

In Vain They Worship Me

by Shane Idleman

Worship is the most important thing we can add to our life, and it's the thermometer of the heart, but vain worship means producing no results, no change, and going through the motions without a heart change.

Duration: 44:14

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 6:1-8, Matthew 15:8-9, Romans 12:1, James 4:8

Topics: "Genuine Worship", "Heart Surrender"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of genuine worship, highlighting how worship should come from a heart that is engaged, surrendered, and free from besetting sins. It discusses the dangers of worshiping in vain, where outward actions do not reflect true adoration for God. The speaker encourages a lifestyle of worship, acknowledging that worship is a reflection of what's happening in our hearts throughout the week.

Transcript

I'm going to talk to you tonight on the topic of worship, and the title is In Vain They Worship Me. In Vain They Worship Me. Many of you are familiar with this passage, are you not? In Matthew, it's in the Gospels, and this is where Jesus actually was talking to the religious leaders.

He said that you draw near to me with your words, but your hearts are far from me. And in vain you worship me. And I'm going to read from there.

We've been in the book of Matthew for quite a while. If you have your Bibles, you can turn to Matthew chapter 15, is where we ended last week. Matthew chapter 15, verse 6. But actually what I want to do tonight is prime the pump.

Do you know what that means? And if you've lived on the farm or in construction, you've got to prime a pump. If it's water, you've got to put some water in that tube or in that pipe. If you're siphoning gasoline, you've got to prime that hose.

Anything, you've got to prime the pump to get it working. So I really felt my job tonight was to prime the pump and get your hearts in the direction of worship. Because I can tell you right off the bat that worship is probably one of the most important things you can add to your life.

That's why it's so difficult, is because it's the most important thing we can add to our life. And in my opinion, I love the Word of God. I read it daily, a prayer.

You have to have all those things. But if you miss the heartbeat of worship, you're going to miss the heartbeat of God. Because let me remind everybody in this room that the Pharisees prayed.

The Pharisees read the Word of God. But they didn't worship. And if they did, they did it in vain.

And Jesus was talking to them. Let me quote A.W. Tozer, who I love to quote as you know. He said, I can safely say that on the authority of all that is revealed in the Word of God that any man or woman on this earth who is bored and turned off by worship is not ready for heaven.

And I don't know if you've seen it before or heard it, but from my perspective, I've had people come into the church, and we've talked about worshiping God in heaven. There's people that say, heaven's going to be boring. I don't want to do that.

I mean, if that's all it is, I don't want to go there. And I'm reminded of this quote often, that if they are bored or turned off by worship, they are not ready for heaven. And some of this is going to be a recap of what I spoke about a year ago when I talk on this topic of worship.

And here's why I think it's so important. Worship is the thermometer of your heart. Worship is the thermometer.

You know what a thermometer is, right? You stick it in the turkey, and you better hope it's 180 for a long period of time before you eat it. That's what worship is. If you read throughout the Bible, even in your own personal life, worship is the thermostat and thermometer.

Not only does it regulate your heart and your worship, but it acknowledges where your heart's really at. If a person isn't a worshiper, then their heart is really not in a good spot. And I think many times, myself included, we can hide in this so I don't have to worship.

I can just, oh, I had a great study that hours long, I did hermeneutics and homiletics, and I jotted down the Greek and the Hebrew, and I looked up this commentary, and I just had a wonderful morning. Well, if you didn't worship God, if you didn't take time and just soak in His presence, I know sometimes people are offended by that term. What do you mean by that? Well, Shane, I don't mean weirdness, okay? Let's just get that out of the room right now.

I'm not talking about weirdness. I'm talking about what the Bible says, meditate on the Word of God. That word there, if you look in its context, in the Greek and the Hebrew, really it's more in the Hebrew and meditating on the Word of God day and night, being like a tree planted by living waters.

Does that tree grow overnight? Meditation is a process by where you sit and you just meditate on God's Word, you think of His goodness and His kindness, and you get your mind refocused back on who God is. It doesn't happen in five minutes. Microwave Christianity is not genuine Christianity.

We have to have a heart of worship, and worship is the thermometer of the heart. I can tell you, and I might make a statement here that concerns people, it's okay, I think we're familiar, we're ready for that here, right? This happens often. But I can gauge a person's spirituality by looking at their worship.

I'm not talking about, you know, going crazy and doing all kinds of stuff. Sometimes that's not worship, that's just weirdness. But you can look at a person's worship, is worship part of their daily life? Are they worshiping God? And nine times out of ten, the group that isn't has the majority of the problems.

That's where bitterness comes in and anger, because you can't stay bitter and angry and resentful and worship God every morning or every evening, it's impossible. It's impossible, because an angry, bitter heart doesn't want to worship God. They're going to avoid that prayer closet like I avoid the dentist.

They're not going to want to worship God. You know what, I don't know, maybe I should just talk about this now, I have it later in my sermon, but let me tell you when worship really changed for me, and why I have a passion for this topic. Many of you know my story, I'm not going to go back and repeat it.

But for many years, I, like many people, went to church. I went to church and I, you know, what's that song, okay, I moved my lips, I mean, you know, that's what you do. But I was bored.

I would purposely come in late to miss the worship. I was disengaged. I was going through the motions.

My heart wasn't in it. It was in vain, they worshiped me. I was coming in as if I was doing God a favor, or if I could check it off my checklist, I went to church.

And I was one of those guys that would go in like, God, another song, oh man, yeah, and the pastor's sermon, I hope it's quick, I hope, you know, it's just, there's no engagement. There's no, I would leave here and I would put on George, George Jones and George Strait and all that country, I love country, I would put that, you know, I just love that stuff. And when I got to church, I hated it, why? The heart was wrong.

The heart was wrong. I avoided worship. And finally it changed in 1999 when God said, okay, now it's time to break you, mister.

And everything broke, relationships broke, financially broke, everything, my whole, my whole party broke me. And then you worship. That's when worship changed.

Because I said, Lord, I need you, I need to spend time with you. And now it comes alive, instead of boring, it comes alive. But here's the problem, it's almost like when I sit and watch VeggieTales with my kids.

My mind is not in that at all, I'm thinking of everything else but that, and they're having so much fun. And don't tell me how it's doctrinally incorrect in some areas, I know, Joan, they kind of take liberty there. But I'm just bored to death, my kids love it, I'm bored to death.

Why? There's no, the heart's not, my heart's not in that. If people, and honestly, guys, I want to really get this point across, this sermon may help, but it's designed, it might hurt, but it's designed to help. My goal is never to tell somebody off and point fingers and get, my whole point of this, is to get your heart primed to pump towards God.

And in doing that, you've got to be truthful and say, many people come in, in a hurry. They want to get through the songs, they want to get through church, they're hungry, I got to get, oh my God, is she going to keep going another song? I mean, that's where our heart's at, we're disengaged. And I want to get you engaged with worship.

Because that's where real change takes place. Back to my own personal life, a hard heart must be crushed, a prideful heart must be humbled, and a self-reliant heart must be broken before true worship can take place. Because true worshipers, they're worshipping God out of their brokenness.

I don't know Ivy and Eugene's story, but I can pretty much guarantee there's been some pain there. You want to know why? Because the anointing of God comes from a vessel that's been broken and rebuilt by

God. That's the anointing.

Because you come up in His strength, in His power, and you have to worship Him. If you can add that to your daily routine, you will be transformed, but your flesh is going to throw a fit like a two-year-old wanting more candy. It will, it will, don't, anything but.

Get on the phone, go on Facebook, go on email, grab the newspaper, turn on the TV, get some, you've got to, anything but worship. Your flesh is going to fight it, but you have to tell your flesh, no flesh, you're submitting to me. I'm not submitting to you.

I have the power of God living inside of me. He's in me is greater than the world. He's in the world.

Flesh, you're submitting. I'm going to sit here and I'm going to worship God. I don't care if I don't feel like it for the first 5, 10, or 15, or 20 minutes, but you are going to submit.

And then once that breakthrough comes and you get a heart of worship, you need it. You need it like a crack addict needs a hit. You need a, you need the word of God.

You need that worship. If I don't have that worship, I'm just, I'm getting through life and pride comes up and arrogance and busyness and busyness I think is the greatest cool of the enemy right now in the church today. Everybody's so busy.

They've got time for everything else but God. Listen, church, this is a worship service, not a cemetery. And I, and I'm not talking about getting weird.

I'm pretty conservative, but I am talking about hearts breaking. Where's the tears? Where's the, can we keep going on for worship? Where's remembering what God did, but God, but God, I got to prime the pump. I mean, I've been in worship services where you can cut the presence of God with a knife.

People they could turn the clock around. They're on their knees before almighty God, praying that their prodigal son comes home before they find him dead in the street. That'll force you to worship.

I asked a lady once, her son, I said, have you, have you fasted and took time for worship? Prayed for that son who's on, who's on crank, crystal myth. Oh, I don't have time for that. I'm busy.

Keep, really? If it were me, I would try to get my vacation days and spend some time fasting and praying and seeking God. That's the only way we're going to overcome the, the onslaught of evil that's coming against this nation and the church. The only way is through prayer and worship and fasting and reading the word of God and obeying it.

It's that's, that's powerful. Think of this. Worship, let me clarify too, is not just singing.

It involves thankfulness, obedience, and adoration that worship really is a, is a lifestyle. But what I'm talking about tonight is kind of corporately, corporate worship, individual worship where there's music involved. It doesn't have to be, but you're worshipping God because you have to take time out and reflect on who God is.

Because if you don't, you know what happens by default. We talk about this often. If you don't do anything, you will drift from God.

Just the human heart bent on its own direction is going away from God. Prone to wander, Lord, I can feel it. Prone to, I feel the wander within needs to be crucified and need to be, you know, wander.

You sit under my feet. You're not directing me. I'm directing you.

You have to, you have to make a lifestyle of worship and I would change things around. If it were me, if there's things in my life that are pulling me away from God, guess what has to go? You know, big disclaimer, I'm not talking about your spouse because people go home and they say, he said I could divorce you. You're not, no, that's, that's, that's, come on guys, I'm trying to get serious here.

Romans 12.1. Think about this. I've never, I've never reflected on this verse as much this week until these words caught me. That's why I like to look at different translations sometimes.

You know, they're, they're solid. You know, the NA, the New American Standard Bible, there's some solid scriptural truths, but it's good to try to pull in some translations just to, just to get different nuances. Much like a commentary and these words jumped out at me and you know the scripture, I appeal to you therefore brothers by the mercies of God to present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Because what I've been, what I learned is what your reasonable service saying, you know, but you're presenting my body as a living sacrifice that involves doing things that don't make me feel good. And it's very interesting. I'll get up, you know, I already, I get up early in the morning and try to, and at the first five or 10 minutes, it's, it's, it's battle.

It's a war zone there. But when I present my body as a living sacrifice, and then I just find an old hymn on YouTube, amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like you, and I have to hit rewind and rewind and rewind. People say, how do you listen to the same song once? How do you not? How do you not? She could have kept saying, Holy Spirit, you are welcome in this place for five minutes.

All that's weirdness. No shame. That's worship.

That's meditation. That's getting my heart right. Because there's so much junk that has to be poured out and crucified.

It's only worship that can bring that at the foot of the cross. Corporate worship. What we're doing here simply reflects what's already been going on in our heart all week.

Do you realize that? Our corporate worship. This is simply a reflection of what's going on all week in our hearts. Because that's what worship does.

It reflects the heart. Because most people can just read this. And please don't misunderstand.

I'm not down. If you've been coming here for any significant amount of time, you know I'm not downplaying this. This is as important as worship, because this is where God directs.

This is where God guides. This is where the word of God comes alive and convicts my heart. But here's the problem.

Jesus said those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. Many people have the truth, but they don't have the spirit of God inside them crying Abba Father. They've quenched and grieved the spirit of

God by avoiding worship.

Because worship is when your heart breaks and cries out to God. In Matthew 15, where I left off last week, you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Remember this? Instead of people helping their parents, they're saying, sorry mom, dad, I can't give you anything.

Really what I was going to give you is going to be a gift to God. And Jesus said, you hypocrites. You're making your tradition become basically supersede the word of God.

And we do that today. And that was two weeks ago sermon. So I'm not going to get into that.

I'll let you know, I'll let you go back and listen to that one. That one definitely convicted some hearts as well. People were not happy about that one.

But you go back and judge yourself. You have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition, hypocrites. Well did Isaiah prophesy about you saying, these people draw near to me with their mouth and they honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me and in vain they worship me.

Teaching is doctrines and commandments of men. Now isn't this interesting? You know what vain means, right? Not vanity as far as it look, you know, you're vain, you're about yourself. But what it means in this context, producing no results, no change, it's useless.

So people, this is amazing to me. People come into a worship service and how I often say, they leave no different than when they arrived. You just worship God in vain.

How long are you going to keep going through the motions? Month after month, year after year, it's just vain, it's useless. There's nothing, there's no heart change. Coming in no different than when we arrived.

Producing no results, no change, it's useless. Basically it's going through the motions. Now any theologian worth their salt, I think would find two points of application in this text.

Obviously, number one is salvation. The Pharisees are on the broad road of destruction. They are on their way to hell.

The religious leaders of Jesus's day who taught the Bible, who represented God were actually not even close to God. That just amazes me. And that's why I'm often reminded of in the churches today.

Do you know how many people are just going through the motions? They just come in and they leave. They come in and when they leave, and they're just going through the motions. That's one of the reasons it's good to go through the whole word of God so you can hit some of the difficult truths, so you can hit them with that right hook.

Hit them with that, what did he just say? Did he say I need to repent and I'm a sinner? I've never heard that in my other church. All we talk about is painting the neighborhood and feeding the poor. That's all we ever, who's this guy think he is? That's what God's word says.

Sometimes we need to, yes, go, please go help, go work in the community, but I'd rather save your soul than feed your stomach. And if people aren't confronted with the truth, they don't change. They go through the motions.

As a pastor, I hear stories probably, we don't exaggerate, right? Let's say two, three, four times a quarter, you know, five, six, seven, eight times a year of people in churches who the pastor says, they're a deacon, they're on our elder board. They were never saved, they were just going through, they're on the worship team, they're in the media, they're in the, they're serving in children's ministry, they're, how did they fall underneath the radar? How? Well, very easy, going through the motions, just going through the motions. You say all the right things.

Bless you, brother. How are you? Filled the spirit today. All just got all the lingo down.

So, one of the points of the scripture, the application of salvation, stop going through the motions. Don't keep worshiping God in vain and just sitting here and going through the motions. Has salvation taken place? Have you genuinely been converted? And the reason I talk about that often is because we have so many different people come in here, I don't know where they're at.

And sometimes it's not until the sixth time they say, oh, wait a minute, that applies to me, because God gets them at a certain point of their life where all the idols aren't answering anymore. And now they're ready to listen instead of the ears being closed off and worshiping God in vain. And of course, the other point of application is what I'm getting at, is this application of surrender.

It's surrender. That's when real worship takes place, is when you as saints can surrender. We don't like that term, especially in the military or just in general.

I don't like it. But when you realize you're surrendering to Almighty God, you're giving him everything. You're saying, Lord, I'm worshiping you.

That's when it goes from worshiping God in vain to genuine worship. You know what the difference is between worshiping God in vain and genuine worship? One thing. One thing.

It's the heart. It's the heart. Is the heart going through the motions? Or is it genuinely engaged? That's why I brought those things up at the beginning, not to be funny or trite.

But if you're in a hurry to get out of worship, if the songs are boring and you want to come in late and avoid it, I would personally, seriously look at heart examination. We get excited at everything else. Everything else.

Well, jump up and down. Everything. I can't wait.

Get home time. Watch such and such. Everything.

If our heart's not engaged, we have to look and say, am I worshiping in vain? And I just have a few points I want to just scurry through while I'm priming this pump of worship. Five points of application. Number one, abundance.

Abundance can prevent worship. I would say that's probably one of the biggest hindrances in the American church, is abundance can prevent worship. I see so many people, they've got their 401k, they're retired, they've got two vehicles, one's paid off.

I mean, everything is good. They're just going through life. And that prevents genuine worship.

Why is that? I don't know. Because apathy takes over and complacency. And the human heart usually will only go to God when they need Him.

If everything's going well, it's very difficult to have that devotional life. Oh, but God takes that job from you. I bet I'll see you in your prayer closet a lot more.

Your spouse is here. What's that? It's divorce papers. You don't think that will change things? That's what we call a game changer.

Prayed for two families last weekend whose their son is caught in homosexuality and so is their daughter. Different families. It's not going to drive you to the prayer closet.

Our blessings have become a curse. Our abundance has created apathy and our comforts have kept God at a distance. So don't despise circumstances that make life difficult.

They actually prime the pump. So when life is difficult and challenging, don't immediately get bitter. Get into worship because those can prime the pump.

I like what Psalms 104 says. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him.

Bless his name. Psalm 59, 16. But I will sing of your strength.

I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress. If you're going through something, allow that.

Let that be the prime, the pump. Let that fuel that gauge towards worship. I have this on a different point, but I think it actually fits better here.

I talked about this last week when I spoke at a conference, and I've mentioned this before, but you guys remember that song, It Is Well With My Soul. And we talked about the history behind that, how that guy sent his four daughters off and his wife off to, I believe, sail to Europe, and they had a boating accident. And all four of his daughters ended up at the bottom of the sea.

And he got the telegraph back. It's famous now, if you can look it up online. He got a telegraph back from his wife that said, saved alone, saved alone.

They go back out to the sea, the same spot that the accident happened, and that's when he wrote these words, when peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrow like sea billows roll, whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul. And we sing other songs, Break Every Chain. Break Every Chain, I can hear the chains falling as you're going through addiction, overcoming.

What about Amazing Grace? How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. Or another song we sing, We Will Not Be Shaken. We will not be shaken.

You can only really sing that song when you're being shaken. Nobody, what does that mean? It will go through hell. And then you'll know exactly what that means.

When the city, county is coming after your children, when something's coming after your marriage, or coming after your job, I will not be shaken. Now that song comes to life. Because the circumstances of life

can cause us to worship God.

The leper, worship God saying, Lord, if you are willing, make me clean. A synagogue official worshiped God. And he said, my daughter has just died.

A broken hearted mom worshiped God and said, Lord, help me. My daughter severely vexed with the devil. What about the demoniac who came down? He fell down, he worshiped God.

Said, Lord, save me. There is a legion of demonic influence in me. Save me, I must worship you.

All of these things drew people to the cross, drew them to worship. That's where anointing comes from. That's where powerful worship comes from, is the difficulties of life.

They force you and they break you. Man, if I lost my four kids over the sea, I would not be writing those lyrics without the grace of God. Without the grace of God, there go I. So see, that's why people can sing amazing grace.

They see that they were just hanging over the flames of hell and God rescued them. Now you'll sing it a little bit different. I was blind spiritually.

I was destroying my family and God opened up my eyes. Now I see the love of Christ. Now I can point people in that direction.

I might sing that song a little bit differently than you. Why is that? Because you've been changed and challenged by the power of God. You have to experience him.

Number two, a lack of joy prevents worship. A lack of joy prevents worship. I wish I could preach a whole sermon on this one.

To prime the pump of worship, you have to clean it out. I've seen this time and time again. You cannot come in and worship God with an angry, bitter, judgmental, unforgiving heart.

It's not possible. Come on, Shane, yeah, I do it all the time. Really? Are you worshiping God with that heart? So I'm gonna, this point's real quick.

A lack of joy will prevent worship. I don't know where you're at, but your heart has to get, if there's unforgiveness, if there's bitterness, if there's just anger, you have to give it up to truly worship God. Those two things, those things cannot dwell in a worshiping heart.

Because when I'm worshiping God, I don't have those emotions. They come later throughout the day and you bring them back into submission. But if you truly wanna worship God, a lack of joy has to be dealt with.

The third point, a sidetracked mind prevents worship. A sidetracked mind, if your mind is anywhere but on God, it will not foster worship. Remember, we read Romans 1. I appeal to you, brethren, to present yourselves as sacrifices, holy unto God, which is your reasonable service.

But then it goes on to say, be not conformed to this world. In the same sentence, tying them together, but be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. This point is really strong for young adults.

Because we can't live like hell all week and expect to worship God today. We can't fill our mind with darkness all week to experience powerful worship. We can't love the world all week and expect to love God on one designated day.

So if you want to truly get into a heart of worship, you've gotta renew that mind. Remember, what you go to bed with on your mind is what you'll get up with. What you're feeding that mind, it either fosters worship or it doesn't.

Because you can tell people are worshiping God and it's just a reflection of what's already been going on in their life. So I often joke about pastors, but it's true. Who they are all week is who they are when they step to the pulpit.

The message is just a byproduct of what's been going on in their heart and mind all week. You can't just come up here and say a quick little prayer and hope that the Spirit of God moves mightily in the service and anoints the service. Okay, Lord, please, I know I've just been distant from you all week.

I haven't been studying, I haven't been worshiping, but come on, give me something cool. I want to build a skyscraper. Tons of stories.

But no heart change. Number four, failure to truly experience God prevents genuine worship. What I mean by that is, and I truly believe that there are, I believe that when a person becomes a Christian, that they are saved, they're sealed by the Holy Spirit.

There's no, you have to wait two years and then be filled with the Spirit. I think it happens at conversion. You're filled with the Spirit of God, but there are subsequent feelings of the Holy Spirit where you can quench and grieve the Spirit to such a degree that you know nothing of the power of God in your life anymore.

You have, or it could have started from the beginning. You just, there's no surrender, there's no obedience to the Word of God. You're quenching and grieving the Spirit, and that's called, that was what we call a miserable Christian.

They are very miserable. You have to experience God in order for Him to change your heart and worship come alive. Remember I quoted before Isaiah, when he was called to be a prophet, he said he saw the Lord high and lifted up.

He saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filled the entire temple. There was smoke, and the angels were crying, holy, holy, holy is our God. And the temple, all the pillars shook.

Holy, holy, holy is our God. And Isaiah, when he saw the Lord there, he said, I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips. I can't even look at the Lord of glory.

And God went and touched his lips and said, Isaiah, you are clean. And now because he experienced God, he can prophesy, he can preach, he can warn the people. He worships because he's experienced God.

Who's this guy, the Apostle Paul? He's a Pharisee. He had the strictest letter of the law, and he was on the road to Damascus, change of plans. God literally knocked him off his beast, the King James says.

And then he says, Lord, who are you, and what do you want me to do? Blind for three days. Then in eyes comes, I believe it was, and prayed for him, and scales were lifted off his eyes. And he was a changed man because he experienced God.

Have you ever thought about what made the disciples different from the Gospels into the book of Acts? A 10-day prayer meeting. And Jesus said, go and wait for the promise of my Father. And when that promise came, boy, were they filled with the Spirit, they were on fire with God.

They experienced God. They're so full of the Spirit that people are mocking them. Saying, look at these guys.

Peter says, oh, no, no, remember Joel? Remember Joel, you Pharisees? Turn to it, Joel 2. In the last day, in the last days, I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams.

Your young men see visions. And on my menservants, on my maidservants, I will pour out my Spirit on those days, and you will be worshipers. They met the risen Savior.

They had to worship. They had to testify, because they met him in a powerful way. And I'm concerned that many Christians, they're Christians, but they're so distant from God that they don't know the power of God.

Their life's not surrendered to him. It's nothing but complaining and bickering. You know, I can say that, because I've been there, and I can slide really easy.

Go back over into that side. It's usually my wife that says, no, come on back over to the middle. And guys, I'm just trying to prime the pump, because we can turn into bickering, complaining, whining, arrogant, and it doesn't help anything when it comes to the things of God and worship.

In vain they worship me. This is why we do the bare minimum when it comes to Christian service. In vain they worship me.

This is why there's a lack of passion for the things of God. This is why we can move our lips on Sunday morning, but praise ESPN Sunday night. This is why we say the right things here, but unload at home.

Oh, trust me, if you had enough time, we would hit some of these areas where we really need to look at our lives and our home lives and our marriages. This is why just a handful of people show up for prayer meetings. This is why many don't like heartfelt emotional worship.

You realize that? A lot of people don't hurry up, get through. They just don't like that. Why? Because the heart's being challenged.

It's being challenged. Here we go again. Here we go again.

The context is pride. And this whole thing that Jesus is talking about, the context is pride and Phariseeism. See, I can understand why the lukewarm person who is not walking with God doesn't like to worship him.

But for the life of me, I can't understand the person who studies and reads the word of God why they don't want to worship him. It goes back to what I said earlier. The true worshipers will worship God in spirit and in truth.

You have to have both. One without the other is dangerous. If you have all spirit and no grounding, you're in trouble.

But if you have all this, you can become hard and arrogant and rigid. And you love to tell people off. You love to quote scripture at them.

You love to put down everything because you're a modern day Pharisee. And you need the spirit of God to work in your heart so you can truly worship him. There's an example.

I kept adding this and taking it out this week. I didn't know if I want to tell you about it. Again, but I think I met you a year ago.

Probably a year and a half ago now, or maybe a year ago. We just, God was moving. You could tell.

Anybody that was here would remember that night. And during the second service, I said, I just came up and said, listen, we're just going to continue worshiping. I mean, people were getting healed, set free, and just marriages.

I mean, it was just a powerful. You can't really explain it unless you're here. Let's just leave it at that.

Well, a guy who came for the first time got upset and left. As he was leaving, he told the ushers, he goes, I came to hear a sermon. The very thing you need is the very thing that he was running from.

The very thing he needed was the very thing he was running from. If I were to tell you, no, no, you need that. You need that.

You've got enough of that. I bet you're about ready to explode with the word of God. I bet you can quote more scriptures than me, but God doesn't have your heart.

Who in the world would leave a powerful worship service and get upset? But it begs the question tonight, how long will you keep running? Many people come in the same way, and they leave, and their heart's not engaged. I'll quote Al Whittinghill. I quote him a few months back, and I think it's relevant for us today.

He said, without the heartbeat of prayer, the body of Christ will resemble a corpse. The church is dying on her feet because she is not living on her knees. Can I add to that? Without the heartbeat of worship, the body of Christ will resemble a corpse.

The church is dying spiritually because worship has become formality instead of focused adoration. In vain, they worship me. Whether you participate or not, the heavens will declare his glory.

Is that interesting? We think, well, I'm not gonna participate. It doesn't matter. You're only hurting yourself.

You're only hurting yourself. And honestly, I don't know what true on-fire worship looks like exactly. I'm not talking about weirdness, but you can tell we're not in a hurry.

You can tell it's not this, and the heart's not engaged. A man can no more diminish God's glory by refusing to worship him than a lunatic can put out the sun by scribbling the words darkness on the walls of a cell. God will be worshiped.

The heavens declare. Everything declares. Everything worships God.

You either have to participate or not and get the heart right. Now, I actually added this point today, and I can't believe I forgot about it. The fifth point, besetting sin will prevent worship.

There are things that people have been clicking for years and paying for for years and consuming for years, and their anger's dominating their home. They're ruling their house with a rod of iron. There's besetting sin that you know God is convicting you of.

And it's a loving father saying, listen, you've gotta give that to me. You've gotta take that to the cross. That will destroy you.

That is preventing worship. Because unconfessed sin works like cancer against worship. We all sin.

But when you take it to God and say, listen, Lord, I'm confessing that. I'm repenting of that, which means I'm changing, by the way. It just doesn't mean, oh, I got caught.

It means I'm changing the way I do things. I need you to help me. That will actually lead to worship.

That will lead to worship. Trust me, I've talked to a lot of men's conferences and guys are actually addicted to pornography. They do not worship God.

They can't. They're already worshiping a different idol. So it has to be eradicated.

You have to begin to remove that from your life. There's a song I came across. I just want to read the lyrics.

I read the first half a few weeks ago. I want to read the last half. It's clear of the stage.

He says, take a break from all the plans that you have made and sit at home alone and wait for God to whisper. Beg him please to open up his mouth and speak and pray for real upon your knees until they blister. Shine the light on every corner of your life until the pride and lust and lies are in the open.

Then read the word and put to test the things you've heard until your heart and soul are stirred and rocked and broken. Because you can sing all you want to and still get it wrong. Worship is more than a song.

■ We turn our eyes from evil things ■ ■ Oh Lord we cast down our idols ■ ■ Give us clean hands and give us pure hearts ■ ■ Let us not lift our souls to another ■ ■ Give us clean hands and give us pure hearts ■ ■ Let us not lift our souls to another ■ ■ Oh God let us be a generation that seeks ■ ■ Who seeks your face oh God of Jacob ■ ■ Oh God let us be a generation that seeks ■ ■ Oh God of Jacob ■ ■ We bow our hearts we bend our knees ■ ■ Oh spirit come make us humble ■ ■ We turn our eyes from evil things ■ ■ Give us clean hands give us pure hearts ■ ■ Let us not lift our souls to another ■ ■ Give us clean hands give us pure hearts ■ ■ Let us not lift our souls to another ■ ■ Oh God let us be a generation that seeks ■ ■ Who seeks your face oh God of Jacob ■ ■ Oh God let us be a generation that seeks ■ ■ Who seeks your face oh God of Jacob ■ ■ Give us clean hands give us pure hearts ■ Sing that out. ■ Let us not give us clean hands give us pure hearts ■ ■ Let us not lift our souls to another ■ ■ Oh God let us be a generation that seeks ■ ■ Who seeks your face oh God of Jacob ■ ■ Oh God let us be a generation that seeks ■ ■ Who seeks your face oh God of Jacob ■

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