

True Worship

by Jim Cymbala

True worship is giving God the glory and honor He deserves, and it brings us closer to Him and helps us to understand who He is and what He has done.

Duration: 29:01

Scripture: Exodus 25:8, Psalm 100:2, John 4:23, Colossians 3:16

Topics: "Worship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher introduces the Vital Truth series, which focuses on essential truths that Christians must understand in order to grow and be fruitful. The preacher emphasizes the importance of worshipping God and not idolizing human beings. He highlights the worship that takes place in heaven and encourages the congregation to engage in worship. The sermon concludes with an invitation for those who have not been baptized to come forward and receive more information.

Transcript

At the beginning of the year, I began a series which has really changed my way of thinking now about preaching and about a lot of things. I've been discussing it with fellow pastors. It's called the Vital Truth Series.

Not so much going through a book of the Bible, nothing wrong with that, expository preaching, but this is more I seek the Lord every week. God, give me a vital truth that Christian believer must understand if they're going to grow and be productive, be fruitful, and have influence. Give me those truths and help me to explain them to the people that are all important.

Just like you can lose a hand and still live, you can't lose your heart. Those are vital organs. In the Bible, there's all these concentric circles and in the middle, in the very center, are vital truths.

You must know them. And the typical meaning of the laver in the tabernacle that Moses was taught to construct, that's in the Bible, that's the truth, but it's not a vital truth. You could grow and be strong in the Lord, not understand that.

Although, read the Bible, we're to be reading it and asking the Holy Spirit for teaching constantly. Oh, brothers and sisters, read your Bible every day. You know, at the end of my life, here's the truth about pastors.

There's pastors from Canada. It's true for them, true for me. How good a pastor was he? Here's all you have to ask.

Are the people in the word every day, his people? Do they love everybody? Are they walking in love? And especially for those who are other. Number three, are they people of prayer? The word, prayer, love. He was a good pastor.

No word, no prayer, no love. They just come to church on Sunday. Man was a failure.

He drew a crowd, but he didn't make for strong Christians. So that's why this is very vital for me and for my wife, Carol, and for all of us in leadership here. We want to see you in the word because you got to walk by faith and faith comes by and hearing by the word.

This is called here a worship service. That's what I want to talk about today. True worship.

What is it? What does it look like? What is its importance? In all this vital series, I've never talked about this. Yes, justification by faith through God's grace, the power of prayer, this, that, the other. We've touched on a lot of things, but worship.

The Bible tells us, Old and New Testament, that God's true people are always true worshipers. They worship God. And worship is used in the Bible in two ways.

First of all, all of our life should be a form of worship. Paul says that his preaching of the gospel was a form of worship. If you give a glass of water to someone in his name, that's an act of worship in a sense.

And the old Westminster Catechism statement, man was created to worship God, glorify God, and enjoy him forever. So we were made to be worshipers. We were made to go to heaven one day after receiving Christ as our Savior, which is full of worship as we'll see.

So this act, because a lot of us are more cerebral than we are spiritual, this worship subject is all important. I don't want to talk about life as an act of worship. In everything you do, whether you eat or drink, do all for the glory of God.

So everything should be an act of worship. And if you can't say something that's worshipful or edifying, then it's better to be quiet. But I want to talk specifically about what Colossians talks about, what we do when we gather here, what the choir led us to do, what we were doing before that as Carol and the team led.

We worship God. We lift up our voices to extol God. In both the Old and the New Testaments, we see great emphasis on this act of worship.

So let's look at this passage from Colossians, shall we? Colossians 3 verse 16. Let the message of Christ, the gospel, dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another. Beside admonishing one another with all wisdom, now through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, capital S, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

Let's look at that again. Let the message of Christ dwell among you. That's everybody, the choir, everybody.

Let the word constantly be in you so that as you mingle and talk, you can teach and admonish one another, share with one another with wisdom. Also use psalms and hymns and songs from the capital S, from the Holy Spirit, singing to God, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. That's a command, a directive from God.

He says, I want my people to sing to me. I know, but I don't have a good voice. Sing anyway.

How many are happy that God likes people who don't even have a good voice like me? Lift your hand if you're like that. The quality of the voice doesn't matter. He wants us to sing to him.

This is that direct form of worship of which we're familiar, and it's found in the Old and the New Testament that God is calling people to worship him. We'll understand this better in a moment why. In the Old Testament, all the Jewish males, all the Israelite males, three times a year were directed to go to Jerusalem for one of the feasts, at which time they offered sacrifices, and they joined in the worship that was going on at the temple.

Jesus did that himself as he was growing up. Three times a year you go and you worship in Jerusalem. Why Jerusalem? Because that's where the temple is, and that's where the center of worship was.

Now we live in the New Testament time, and worship takes on a different complexion, but no less, in fact, more of value to us. We are to worship God. We are to extol him.

We are to magnify him. You can't make him bigger than he is, but what worship is is when you, from your heart, lift him up and extol him. To God be the glory.

Great things he has done. God, you be praised. God, we thank you for everything you have given us.

You are Jehovah Jireh. God says, I want all my people to be worshiping me because God is the only one worthy of worship. Men are never to be worshipped, and that includes pastors and singers and great writers and this and that.

Sometimes in church the worship, the focus, can go off of God to the people who are ministering in his name. He gets lost in his own temple. God misses out on the worship that is only due him.

The Bible over and over again says, don't worship men. Do we appreciate men and women? Do we thank God for men and women? Right? We do. But worship? No.

The only one who ever gets worship. We're never to bow before any human being on this earth. We're never to lift our hands and say all praise, all honor to you.

Only God deserves that. Can we put our hands together and say amen? Never, because everybody's just made of flesh, and on a bad day they'll disappoint you real quick. Notice what happened in Revelation in heaven when John was lifted up there in Revelation.

I, John, this toward the end of the book, I'm the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, don't do that.

Would to God all Christians and and people who are celebrities would say that. Don't do that. Don't you extol me.

Don't you look up to me like that. Don't do that. I am a fellow servant, and this was an angel, with you and your fellow prophets and with all who keep the words of this scroll.

Worship God. Worship God. How many are not embarrassed to lift up your hands and worship God? Come on, lift up your hands.

Just close your eyes and give them worship right now. Just say hallelujah, or I praise you, or I love you. I'm not ashamed to do that in front of everyone, God.

In the midst of the great congregation, I will praise you, oh God. That's what our services should be now. Yes, teaching.

Yes, communication, taking an offering, which is an act of worship. But worship God. Worship God.

Extol God. That's what we're going to do for all eternity. We're going to worship God.

That's what makes heaven such a perfect bliss. What makes heaven heaven? They never stop worshipping. For those of you who are adverse to worship, or find it it's emotionalism, or it's a emotional technique to stir people up, that's just emotion.

That's just church culture. I'm talking now about true worship. Look at what happens in heaven.

Then I looked, and I heard the voices of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. And they encircled the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying, worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power, and wealth, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and praise.

Then I heard every creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all that is in them saying, to him who sits on the throne, and to the lamb, be praise, and honor, and glory, and power forever and ever. And the four living creatures said, amen. And the elders fell down and worshiped.

You know why heaven is perfect joy? Because there's perfect worship. You and I are never happier than we're worshipping God. Not a new car, not a new phone, not hit the number, and all the rest of that.

If we would understand this, our souls are made glad the most when we are worshipping God. Worshipping God. Put our hands together again.

Come on, let's do it. Worshipping God. Worshipping God.

That's all they do in heaven. For those of you who are not into worship, I don't like that kind. What are you going to do in heaven? What are you going to do in heaven? Everyone, when you see him, you worship.

People who don't want to worship have no revelation of who God really is. You have no appreciation for what Jesus has done if you're not a worshiper. Something's blinded your eyes.

Something has come between us and God when we don't want to worship him, and praise him, and extol him. The Bible tells us that this is non-stop in heaven. Non-stop.

It's a perfect place of bliss because they never stop worshipping God. Now, the Bible tells us, draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Say that with me.

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Say it one more time. Draw near.

So that shows us that not everybody is living at the same distance from God at all times. Otherwise, there'd never be an invitation to draw near. You can be a Christian, understand doctrine, and be living 100 miles from God.

Your heart is 100 miles from him. Draw near to God. And how do we draw near to God? One of the ways to draw near to God that I have found the best way in my life to draw near to God, yes, reading the Bible, yes, praying, but a lot of that prayer is centered on what I need, not who he is.

One of the great ways to draw near to God is to stop and worship God, and just start to praise him. The devil will block you. The devil will get you negative.

The devil will distract you. The devil will do a thousand things because he does not like when we praise God because God inhabits the praises of his people. He draws near to us when we worship him.

So the Bible says, draw near to God and praise him. Haven't you ever had that happen in your life? Haven't you ever been colder than an ice cube? Haven't you ever been drier than sand? Haven't you ever been just out of it, not walking with God the way you ought to, and then something by the spirit quickens you and you say, wait a minute, I'm going to praise him. I'm going to praise him today.

Oh, bless the Lord. Oh, my soul and all that is within me, bless his holy name. And you start to praise God.

You draw near to God. How do we draw near though? Remember this, you say to me, pastor, you could draw near to God. You don't know how I live.

I can't draw near to God. How would I come near to him? You know, the Old Testament, nobody could draw near to God. Nobody.

The people were kept in the outer courts of the temple. The priests only could go into the holy place, but nobody could go into the holy of holies where his presence was except the high priest. And that once a year, that was the inferior character of the old covenant.

It was just a shadow of things. God had something way better for us when he sent his son Jesus into the world. So now the Bible says, therefore, let us come boldly into his presence.

How? Through the blood of Jesus. We come boldly through the blood. I don't come and worship God today because I'm a pastor and I preach a lot of sermons.

The choir can't come because they've been faithful in their ministry. The deacons can't come because they're deacons. All of us can only come one way.

There's only one way to draw near to God and worship him. And that's through the blood of Jesus Christ. He shed his blood for me.

My sins are gone. Come on, let's say amen to that. My sins are gone.

And thus, no matter who we are, we come together. We walk together into his presence. We come together.

You can come and worship God today. Don't let the enemy be reminding you of your sins and your shortcomings. The Bible is saying, worship God, draw near to him through the blood of Jesus, not through your good works and your track record.

Then you'll never worship. You'll always be waiting. Do you get good enough? No, we can come right now.

We can draw near to God. And then the Bible says, when we do that, God will draw near to us. What does that mean? This happens many times when a good spirit of worship comes upon us.

As you worship God and you draw near to him, many wonderful things happen as you draw near to God. Then he draws near to us. What does that mean? If he's everywhere at all times, how could he draw near? He's there.

He's on the present. Drawing near means his manifest presence palpable to the spirit. His palpable manifest presence can be experienced by a church, by a person.

Haven't you ever had God draw near to you? Haven't you ever enjoyed seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord? And he draws near to us. He manifests his presence. One day in an all-night prayer meeting, I was walking out to use the restroom.

It was one or two in the morning, and we were waiting on God. And I was walking, and I got right to where equal to where my wife is sitting. And I stopped because God just descended on the 100 or 150 of us that were here still praying.

I stopped. We all froze. He came.

It was like heaven on earth. When you imitate the praise that's in heaven, many times God brings heaven to us. We have heaven on earth.

How many of you have had a little taste of heaven on earth? That's not emotionalism. You get that, right? That's what revival is. God manifesting his presence in a new way to help his people as they worship and seek him.

When he comes, your discouragement lifts. Your depression lifts. You have joy.

What happened? Who taught me to have this joy? No one did. God gave you that joy. As he drew near to you because you were drawing near to him, your weakness becomes strength.

Your depression becomes, and anger becomes peace. Why? Because where he comes, everything changes. Listen, Christianity is not essentially a teaching religion.

If you make it that, we lose the power of it. We're not Mormons. We're not Jehovah Witnesses.

All they can do is teach. We can have the presence of the Lord in our lives, in our church. How many want to draw near to God and have him draw near to you? Wave your hand at me.

Continually drawing near to God so he can draw near to us. But let me give you maybe the most significant verse. It's from John as I close.

Jesus was with the disciples and they went into a town and get something to eat. And he met a woman at the well. She was a Samaritan and she was shocked that he talked to her because Jewish men were not

in the habit of talking to these low life to them Samaritans, much less a woman in that day.

And they got to discussing things and Jesus touched on the matter of worship. And she said, we Samaritans say it's on this mountain that you should worship. This is the place you have to come because remember locality meant everything in the Old Testament for worship.

You couldn't sacrifice an animal anywhere you felt like. You had to go to Jerusalem. The Samaritans said you had to come to Mount Gerizim.

And she said that's what we Samaritans believe. But the Jews believe it's where the Temple Mount is, where the Mosque of Omar is now. That's where the true worship is.

And then Jesus said something that destroyed thousands of years of Old Testament history. He said no, the hour is coming and it is now when it doesn't matter what mountain you worship on. The mountain in Jerusalem doesn't mean two cents and neither does the mountain in Samaria because no more worship by locality.

No more worship by physical acts of grain and oil and sacrificing animals. Listen to what Jesus said in John 4 as I close. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit, capital S here in the NIV, and in truth for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

Oh brothers and sisters, I heard about seeking God. But God seeking something? How could that be? He's God. That I need a touch from God? That I need a new job? That I need healing for my child? I got that and we seek those things from God.

But now Jesus said the Father is seeking something. What is the Father right now seeking in this building? What is the Father seeking all over America and around the world today? He's seeking true worshipers. What's a true worshiper? Not by rote, not mechanically, not with a cold heart.

But the Father seeks those who don't care about location, don't care about status in life, but they come through the blood of Jesus and they worship in Spirit and in truth. Now the NIV has the capital S which means worship induced by the Holy Spirit, which is true. Most translations have it as a small s because it's the same word.

Translators have a difficult time. They have to decide should it be a capital S, the Holy Spirit, or should it be a small s, the human spirit. But what Jesus was teaching here at the very least was this, that all true worship that the Father wants is not from your brain, not from your mouth, not even from a lifted hand.

The worship that God wants is from our spirit. God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit. Your innermost being has to go up and have communion with God.

Carol and I have often said, I wonder in how many churches around America and including our own, do people actually open up and let their spirit touch God and commune with God and worship God from the deepest part in you? Not, Lord, I know that you're great and I want to tell you, you're really great, Lord, because I know that. But from our heart, I'm not talking about emotionalism, not talking about working up something with an organ. I'm talking about the Father seeks those who will open and be vulnerable and come before him and say, God, I worship you.

From the depth of my being, I tell you, I love you. I praise you. My hands are irrelevant.

Yes, use them. That's helpful. You can, yes, use your mouth, give them the fruit of your lips.

But the worship that God wants is from your innermost being. I wonder right now, be honest now, I wonder how many of us here have actually yet worshiped in this service. Carol and the band were doing their best.

The choir was doing their best. But I wonder how many of us have opened our heart and said, God, I adore you. You are a spirit.

The only way I can really commune with you is on with my human spirit, activated and helped by the Holy Spirit. But God, I worship you now from the bottom of my heart. And the true worshipers will worship in spirit and in truth.

What does that mean? Not just sincerely, but it means that we worship the true God as he's revealed in scripture, not something of our own manufacturing, not an American God, not an American Jesus, not a white conservative Jesus, not a black liberal Jesus, the true Jesus, the true God, not an Asian Jesus, not a Latino Jesus, the true Jesus, that we get filled with truth and we see who he is and we worship him from the bottom of my heart. And we say, God, we love you. We praise you.

We know who you are. We're learning more and more. We don't worship a construct of our mind.

We worship the true and the living God. And the father seeks that. How that humbles me.

God is seeking me to worship him, not to climb over a mountain, not to die on a cross for my own sins. He's taken care of that. He's saying, but in response to all I've done for you, worship me, worship God, praise God, make God first, because not only is he worthy of it, blessing comes upon us.

Deliverance comes upon us. Did you know in the Old Testament, one time when they were worshipping, God went out and defeated their enemies while they were worshipping. Did you know that can happen? The enemies that you have right now in your life, spiritual enemies, they can be defeated and you're not even thinking about them.

You're just worshipping God. We praise you, God. We worship you, God.

Is this not true? God wants us to worship him. Never over admire a human being. When I see the world, I was looking at one of the all-time great rock stars of all time, rock and roll stars, pop music stars.

Carol and I are watching video about him. And at the end, he had left the stage and the music, the band was still playing. And they just had the crowd.

And there was a woman in a white dress, blonde hair. I have to say she was not clapping, he had left. She was worshipping.

Her hands were up, her eyes were closed. And I got so convicted. I said, imagine at a rock concert or a music conference, they're worshipping some human idol and we can't get the church people to worship the true and the living God.

They're nervous, they're self-conscious. I can't do that. She didn't care what anyone thought.

She was worshiping her God, small g. Oh, how I want us to worship God more. How many want God to be happy with our church? Say amen. He wants us to worship.

Pastors who are here from Canada, go back and through the power of the Holy Spirit and the word, lead your people into true worship. And notice what Jesus said, the true worshipers, which means there's other kinds of worship, but the true worshipers worship God in spirit and in truth. We praise you, God.

Can we open our mouths just where we're sitting and just start to praise God? Just close your eyes and praise him. Is that hard for anybody here? Is he not worthy of your worship and your praise? Every eye closed. Let the sons and the daughters sing the Bible says, because God's family praises him.

Maybe you're here today and you're not a born again Christian. You're not a son and daughter of God through faith in Christ. You don't have to join this church.

You don't have to climb a mountain. All you have to do is pray. Like I pray right now, everyone in the building, let's pray and help someone who really needs it.

Dear God, I believe in Jesus, savior of the world. I believe he died for me to wash away my sins. I confess my sins.

I have broken your law, but there's mercy with you. Forgive me, cleanse me, make me a new creature in Jesus Christ. Today is the first day of my new life following Jesus.

I ask this in his name. Amen. Every eye closed.

If you're here today, we are baptizing people at the end of September. And if you're here today and want to be baptized, maybe you just receive Christ now. That's all it takes.

Doesn't take eight months of training. It takes a prayer. Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

That's all the thief on the cross said. Today you'll be with me in paradox. We would love to baptize you.

We'll give you all that information. You just come to the front now so we can tell you what you need to know and we'll baptize you. Anyone not baptized here, remember, believe and be baptized.

It's an outward act witnessing to that inward fact in your life. You've given your life to Christ. Lord bless us.

Thank you for your word today. And thank you that we don't have to go to Jerusalem or 17 Smith street to worship. We can worship on the A train, on the C train, on the two train, in the kitchen, in the bathroom.

We can worship you wherever we are. Thank you, Lord. Let the worshipers truly arise and let us be worshipping you all day long as we draw near to you, draw near to us.

Bless the people now. Let your face shine upon them. Grant us Shalom, the peace of God and get us home safely.

We ask this in Jesus name. And everyone said turn around and hug a fellow worshiper. Give someone a hug.

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