonight just let him have his way

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