

Worship, Our Highest Calling

by David Ravenhill

The highest calling of man is to be a worshipper, to give ourselves fully to God and bring pleasure to Him.

Duration: 1:12:49

Scripture: Genesis 22:5, 1 Chronicles 16:29, Psalm 29:2, Psalm 99:5, Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 4:10, John 4:24, Romans 12:1, Colossians 3:23, Hebrews 13:15

Topics: "Worship", "Surrender to God"

Description

David Ravenhill emphasizes the profound calling of worship, which he believes surpasses all other roles in the church. He explores seven facets of worship, including its priority, person, provision, picture, price, posture, and power, stressing that true worship is an unreserved giving of oneself to God. Ravenhill argues that worship is not limited to music but is a lifestyle of surrender and devotion to God, reflecting a heart fully committed to Him. He highlights the importance of engaging the mind, emotions, and will in worship, and concludes that God seeks true worshippers who will worship Him in spirit and truth.

Transcript

I want to share with you this morning on one of the most neglected truths in the Word of God. And in our neglect of that truth, I believe we have despised one of the highest callings that God has given to man. A calling that surpasses the calling of an apostle, or a prophet, or evangelist, or a pastor, or a teacher.

The call to be a worshipper. I don't profess to have a full understanding of all that is involved in this particular topic. I have wrestled with it now for a number of weeks.

I've given myself to prayer. I've asked God many, many times, Lord, I don't want this simply to be a sermon. I want it to be the outflow of a life.

I want to be a worshipper. And I'm convinced that this is a calling that is not restricted to a few, but ultimately is chosen by the few. Let me say that again.

I believe it is a calling that is not restricted to a few, but ultimately is only called, or only a few choose that calling. I want to look at seven aspects of worship this morning, or if you like, seven components, or seven facets of worship. First of all, I want to look at the priority of worship.

The second thing, the person of worship. Number three, the provision of worship. Number four, the picture of worship.

And I want to deal primarily with number four, the picture of worship. Number five, the price of worship. Number six, the posture of worship.

And number seven, the power of worship. Those of you who are familiar with Mike Bickle will know that we are not allowed to ever end with six points. He gets agitated, he will make a point, even if there isn't a point, of having seven.

And so when I was preparing this, I thought I cannot afford to end this with six. I better make sure there's another one in there, otherwise I might get myself dismissed or something. Mike called me this morning about eight o'clock.

I didn't take the phone call. I mean, I didn't take it because I knew it was Mike. I was doing something else.

Somebody else took it. You'll get me in trouble. Peter Dippel answered the phone and he told me afterwards, he said, Mike called a few minutes ago and wants you to know that he is behind you, that he's backing you all this morning.

So I want you to know that this has got the sanction and the approval. Everything that I say this morning has already been approved by faith by Mike Bickle. So if you have any problems, if you call into question my theology, you then go see Mike, will you? All right.

Let me look at the problem. First of all, once I quote something from A. W. Tozer. A. W. Tozer says this in one of his writings, God wants worshippers before workers.

Indeed, the only acceptable workers are those who have learned the art of worship. Let me say that again. God wants worshippers before workers.

Indeed, the only acceptable workers are those who have learned the art of worship. He goes on in one of his other writings to say this, we are called to an everlasting preoccupation with God. Man was made to worship God.

God gave man a harp and said, here above all the creatures that I've made and created, I've given you the largest harp. You can worship me in a manner that no other creature can. And when he sinned, man took that instrument and threw it down in the mud.

Man took that instrument and he threw it down in the mud. Notice again, we are called to an everlasting preoccupation with God. God gave to us a harp and he says here above all the creatures that I've made, I've given you the privilege of worshipping me.

And man in his sin and his rebellion took that instrument, threw it down in the mud, turned and spurned the face of God. Now let me say this, don't be led astray by the word harp. Because I am convinced that worship in the word of God has nothing to do with music.

At least not solely. I'll explain that as I go through. One of the things that has bugged me for so many years, partly because I don't have any musical ability.

I've told people for many, many years, somebody let me sing once and said, you're a prison singer. I said, what's a prison singer? They said, somebody behind a few bars and missing the key. But worship and music are not necessarily synonymous.

I think that is important. I get bugged every time I open some Christian magazine and I see worship conferences around the nation and a list of musical items and songwriters and song directors and so on and so forth speaking. Because somehow they equate music with worship.

Now I'm not saying that music can't be a part of worship. It can, thank God for it. But the greatest acts of worship anywhere in the word of God are devoid of one single musical note.

And I want to look at this because I believe that God is saying something. In this day and age in which you and I live, God is looking for worshipers. Worship is far more encompassing than music alone.

Worship involves the unreserved giving of ourselves in total abandonment to the will and the purpose of God to bring pleasure to the heart of God. Jesus made the statement, I do only do the things that please the Father. That to me is worship.

Words of the song, All to Jesus I surrender, All to him I freely give, I will ever love and serve him in his presence daily live. That's worship. All to Jesus I surrender.

It's not listening to a particular song, memorizing it, getting a particular ditty in your head and singing it off. That is not worship. Worship is the unreserved giving.

Without any reservation, without any hesitation of giving everything to God, placing it on the altar and saying, God, my life is to bring pleasure to you in everything I am, everything I do. I read a book recently and it says the best time to worship God is in the morning. And something rolls up within me.

And I said, no, a thousand times no. Worship cannot be limited to a time or a place. Worship isn't something that you get over with in the early morning hours.

Oh, thank God for those that rise early. Here at Metro Vineyard, we rise early. We have prayer meetings every single morning of the week.

But worship is not confined to a particular time or a particular place. It's the outflow of a life. It's an outflow of a life that longs to bring pleasure to God, that is preoccupied with God himself.

Time after time we're exhorted. In the word of God, to worship God. In fact, it's not an option.

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God. Jesus said to the devil there who said, listen, I'll give you all the kingdoms of the earth if you'll only simply fall down and worship me. And Jesus says, no, it is written, thou shalt.

Not an optional thing. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God. The psalmist beseeches us time after time after time in the Psalms.

Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our God, our maker. Many, many times in the word of God, we're exhorted to this place of worship.

God longs for worship. Jesus speaking to the woman at the well, there in John chapter 4, made the statement, the hour is coming, and now ends when those that worship the Father will worship him in spirit and in truth. For such people the Father longs for.

He seeks after. To the best of my knowledge, there's only two times in the word of God where it says that God is seeking for something. He came to seek and to save that which was lost.

But he also is seeking for something else. He's seeking worship. The very fact that he says he seeks it seems to imply to me that it's a rare commodity in the house of God, amongst the people of God.

It's something that the Father looks for. He pursues. He desires it.

And he says, I seek after that thing. I covet that thing more than anything else. Psalm 29 and verse 2, ascribe to the Lord the glory.

Jew his name. Worship the Lord in holy arraign. Psalm 99 and verse 5, exalt the Lord our God.

Worship at his footstool. Paul expresses it in a different way, right into the Colossians, where he says that in all things he might have preeminence. In all things.

Oh, not just on a Sunday morning for an hour before the message. Not for a Sunday evening for an hour and a half before the evening service begins. But in all things he might have preeminence.

That is worship. You see, it's not enough for Jesus Christ to be present. It's not enough for Jesus Christ to be prominent.

Paul says he has to be preeminent. He has to surpass every other thing. Every other desire.

Every other longing. Again, it's that preoccupation with God himself. Again, the priority of worship.

I trust this morning that God will find worshippers. That something will be awakened in your heart this morning. Again, it's a great longing on the heart of God.

It's the ultimate calling. After all the evangelism is done. After all the churches are built.

After all we've done on this earthly pilgrimage is through. A hundred million years from now, you and I will be in the presence of God. Falling prostrate before him.

In worship and adoration. When all the prophets have done prophesying. And all the apostles have done.

And all the evangelists and pastors and teachers. When all of that is through. And all the counseling is through.

Again, the one eternal calling of man. Preoccupation with God. Again, as Michael said.

That holy passion for the Son of God. The next thing is the person of worship. The person of worship.

You see, worship has to have a focus. Let me say that again. Worship has to have a focus.

Jesus said to the woman at the well. Or she responded to him. You say in Jerusalem is the place to worship.

Our fathers told us it's this mountain that we're supposed to worship. And Jesus said again. Worship is not a place.

Worship is a person. The hour is coming and now is. When they that worship the Father.

I'm concerned sometimes about what we call worship. In fact, what we call praise. Let me tread on a few toes this morning.

It's in my blood. I read a statement some years ago that has stood with me. Or stuck with me.

The statement was this. I become superstitious whenever the means of worship eclipses the object of worship. Let me say that again.

I become superstitious whenever the means of worship eclipses the object of worship. Now let me give you a little bit of background. Because some of you may be turning me off right now.

I am not opposed to celebration. I've lived in it for the last 25 years. I was in possibly the most free church in all of New Zealand for 15 years.

I have personally led half the congregation out of the door on a Sunday morning. And round a city block downtown. So I'm not opposed to dancing.

I'm not opposed to anything that we talk about as far as celebration. But so often our celebration, again, eclipses the object. We need to be so careful, so sensitive.

Again, I've done so much research into the realm of pageantry. And all our flags and our banners. But so often they distract from the person of Jesus Christ.

And people begin to look at men's handiwork. And all the elaborate embroidery. And all of this and all of that.

And Paul says in Acts chapter 17. We think that somehow the art of man, or God rather, can be reduced down to the art of man. And it becomes some sort of a divine fetish.

I tell you we need to be careful. When worship really comes into the house of God. I believe we're going to fall prostrate before him.

I believe we're going to be lost in the very beauty and majesty of the person of Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, I'm not opposed to times of celebration. I love it.

But we need to be so sensitive to the various moods of the Spirit of God. I'm convinced that in Pentecost we've got one mood, basically. Full steam ahead.

And sometimes we need to take time to bask in his presence. Oh, I've been thankful for the times of stillness. Unfortunately, there's always somebody that feels that that's their time to let loose.

Sometimes we feel awkward, don't we? When somehow there's that holy hush that falls on a congregation. And we don't really know what to do with it. Instead of turning our focus to the Lord.

And becoming absorbed in the person and the beauty of his majesty. Somehow we've got to do something. It's an awkward sort of a season.

It's an awkward time. But listen, let's embrace the various moods of the Spirit. There's times simply to be quiet.

There's times to be prostrate before him. There's times just to kneel reverently in the presence of God. You see, worship has to have a focus.

The woman said it's in this place, and you say it's in that place. And Jesus says, it isn't in any of those places. The Father is the one that we worship.

The Father is the one that we worship. We're not worshipping a creed. We're not worshipping a doctrine.

We're certainly not worshipping a movement. We're not worshipping some past revival or some future revival. We're not hoping, at least I don't care if there's another wave or there is another wave.

I think what Bob Mumford said the other night, I'm looking for a visitation of the presence of God. That's the longing. That's the longing of this team.

It's to know him. Oh, as David says, that I may know him. One thing that I desire the Lord, that will I seek after.

That's the thing I'm going to pursue. Worship. The privilege of worshipping Almighty God.

Of focusing our attention, of being absorbed in the beauty of his majesty. Remember my father many years ago saying that he had the privilege of spending some time with A. W. Tozer. He went into his office one afternoon about one o'clock or two o'clock in the afternoon.

And Tozer was just stirring, getting up from a little mat that my dad said was about three feet by two feet, something like that. Just a cheap sort of a K-Mart mat that he had on the floor. And he said to my father, when my father came into his office, he said, you know, I've got one of the busiest days.

He said, I came in here, I think it was eight o'clock this morning. And he says, I decided to have some time alone with God in prayer. And he said, when you knocked at the door, he said, I just got up and all I've done is worship.

I haven't even started to pray yet. Eight o'clock in the morning till one o'clock in the afternoon, absorbed in his majesty. Transfixed as he gazed upon the beauty of his holiness.

Do we know anything about worship? I don't. God's wanting to teach us. Again, it's a person.

Worship has to have a focus. Oh, I'm longing for that day when we'll stand with all the redeemed of all the ages in an arena a hundred thousand times bigger than this, with men and women from every creed and background. Background.

China with its one billion. Down to Pican Island with something like 50 people. Men from the jungles of Africa and Indonesia and the Philippines and New Guinea.

All the great men of the earth. All the rich men of the earth. Politicians and kings.

Everybody redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. And stand with that vast array, that vast crowd of people. And sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

Where there we gaze again upon his majesty. Join with all the seraphims. Join with all the cherubims.

Bowing down incessantly and saying holy, holy, holy. To him that sits on the throne be glory and honor and power and majesty. The one that this morning again sits above the vault of the earth, the circle of the earth.

He reduces rulers to nothing. The one that neither slumbers nor sleeps. The alpha, the omega.

The ruler of the kings of the earth. The one that has been raised from the dead. Declared to be the son of God by the power of the resurrection.

Oh, what a glorious day. What a wonderful time. To gaze at his majesty.

To bow again. I remember, I think it was Jack Hayford many, many years ago. That had an understanding of why those seraphim or those cherubim keep bowing down.

Bowing down day after day, hour after hour. And he said because every time they lift their head. They see a new facet of the nature and the character of God.

And it causes them to stoop again. And then they come up again. They see God from another facet.

And they bow again. Oh, I believe all eternity will never exhaust his beauty. When that veil is taken away.

We no longer see through a glass darkly. But face to face. What a wonderful time.

The one who made the heavens and the earth. The one who created man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And man became a living soul.

Oh, this is a God that we worship this morning. The God that never slumbers or sleeps. The one that sits on the throne this morning.

His throne is established in the heavens. And his sovereignty rules over all. Oh, what tremendous security that brings to us this morning.

I don't care what goes on on this earth. I know that my times are in his hands. And all the redeemed of all the ages.

Are going to gather. There's going to be one great celebration. My voice is going to be tuned up by then.

Thank God. And you'll hear me soaring above everybody else. As I begin to express all that's been in me for so many years.

And my wife says, hey, you're off key. And she'll no longer be able to say that. Oh, what a glorious day.

But you see, there is an object for our worship. Paul, there on Mars Hill. He says, oh, I went through your city.

He says, I saw the various altars. And there you had a God. Oh, an altar to the unknown God.

What therefore you worship in ignorance. Oh, I think there's a lot of ignorant worship, isn't there? Jesus again said to the woman at the well. He said, you worship, you don't know whom you worship.

He says, we know who we worship. We worship the Father in spirit and in truth. All you know is that there is a place.

Again, as Paul Cain was explaining last night. It was ritual. It wasn't reality.

Somehow she was bound to a particular grotto somewhere. Up in the hills. As opposed to some other place.

And Jesus said, listen, it's not a place. It's a person. Worshiping the Father.

The Father seeks those that will worship Him. Tell you, there's an object for our worship. You see, it's possible to worship worship.

We need to be careful of that. Oh, we get so carried away that really there's been absolutely no focus on the Lord. It's like Martha that gets cumbered about with much serving.

We can get cumbered about with all sorts of activities. That we go under the guise of worship. And when it's all said and done, we haven't really sat at His feet and given Him anything.

And He longs for it. He's crying out for it this morning. He's seeking it out even in this building this morning.

The Father seeks those that will worship Him. The third thing is the provision of worship. The provision of worship.

You see, true worship is giving back to God that which is from God. You and I need to come to an understanding that of ourselves and by ourselves, we have absolutely nothing to give to God. As Paul says, in my flesh dwells no good thing.

That we are spiritually bankrupt apart from the grace and the mercy of God. It's no wonder the writer was able to say, amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, now I'm found.

Was blind, but now I see. He recognized, God, I have nothing to give you. It's purely your grace and your mercy that has brought me to this place.

The provision of worship. We don't have it by ourselves. It's giving back to God that which He has given to us.

It's expressing again the love that He expressed to us. Paul puts it so well. Romans 11 and verse 36.

I've shared on this before. One of my pet peeves in the Word of God are chapter divisions. The only thing that isn't inspired, apart from the footnotes, if you've got a skull fill.

But anyway, it says from Him, through Him, to Him, of all things. And then Paul goes right on. Therefore, and notice, from Him, through Him, to Him, of all things.

Therefore, I beseech you, brethren, that you give back to Him that which is from Him and through Him. It belongs to Him. I told people, I'll say it again, that I believe that one single verse is a great test.

The great equalizer of every new doctrine that comes to the church of Jesus Christ. Is it from Him? Is it through Him? And then the ultimate test, is it to Him? Prosperity. Is it from Him? Yes.

Riches and honor come from you, O Lord. Is it through Him? Yes. Is it to Him? No.

It terminates in man. Therefore, throw it out. Unless you can put it on the other side of a triangle, if you like.

Lord, you've blessed me, you've increased me, you've prospered me. Therefore, I give it all back to you. Paul is saying, listen, your life came from Him.

And your life exists through Him. In Him, we live, we move, we have our being. Therefore, it belongs to Him.

And you need to give back to Him again that which is His. That which is His through right of creation. That which is His through right of redemption.

The provision again of worship. It's recognizing again that I have nothing to give Him, apart from what I've received. That I'm devoid of anything that can satisfy the heart of God, apart from what He's given to me.

We sing a song sometimes, it's been a while since we've sung it. Says this, only by grace can we enter. Only by grace can we stand.

Not by our human endeavor, but by the blood of the Lamb. It's only by grace that we enter. It's only by grace that we stand.

It's not by our human endeavor. It's not by our abilities. It's not by our intellectual attainments.

It's not by all of our achievements. It's not by all of our talents. All of that, the Bible says, is just self-righteousness.

It's filthy rags. But we give back to Him again that which we derive from Him. Paul, writing to the Hebrews, says that Jesus Christ suffered outside of camp.

He goes on in the next verse to say, Therefore through Him, let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God. Notice, therefore through Him. That's the provision of worship.

It's a recognition again that Jesus Christ has done everything for us. But apart from Him, we can do absolutely nothing. Oh, that brings us all down to sort of level ground, doesn't it? There's nothing that we can boast about or brag about.

We've got to acknowledge it's the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me that I give all the glory to and all the credit to. One of the songwriters said, My Jesus, I love Thee. I know Thou art mine.

For Thee all the pleasures of sin I resign. And then in the second stanza of that hymn, he says, I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me. Purchased my pardon on Calvary Street.

I love Thee for wearing the crown on Thy brow. If ever I loved Thee, and my Jesus does now. But notice, I love Thee because.

The provision of worship. I love You because You first loved me, Lord. You made it possible.

You rent that veil You entered in. You made a place for me in the Father's house. That place that was off limits apart from the high priest.

In the Father's house are many mansions. Oh, I understand that at least as the tabernacle of the outer court. The holy place, the holy of holies.

And he says, I'm going to prepare a way for you. That where I am, there you may be also. Oh, that's not speaking about something in the future.

That's not speaking about the fact that he's got his cap and his belt on and he's up there busy constructing some sort of a building project to house the saints. He's already provided a place that where I am now. Not in the future.

Where I am now, you may be also. Why? Because there is a new and a living way. I go to prepare a way.

The veil has been rent. We have access into the throne room. He's raised us up, seated us with Him in heavenly places.

And it's all because of the provision of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. The third thing is the picture of worship. And I want to spend a little bit of time on this this morning.

Genesis chapter 22. We have that very beautiful story of Abraham. And I want to look at worship through the life of this great man of God.

I am a firm believer in what we call the law of first mention. Many of the old saints that I've read refer to the fact that when something is mentioned in the scriptures for the first time, that it gives us an insight that carries through the rest of the Word of God. It gives us understanding.

And this is the first time in the Word of God that worship is ever mentioned. It's mentioned in association with Abraham. The very first mention of worship.

The Bible says of Abraham, Abraham is the father of all things that believe. Not just simply the nation of Israel. But he's the father of all things in a spiritual Israel, if you like.

The father of all things that believe. And as the father of all things that believe, he is a divine prototype. He is a divine pattern, if you like.

You study the life and the dealings of Abraham. And somehow you can understand what you're going through yourself. I've so often gone back to story after story after story.

And the life of this great man received tremendous insight. Abraham, the father of all that believe. Oh, I'm convinced that when the book of Malachi, that last chapter, that verse that I think is so often abused.

Where it says that the spirit of Elijah in the last days will turn the hearts of the children back to the fathers. I don't think it's somehow God covering parental neglect. I don't think it's somehow restoration of the family in that sense.

Oh, I believe God in His grace will bring that about. But I believe He's talking about the spirit of God that's going to be poured out in the last days. That's going to turn the hearts of a wayward generation of believers that have settled down into indifference and apathy.

That have allowed compromise to come in. He's going to turn our hearts back to the heart of the fathers. Men like Abraham, men like David, men like Moses.

Men whose hearts burned with passion for the Son of God. You study the life of Elijah there on Mount Carmel. As he challenged the nation of God's people.

Who were given over to bear worship. Who were bound down to idolatry. Who had lost sight of God.

And he makes a prayer there. And he turns to it. If you don't believe me, you can turn to it yourself.

I'm reading from the New American. 1 Kings chapter 18. Notice what he says here as he makes this prayer.

He says, answer me, O Lord. Verse 37. Answer me that this people may know that thou art the Lord our God.

And that thou hast turned our hearts back again. You see, it was a generation. This wasn't some family dispute.

This wasn't some father separated from a son. This wasn't God covering up for some lack of parental authority or discipline. This was a prophet of God operating under the spirit of God.

Turning back a generation whose hearts had gone after the things of the world. Who were mesmerized by burial. Settled into compromise.

Where hearts full of idolatry. And I believe the spirit of God in the last days. While he may restore families.

He's going to bring a generation back. The ancient boundaries are once again going to be in place. Holiness once again is going to prevail in the house of God.

Separation is going to come back into the church of Jesus Christ. And it's going to take the spirit of God to do that. All we've tried and all we've produced is our long dresses and long hair and so on and so forth.

I tell you it's going to be a work of the spirit of God. But we're going to have a heart of passion for the son of God. And it's the spirit of Elijah.

It's going to be poured out and turned back a generation. And Elijah stands there on bail. He says, oh God answer me.

Turn the hearts of this people. See God is going to restore the hearts of the children to the fathers. Oh I checked in a number of commentaries.

I said God am I off on this? I mean this. You know I couldn't find one single commentary and I've got quite a few. That even supported the idea of God sort of joining together families that are separated.

Thank God he does and he will do it. It's the nature of God. It's for you and your house.

But every single commentary that I checked. Spoke again about turning a generation back to the fathers. Again back to the purity of the fathers.

Back to the passion of the fathers. See that's why the Bible says this man again is the father of all those that believe. There's something about this man.

He's a divine prototype. We need to study his life. We need to understand the dealings of God in the life of this man.

Who is our father? Spiritual father. And Abraham was a worshiper. Several weeks ago.

In fact maybe only two weeks ago. Jim Goyle and Jim will be sharing tomorrow morning. Jim Goyle came to one of our prayer meetings at Noll Avenue.

And he was sharing a dream. That he had had just not too long ago. And in this particular dream he was in a very.

If I remember correctly sort of a lavish banquet hall. It was a beautiful meal being served. A number of courses had already been served.

And then as he observed in this dream of this vision. There came the main course. And it was brought in by the Lord himself.

And it was a beautiful silver covered platter. And he set it down in the middle of the table. And then he lifted the lid of that platter.

Or the cover of that platter. And there in the heart of the dish. The main course was a heart.

And God spoke to him and says. I want to share my heart with you. I want to share my heart with you.

A heart of love. Heart of compassion. A heart of kindness.

A heart of mercy. But also a heart that longs for the lost. A heart that is broken over the condition of the church.

Can he share his heart with you this morning? Can he give you his heart? Can you be a recipient if you like. Of the things that move the heart of God? Can you have those same bowels of compassion that weep over Jerusalem? That weep over your city? That weep over the lost condition of men and women? But as Jim was sharing that. Something in my own spirit.

I immediately thought of this. Son, give me your heart. That God is not only wanting to share his heart with us.

He wants us to give him our heart. And I'd no sooner got through thinking that. Than Bob Hartley.

One of our team members stood up. He took the microphone in the prayer meeting. And he said, you know, when Jim was sharing that.

I thought of this. God is looking for us to give him back our heart. Now Abraham gave God his heart.

And the heart really is the essence of worship. Again, Proverbs 23. Son, give me your heart.

Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 5. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all your heart. With all of your might. 2nd Chronicles chapter 16 and verse 9. The eyes of the Lord be of two and full.

Throughout the whole earth. That he may strongly support those whose heart is completely his. What a beautiful verse.

That he may strongly support. In other prayer words. Put all these power.

All these energy. All these resources. Behind the heart that is completely his.

Not a half-hearted heart. Not a divided heart. But the heart that is completely his.

God says the eyes of the Lord are one, two and full. Seeking again those whose heart is completely mine. Hebrews says that when we draw nigh to God.

We are to come and draw near to him with a true heart. Now what does the heart mean? Let me take a little bit of time now for a moment. I want you to turn to Genesis.

You don't need to turn to it. Just look at a couple of verses. But it's Genesis chapter 6. You see the heart is one of those strange words.

We refer to it purely in a natural sense these days. Somebody had a heart attack. Or he's had a bypass.

And so on and so forth. It's not a sort of a common word. Certainly outside of the church it is.

Apart from its natural usage. And so we need to understand. When the Bible says give me your heart.

What is God requiring? What is he asking? What does it mean to be completely his? Again if we take this law. The law of first mention. The very first time that the heart is mentioned.

I want to look at the first three times. That the heart is mentioned in scriptures. Because those three times.

Give us an understanding of what the heart is. Genesis 6 and verse 5. This is man. Again just prior to God judging him with the flood.

Verse 5. The Lord saw the wickedness of man. That it was great on the earth. That every intent of the thought of his heart.

Was only evil continually. Notice that phrase. The thought of his heart.

You see the heart represents the mind. It represents the intellect. The thinking process.

Son give me your mind. Give me your intellect. Chapter 6 and verse 6. The second time.

And the Lord was sorry. That he had made man on the earth. And he was grieved in his heart.

Oh you see heart used now in a different way. Heart speaking of the emotions. Heart speaking of the affections of the emotional life.

God was grieved. He was sorry. He was sad.

He was disappointed. He was broken. He was grieved in his heart.

Then over into chapter 8. The third time. Verse 21. And the Lord smelled the soothing or soothing rather warmer.

The Lord said to himself. I will never again curse the ground on account of man. For the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth.

Notice the Lord said. It says in the King James. The Lord said in his heart.

I will never again. The Lord said in his heart. I will.

Again the heart of man. And the heart of God speaks to the will of God. And so the word heart here deals with the mind.

The will and the emotions. Those three aspects. Those three things have to be united together.

That's what the heart represents. Your intellect. Your affections.

Your desires. Your will. Jesus said.

This people honor me with their lips. The heart is not in it. You see it's possible to get caught up in some sort of rote.

Where we memorize things. We enter in. We wave our hands.

We get just caught up in what's going on around us. But our heart is not in it. Abraham's worship.

Son give me your heart. And here's the test of this great man of God. Again Genesis chapter 22.

I want to look now how they. These three areas come into play. If you like in the life of Abraham.

Verse 5. And Abraham said to the young man. Stay here with the donkey. And I am a lad will grow younger.

And we will worship. And return to you. Now what was involved in worship? I want to get down now to sort of bedrock.

I want to get down now to the very essence. If you like. This beautiful picture of what worship really is all about.

The very first time that worship is mentioned in the word of God. I am the lad will go younger and worship. He doesn't have a band of musicians.

They're not tuning their instruments. They're not getting ready to perform. Oh there's no music in this.

This is pure worship. I am a lad will go younger and worship. What's involved in worship? Worship is giving God your heart.

You see there are three areas that Abraham had to surrender. First of all he had to surrender his mind. His intellect.

Son give me your heart. It didn't make sense to the natural mind. The things of the spirit of God don't.

God you're asking me to give back that child of promise. That one that in him are yeah and amen. All the promises are yeah and amen.

You're asking me to offer him up this supernaturally born child. God you've got to be wrong. You've got to be kidding.

It's a miracle that he's even here. And now I'm that much older. It's impossible to ever replace him.

God are you sure you're feeling all right? Oh no Abraham first of all had to take his mind. And that mind had to become subservient. To the mind and the will and the purpose of God.

You see worship never questions. Let me say that again. Worship never questions.

Worship doesn't carry on a dialogue with God. It's not the clay saying to the potter why why why God. It doesn't make sense.

You see the problem. So much in the spiritual realm is that it violates our natural reasoning doesn't it? I was sharing with a group in my seminar that the very first prophetic word that I ever had over me was this. Your carnal mind is enmity against God.

I've never forgotten it. Out of all the prophecies I've had over the years. I've never forgotten that one prophecy.

All because I used to reason things out. The psalmist says I think it's Psalm 50. Where the spirit of God is saying through the through the psalmist.

You think that I am altogether like you are. And somehow we've taken God and we've reduced him down to our ability to intellectualize and analyze God. God doesn't conform to that.

That's where we get confused. This charismatic chaos. It doesn't make sense.

It's against all my training, my intellect, my intelligence. I've got to have proof. Whatever happened to faith? By faith we understand.

Walls were framed by the word of God. Oh it's beyond isn't it? Beyond our own grappling. Certainly beyond mine.

His intellect. The second thing he had to surrender was his affections. His emotions.

Oh you don't think he went through a time here of difficulty? Here take the son that you love. Not Ishmael. Take Isaac.

God says the son that you love. You see worship involves this one thing. Do I love him more than anything else? Does my love for God surpass the love of every earthly affection? Jesus said to Peter, love us all me more than these Peter.

Peter, love us all me more than these. Does my love, is it greater than the love of fishing? Peter was discouraged you recall. He says I ain't going fishing.

I don't know about you guys. Let me ask you what's your greatest love right now? The love of pleasure? The love of security? The love of popularity? Love us all me more than these? Abraham, do you love me more than Isaac? Are you willing to place him on the altar to prove it? Wonder what he's asking you to place on the altar this morning. See worship involves the unreserved giving of everything.

Oh it's not holding back some little thing. God you're not interested in this. It's that total abandonment to the will and the purpose of God.

He had to surrender his will. Again everything within this man sought to protect Isaac. You see it's not enough simply to give God our mind.

It's not enough just to give God our emotions. I think the great lack in the church of Jesus Christ today is somehow that God is wanting to engage our will. Or we can get emotional.

We can do our cartwheels from one end of this building to the other and walk outside and live like the devil. Why? Because it's emotion. We're caught up in the emotion.

Thank God for emotion. I tell you God's looking for the will. He's looking for that resolve that when we leave this place we say God I'm going to meet with you every single day.

I don't care if there's 3,000 people watching. I'm going to wave my flags in my bedroom if necessary. I'm a worshiper.

Now bow before your Lord and I'll surrender my will. My will to do my own thing. My own desires.

My own ambitions. My own goals. And Lord I'll place it at your feet.

And I say not my will but thine be done. And Abraham said God I'll give you that. Oh he didn't just have some sort of warm fuzzy feeling.

He didn't say well Lord and I've finally sort of rationalized this out. It does make sense. I've sort of intellectualized the thing.

I've been thinking about it. I think you're right. No there was a will involved.

I will arise and go. Prodigal son had to come to that place. Oh there was emotions.

He was hungry. He was feeling rotten. He was filthy.

Hadn't had a shower for months. Wallowing in all the pig swill. But he came to a place where he engaged the will.

I will arise and go to the Father. I think the will is missing in Christianity today. We're not prepared to get out of bed and pray.

Oh we know that we should do it. We can even feel that we should do it. But to actually do it is another thing.

You see worship involves these three things. I believe when the psalmist says. I find the verse here.

Where he says unite my heart to fear thy name. What is he doing? He's talking about bringing all things together. Lord I can intellectualize it.

I've settled that thing. You're right in what you're saying. But Lord my emotions are going another direction.

And my will is still not engaged. Lord unite my heart. Put these three elements together.

Bind them together Lord. Unite my heart to fear your name. And God is looking for a united heart.

An undivided heart. Where the will and the emotions and the mind of man come into conformity to the will and the purpose of God. We have as a foundation in the work here.

And some of you are familiar with what we call our four heart standards. One of the things I brag about when I get on the road is that we're being called a sort of a prophetic people. And people have got an idea that every other person is a prophet.

And you know that we as a team wake up every morning and some prophet calls us and says these are your instructions for the day. And we say yes sir. You know that's the way it's being portrayed at least around the nation.

But you know the thing that hasn't been said very much is that there is a foundation. Oh obviously there is the foundation. The Lord Jesus Christ.

But there is something that has united us. And we call it our four heart standards. They're this.

First of all night and day prayer. Night and day prayer. Secondly holiness of heart.

Purity of heart. Integrity of heart. Thirdly extravagance or sacrificial giving.

Extravagance or sacrificial giving. And number four unwavering faith. Unwavering faith.

Those are the things that have united us as a team. Those are the common denominators. Those are the things that we agree upon.

Those are the things that we've got to love for. And I want you to see in the life of Abraham the embodiment of those four heart standards. Because again this is part of worship.

Night and day prayer. What do I mean by night and day prayer? I'm talking about intimacy with God. I'm talking about fellowship with God.

I'm talking about passion as Mike would say. Passion for the Son of God. That's what we're talking about.

Not just simply some sort of ritual that we do. We're talking about fellowship with God himself. We're talking about giving him the priority in our lives.

Of meeting with him. Of communing with him. Of listening to his voice.

And see Abraham came to that place where God said to Abraham. Abraham. And Abraham responded.

Let me read it there. John chapter 22 and verse 1. It came about after these things. God tested Abraham and said to him.

Abraham. And he said here I am. Here is a man that was in communion with God.

Here is a man that was in fellowship with God. In fact there are three or four times. At least three times in the Word of God.

When Abraham is said to be the friend of God. Divine intimacy. Holy passion for the Son of God.

And God is able to speak. And Abraham answers. He responds immediately.

Lord here I am. Night and day prayer. A constant awareness of the presence of God.

Openness to the heart of God. Where he could hear when God spoke to him. He was in that place again of fellowship and intimacy.

God's wanting to bring us into that place. See that's what worship is all about. Holiness of heart.

Expressed by his radical obedience. Holiness of heart. Oh you see there's no taint here of self.

There's no taint here of deceit. The Bible says the backslider in heart is what? Filled with his own ways. The backslider in heart is filled with his own ways.

That is not true of the life of this man. Abraham take your son. Yes sir.

In fact it says Abraham rose early in the morning. He saddled his ass. He split the wood.

He gathered together his servants. And he was off on three days journey. I can think of a thousand one reasons why I would not have set the alarm that night.

What a morning to sleep in. Sacrifice your son. I've got three daughters.

Sacrifice your daughter. David are you willing to place her on the altar tomorrow? Maybe I wouldn't have slept that night. But I'd have thought for some sort of a reason.

I wouldn't have been able to find the saddle. I'd have given the donkey a kick when the Lord wasn't looking. And sent it scurrying across the pasture.

I'd have delayed that thing as long as possible. Or I'd have had to sharpen the axe two or three times. To make sure that I could split the wood.

Then I'd have got it stuck on the first blow. Not being able to budge it. Oh no not Abraham.

Abraham rises early in the morning. Radical obedience. There's no sense in which his heart is filled with his own ways.

He wasn't backslidden in heart. Here there is purity of heart. Holiness in heart.

Here is a man of integrity. Extravagant giving. Sacrificial giving.

Boy it's expressed isn't it so beautifully. Again apart from the father offering up the son. What better expression is there than Abraham? Sacrificial giving.

This wasn't financial. This was flesh and blood. I'm prepared Lord to place him on the altar.

The sacrifice involved. I can't even begin to fathom that. Neither can you.

To the lavishness again. Extravagant giving. Lord I'll give you a thousand sheep.

Or Solomon offered to the Lord a thousand burnt offerings. I could offer the Lord a thousand burnt offerings. But one burnt.

Extravagant giving. God's looking for that. You see this is the essence of worship.

This is the foundation of worship. Unite my heart Lord. Unwavering faith.

Hebrew says that we consider that God was able to raise him from the dead. God I don't understand it fully. But I'm not going to call you into question because I know that you're the sovereign God.

You hold the keys of death and hell. And I'll place him on the altar. And I believe that Lord even if you take his life you're able to raise him from the dead.

Unwavering faith. You see God is looking for that. This again is the essence of worship.

Lord I'll give you my heart. My heart that is made up of these various areas. Holiness of heart.

Extravagant lavish giving. Unwavering faith that never calls you into question. The Lord looks at you and says Lord you're able to do exceeding abundantly.

Is there anything too hard for me God says. And the response from the bottom of your heart is Lord there's nothing. Unwavering faith.

This is the picture of worship. Is it any wonder the Bible says the father seeketh those that will worship him. Father seeks those that worship him.

Let's look at the price of worship. And I realize that we've already covered this in one sense. These are just various facets.

I know that they overlap somewhat. But the price of worship. You see worship is costly.

And yet the worshiper doesn't think in terms of what it's costing him. The worshiper thinks of the object of worship not the cost of worship. How many of you young men have gone out.

And you've thought nothing of spending \$300, \$500, \$1,000, \$1,500, \$2,000 for a ring. An engagement ring. And you haven't sort of wrung your hands and agonized.

Why? Because you're thinking of the object of your devotion. How can I please her? I wish I could give her a \$10,000 ring but I don't have it. Worship is extravagant.

It doesn't think of the cost involved. It thinks of the object. How can I satisfy the object? The Lord Jesus Christ.

The woman in the master box wasn't thinking this is going to cost me a year's wages basically. \$200 a denier of those wages. You take off all the Sabbaths and all the feast days and basically you've got a year left.

And she's given the average of a one year's work. Or let's take the average in here maybe \$25,000. This wasn't some little perfume thing.

Worth a few cents. We're talking about something in the value of \$20,000 or \$30,000 or \$40,000. And she breaks it and pours it all over him.

And she's not sitting there crying because of the cost. She's looking at the game. She's looking at the object.

She's pouring out her affection. She's pouring out her adoration. She says, oh God that it could be greater than this.

If only I had two pounds or five pounds or ten pounds. I'd pour it over his feet. Word to the songwriter, love so amazing.

And it begins with, Lord have a realm of nature mine. That were an offering far too small. Love so amazing, so divine.

Divines my soul, my life, my all. Lord have a realm of nature mine. If I had the world, if it belonged to me, with all the riches of it.

It's still an offering far too small. Paul says it again in Romans 12 in verse 1. From him, through him, to him who opens. There he will beseech you.

That you give back to him that which is rightfully his. You present your body, a living sacrifice. Which is your reasonable service.

It's the very least that you can do. Are you prepared to do it? See there's a cost involved to worship. Oh, it's not just raising our hands, thank God for that.

It's not just doing the sort of the two-step. It involves again the mind, the will, the emotions. Unite my heart, Lord.

I give you everything. I present it on the altar of sacrifice. I'm not looking at the cost, Lord.

I'm looking at the gain. Not my will, but thine be done, Jesus said. Again, I do only do the things that please the Father.

The price of worship is summed up in one word. Amen. If you've ever read through the book of Revelation, you will know that many times, or at least several times, it talks about the worshiping.

And they are saying this. Amen. The Greek word comes from the Hebrew word.

And I took the liberty of looking this up. It means to build, to support, to firm, to be faithful, to trust in. And of course, as we so well know, so be it.

In other words, it's saying, Lord, I'm building with you. Lord, I'm supporting you. It's saying, yes, Lord, to the will of God.

So be it, Lord, to the will of God. Amen, Lord. It's an expression, I'm behind you.

Kittles says in his great work there of Bible work, he says, the word amen denotes concurrence, agreement, or commitment. I concur with you. I agree with you, Lord.

I'm supporting you. I'm behind you. I'm committed to you.

That's what the word amen means. And you notice it's an expression of worship. In fact, the best single word, I think, for worship in the word of God is this word, amen.

I mentioned that the greatest acts of worship in the word of God were never accompanied by music. The first one is Abraham. The second one is found in the book of Job.

When God stripped this great man of God of everything and took his entire family, maybe it's a greater act of worship than even Abraham. Abraham at least got his life back. He got the son that he loved back again.

All was a test. But Job didn't. Job had his family obliterated, his sons and his daughters, those that he prayed for daily, those that he arose early in the morning, offered sacrifices.

The word of God says, lest my sons and daughters should sin. And one day the tragic news comes. They've all been destroyed.

Your houses, your lands, everything has been destroyed. And then to make things worse, he comes down with this terrible sickness. And he falls on his face.

The Bible says he worshiped. So be it, Lord. So be it, Lord.

He's not angry. He's not questioning. He's not mad.

Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? He understands God. He understands God's nature. He understands God's character.

And he bows, prostrates and says, so be it, Lord. That's worship. The next illustration that I see in the word of God is the life of David.

And David, after he committed that sin with Bathsheba, she became pregnant. Nine months later, she gives birth to this beautiful child. For a period of time, seemingly a matter of days or weeks, maybe months, that child lives.

David becomes attached to this very beautiful child. And then suddenly God strikes the child with sickness. And David doesn't just sit there complacently.

David aggressively goes after God. And he begins to cry out. He fasts.

He prays. He seeks God earnestly. He goes into his room.

He closes the door. Puts up his sign. Don't disturb me.

Tells the servants of the household, stay away. I ain't going to be in there until I get an answer from God. And he's on his face before God, crying out, God be merciful.

God intervene in the situation. I'm sure he confessed his sin a thousand times. And after the days go by, there's a knock on the door.

And he's informed that the child is dead. And he doesn't go into some sort of a tantrum. He rises.

He washes. He changes his clothes. He anoints himself.

He prepares himself to meet God. And he goes into the house of God. He falls down on his face and he worships.

So be it, Lord. So be it, Lord. Worship never questions.

Worship obeys. Worship has that submissiveness to it. I submit to you.

I don't understand, Lord. Why? But I don't question why. Lord, I'm yours.

And if you take my child, I may not understand it on this side. But one day I will. Again, shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Three incredible acts of worship to me.

You see, not one single one of them has music. Because worship involves far more than that. Again, it's a united heart of surrender to God himself.

The posture of worship. Again, the very word worship means to fall prostrate. Means to fall down or to stoop or to crouch.

To bow, to kneel. Any of those things. Oh, it's not that God is just simply looking for a physical posture.

It expresses, again, the heart of the individual. I have traveled a little bit. One of the things I find that in different cultures, they know something, if you like, about this.

I was just in Korea a few weeks ago. I noticed the Korean people will bow when they greet you. They'll take a lower posture than you are.

I remember going down the stairs in the Bible school that I was teaching at. And young girls coming up and sort of crouching and bowing as they went past me. I've been down into the islands of Tonga.

And in Tonga, the custom is that when you're addressing somebody that is a senior, that is older than you, whether it's a mother, whether it's a father, you all get down below the shoulder level of the individual that you're addressing. Again, a sign of respect, a sign of submission. You see, there is a posture to worship.

Oh, worship doesn't come in swagging the shoulders, bragging. Worship is expression. The life of this great man, John the Baptist, when he says he must increase and I must decrease.

It's the acknowledgement that there's one greater than I. The psalmist places it, puts it so beautifully. Psalm 123, as the eyes of a maiden look towards a mistress, and the eyes of a servant look to his master, so our eyes look to thee, O Lord. You see, it's that servant heart.

It's the acknowledgement that he's greater than I am. In the words of Paul, the moment he got converted, Lord, what would you have me to do? He falls on his face and he acknowledges, Lord, what would you have me to do? It's the servant to the master. It's the posture again of bowing down, of humility, of brokenness, of esteeming God greater than yourself.

But you see, God isn't just interested in a physical posture. He's interested in the attitude of the heart. Again, it's the response of a servant.

Lord, how can I serve you? In the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, as just a young man, I must be about my father's business. I'm consumed with this one thing. I delight to do thy will, O Lord.

You see, that's all embodied in worship. It's, Lord, I'll serve you. I'll go where you want me to go, Lord.

Whatever you require of me, I don't question it. I'm here to serve. You're the master.

Lord, what would you have me to do? Yes, sir, I'll do it. That's worship. No, it's not doing it reluctantly.

It's my affections behind it. It's, Lord, I'll do it because I love you. One of the choruses we used to sing, I will serve thee because I love thee.

You have given life to me. It's not serving out of a sense of frustration or anger or resentment. It's not God twisting our arm.

It's the response of a lover, as Mike has been showing us so beautifully there in Song of Solomon. Oh, I want to do everything I can to please you. I'll follow you wherever you go.

Finally, the power of worship. Again, in Genesis chapter 22 and verse 16. It says, by myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this thing.

Because you have done this thing, this act of worship, you have not withheld your son, your only son. Indeed, I will greatly bless you. And I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore.

And your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. The power of worship releases the power of God, because you have done this thing. I'm able to entrust you with my blessing.

I'm able to entrust you with my authority. I'm able to entrust you with my power. All the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

If I can get men whose hearts are wholly given to me, the eyes of the Lord running to and through, through the face of the whole earth, to show himself strong, the power and the blessing of God, showing himself strong, on behalf of the heart whose heart is undivided, whose heart is completely his. Because you have done this thing, Abraham, I can entrust you with blessing. I can entrust you with the nations.

I can entrust you with my purpose. Can he entrust you this morning? Can he say, there's one thing I know about this person, there's one thing I know about that person, that I can entrust them with blessing and they won't hold on to it? I can entrust them with authority and they won't take it and abuse it. Because I've tested them to the utmost.

They've given me everything. The thing that they cherish the most, the thing that they love the most, they've given and they've placed it on the altar. And I'm not going to be outgiven.

Abraham, I'll give you all that I've got. I'll put all my blessings, all my power, all my authority behind you. Because you've done this thing, Abraham, because you've proved to me that you can receive my blessing, I'll give it to you.

And the gates of your enemies will not prevail against you. I will build my church, but I'll build it with worshippers. I'll build it with people who say, God, I'll give you everything.

My mind, my will, my emotions. Lord, unite my heart this morning. Lord, I want to be a worshipper.

Oh God, where do you want me to go? Lord, I long for your power. The reason the church of Jesus Christ doesn't have the power that we long for, we can't be trusted with it. Because we're holding on.

We've got reserves. We've got reservations. We're questioning things.

And God is saying, you're willing to place it all on the altar? All the power that is released through worship? He's looking for worshippers this morning. But it's going to cost you something. It's going to cost you everything.

It's going to cost you death to self, and death to your own ideas, and death to your own will. And it's got to be presented on an altar. And when you leave this place at the end of the week, it's got to have the will behind it.

Where you say, Lord, I'll put my will to the will of God. And the response to my heart is, Amen. I'm behind you.

I support you. I concur with you. I'm committed to you.

The Lord, when you say, I'm not willing that any should perish, I'm committed to that. When you say that you're broken over the heart of this generation, I'm committed to that. Amen.

When your heart breaks and weeps over the needs of men and women, I'm committed to that. Amen. Can you say that this morning? It's just behind prayer.

Father, we've already sung it at this conference. I will give you all my worship. Father, we'll have new understanding, a new revelation of what that means.

Father, let it be true. Let the words of our mouth, meditation of our heart be acceptable. Father, put an Amen in our spirit this morning.

Father, take out the questioning. Take out the reasoning. Father, as an act of our will this morning, we surrender.

We say again with the words of the songwriter, all to Jesus I surrender. All to him I freely give. I will ever love and serve him in his presence daily live.

Make it true, Lord, in Jesus name.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30165.mp3>

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