

Worship: Cemetery, Circus, or Christ Centered?

by Shane Idleman

Worship is not just about music or formality, but a lifestyle of expressing our love and devotion to God in spirit and in truth.

Duration: 57:50

Scripture: Psalm 33:1, John 4:24, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Worship", "Heart of Worship"

Description

Shane Idleman explores the essence of worship, contrasting three types: cemetery, circus, and Christ-centered. He emphasizes that true worship is not merely about music or style but is a heartfelt expression of reverence and obedience to God. Idleman argues that worship should be a lifestyle, reflecting our relationship with Christ, and challenges the congregation to examine their hearts and motivations in worship. He highlights the importance of worship as a communal and personal act that should be filled with expectancy and authenticity, rather than mere tradition or preference. Ultimately, he calls for a return to Christ-centered worship that honors God and transforms lives.

Transcript

The title this morning is worship. Worship, cemetery, circus, or Christ-centered. Those are the options.

You're well aware of that, correct? Cemetery, circus, or Christ-centered. And we're in a series on theology on fire. And guess what we land on this Sunday? The theology of worship.

Did you know that that is an aspect of systematic theology, corporate worship? How do we conduct ourselves in different things? And it's an area of theology, which is the study of God. So, in short, the theology of worship is what does the Bible say about worship, okay? We don't need to look on TV or different events or that church does this, this church does this. What does the Bible say? Now, this had to turn into one long point because I had three points I was hoping to get to, and what these points were, number one is the theology of worship, and then I want to talk about the worship wars.

You know what that is, right? Our church does it this way. Well, this church does it this way. And I was just in an event this weekend, I think it's still going on, it's a tent event for the valley, they're reaching out to a lot of people that normally wouldn't come to church, and they take the church to them at a park, and talk

about different worship, I mean, but believers coming together to worship.

And if you think it's loud here, you haven't heard anything yet. And the worship and just the dancing, I'm like, I can't quite do that, I can do this, but you know, I just, I wasn't born with that rhythm. And it's just a whole different worship, the excitement, the worship atmosphere, so you have praise and worship, but you also have heartfelt worship.

And there's a difference, there's a distinction, so what many people say, racism in the church, sometimes I just think it's preference, or upbringing. What resonates with me might not resonate with you. And even this morning, early morning worship.

People say, well, why don't we do these songs, or why don't we do these songs, and I have a whole list from the 1970s, to Keith Green, to loud music, that's worship music that's wonderful for working out, but I'm not sure, you know, it's gonna fit here. So you have to take all of this in, and look at what is Christ-centered worship. And I couldn't get to the worship wars, but let me just assure you that a lot of it isn't racism.

Or, you know, the black church, the white church, the Hispanic church, they will all worship differently, because often of the culture. And we do things differently. So that's okay to have, as long as your preference doesn't become a gauge by which you judge others.

It's just a preference. Well, I prefer these songs, and I prefer other songs. Let me just give you an example.

I've been, I don't know, you guys might take this wrong, but, and just to show you how preference goes, right? That new song right now that's, is it Hill's song, what is it? What's it called? 10 Billion, I just can't get into it. Me and my wife, I don't, I mean, you either, right? I'm like, but people love that song. Can't we do 10 Billion, whatever, it's Hill's.

You know, three times, I'm like, yeah, we can, but I just don't, well, why don't you, why don't you feel the same thing I do? I don't know. I try, I try, I try. Every time it comes on, I try.

And it just doesn't work for me. But I can put Amazing Grace on, a YouTube clip that's 25 years old, no instruments, just a lady singing, and I'll be brought to tears. Other people say, oh, Shane, that is so outdated.

We can't play that. So what, see, you gotta be careful here. Because preference can begin to taint our views.

And people, you know, unless we have the hymnals, we're not worshipping. Unless we have the contemporary worship, we're not up to the times. I mean, all that is, as I often say, the old hymns used to be the new hymns.

You know that? Old Ragged Cross, It Is Well With My Soul, they were new hymns. So I think we just need to be careful sometimes and just come with a heart of worship and understand that all worship, if it's God-honoring, if it's doctrinally sound, if it's Christ-elevating, is worship, if the heart is right. So the message is worship, cemetery, circus, or Christ-centered.

The majority of my time I'm going to be spending on the theology of worship based on the Bible. But it does beg the question up front, why do we associate it with music? Because worship really isn't, in the Bible, isn't just music. I was just reading this week, it was interesting, the story of Abraham's servant who went to find a bride for his son Isaac.

The servant, when he found the right girl, it said he worshiped the Lord. I'm pretty sure he didn't break out in songs and dancing and things. He bowed his face and he worshiped the Lord.

And sometimes it's not music. Really, if you want to be technically correct and biblically correct, worship is a lifestyle. Come let us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

See, it starts with our mind, it starts with our actions. My whole life should be about worship. I get up in the morning and it's worshipping God, and as I'm working, I'm worshipping and Christ-honoring decisions in the workplace and different things, and it's a lifestyle of worship.

And then when you come to church, there is a segment called worship. But worship really starts when we get here. And it ends, we can fellowship and still be worshipping God, building each other up and encouraging people.

And it's really good to make this point because people can be singing songs, think they're worshipping, and oh, they draw an eye into Him with their lips, but their hearts are far from Him. So it's not just about songs. However, worship does reflect our heart, and that's why we do worship.

There's a time set aside for that. Psalm 33.1.3, I'm gonna go to the scriptures a lot this morning. I hope that's okay with this Bible-believing church.

Rejoice in the Lord, oh, you righteous. Rejoice in the, you know what, let me just stop. This is so hard for me because on one hand, I don't wanna beat people up, but on the other hand, I wanna kinda ruffle some feathers.

Throughout this whole week, looking at these verses, there should be a rejoicing. The rock of Gibraltar is not in worship. They need to be broken by the rock.

You know, it's just, oh, I'm just the rock of Gibraltar. I'm just strong in here, and what time is it? And I see this rejoicing in Scripture. I see this lifting up of holy hands.

I see this shouting unto the Lord. I see there's an excitement there. So if it's not happening, what's going on in our hearts? And me included, I'm not, if you were to define me, I'm not an emotional person.

I would be probably in the conservative camp, but something happens when you're worshipping God. So it says, rejoice in the Lord. Oh, you righteous, for praise Him, for praise from the upright is beautiful.

Praise the Lord with harp. Make melody to Him with an instrument of 10 strings. Sing to Him a new song.

Pray skillfully with a shout of joy. That's worship in the Bible. I'm not, this isn't Shane Eidelman.

This is biblical text, and it's funny because hopefully he doesn't mind me saying this, but like Ronnie, who helped with our worship last Wednesday, back in Lancaster a couple years ago, as he was leading worship, he'd say, just sing to the Lord, sing your song to the Lord. Sing a new song to Him. People would come up to me and go, what does that mean? I don't know what that means.

I can't do that. Is that in the Bible? Well, yeah, the Bible isn't, let's see, let me get every line, every sentence correctly. The worshiping is coming from the heart, and it might be a surprise to a lot of you, but I don't look at the PowerPoint too often because the heart is engaged in worship.

It's crying out, God, if you don't deliver us, we are lost. God, these school shootings have to stop. God, let the church in so we can witness to these children.

God, it's worshiping. It's not, you don't have to have every line and every sentence correct and every stanza. Why didn't the person back there flip to the next screen, what's next? It should be a heart of worship crying out for our communities.

I'm just on a little bandwagon this week because I reached out to the school district when we had a local shooting. You know, can we go in there? Can the church go in and minister? And they said, well, Shane, we've got highly trained secular psychologists that will be there, but thank you. No, they need real hope.

Real hope, real truth. To be built up and encouraged. You teach kids they come from animals, they will act like animals.

There's no purpose, there's no meaning. We just leave the earth. What's that gonna do? That's just gonna reinforce.

And I'm actually a little bit, I'm so irritated, I might write another article. And put it, well, and, but, but put it in the paper. Put it out there to national media because these things are not going to decrease they're going to increase.

And many of you saw the news in Texas, 10 kids dead recently. And everybody's, we gotta get rid of guns. That's the sin, it's a sin problem.

Outlaw pipes and you'll stop pipe bombs. Outlaw cars and you'll stop people running people over with cars. It's a sin problem.

We have to go back to the word of God. 1963, I think it was the Engel versus Board of Education removed the Bible from the schools and prayer from the schools. Now I understand you can't force it.

It's hard to get prayer in the school when you don't even have it in the church. Oh, yeah, that was a right hook in case you weren't paying attention. That was a right hook.

But you can't just force it. Let prayer back in the school. That will change things.

It has to be the right prayer from the right heart. God honoring. But see, we have to be, we're so worried about being politically correct.

And these organizations are gonna come against us and their lawsuits and separation of church and state and all this is baloney. We teach that evolution is fact and that God is a fairytale. When the opposite is true.

Evolution is a fairytale conceived by minds that don't want there to be a God where creation is a fact. It's so ironic. If I write this article, they're gonna think, nobody's gonna think that article just came together by itself.

My printer exploded and here's this article. Nope. They would think I was out of my mind.

How much more when you see this to think that all just happened? You have got to be out of your mind to believe that. Not in a mental health state, but in a state where you don't want there to be a God. Okay, back on track.

10 minute rabbit trail. I've gotta make up the time. So here's some more scriptural support.

Worship, let me do three or four points of worship. Worship involves expression. Okay, for all of us who don't like expression.

Me, Mr. Conservative. My dad said, boys, don't cry. You know, Mr. Keep to yourself, emotional.

Worship involves expression. 1 Chronicles 16. Ascribe, which is give to the Lord.

The glory do His name. I don't know, we might have those up, Jason, if it would help. 1 Chronicles 16.

Yeah, I did change it from posture to involves expression. Ascribe to the Lord. The glory do His name.

Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness. Tremble before Him all the earth. The world is firmly established.

It cannot be moved. Let the heavens rejoice. Let the earth be glad.

Let them say among the nation, the Lord reigns. So here we say that worship is a priority. Do you know how many churches try to get a few quick songs in? They've got it down to the minute.

Okay, this song is four minutes and 32 seconds, and I'm not joking. Four minutes, 32 seconds. This song is three minutes, 80, or we can't have 80 seconds, but you know.

But, and they've got it, and then here's this announcement for this mission trip, whatever. It's 1.2 minutes, and they've got it down exactly. Here it is, here's your schedule for the morning.

And you can't do that. You can't put God in a box. So worship is a priority.

It comes first. Give Him everything that is due His name. And that's why I said, I've heard this quote, and you can argue both sides of it, but prayer gets God's attention.

Worship gets His presence. But I also believe that prayer gets His presence, of course. But there's an added benefit of worship when we worship Him, because it's really getting the heart right.

Tremble, in this case. Tremble can mean excitement. See where it says tremble.

Let the Lord tremble before Him. And it's not this dog that's been abused, right? You know, those dogs get like this, and don't pick me up, and don't. It's not, this is a, this is a trembling can be of excitement.

Yes, a fear and reverence. You're worshiping Almighty God. You might want to have it right.

We might want to come in with holy hands and attitudes right. But it's also an excitement. It's an expectancy.

Did you know you should come to a church expecting God to move? That's healthy. Follow the disciples around in the book of Acts for 30 years. It was written over a 30 year period.

Follow them around. They went to cities with expectancy. Paul would just go into a city, and this girl would be bugging him.

And he'd just say, out of her, Satan. And then now she's set free. And then now they want to kill him.

Now they want to stone him. Peter says, silver and gold I do not have. But what I do have, I give you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Arise and get up and walk. And the man who was crippled from birth began to get up and walk and rejoice. That's New Testament biblical Christianity.

That expect God to move. Expect God to move. If you don't expect it, he might not move.

There's a spirit of expectancy. Don't worry, I'm ready to preach this morning. I'm fired up because this is a message on worship.

On Pentecost Sunday? You know that's today, right? Pentecost Sunday, 2,000 years ago, the Holy Spirit fell on a group of believers in an upper room, worshiping and praying for 10 days. I'm thinking they were fasting a little bit in there, but don't hold me to that. The Holy Spirit fell upon those people.

And the world was changed. And that's where actually the word Pentecostal comes from, is the day of Pentecost. Not a bad thing.

Pentecost is the day the Holy Spirit fell upon His people. And as much as I wanna wait till I talk about the Holy Spirit, I'm gonna just throw this out there. Is the Holy Spirit upon you? Is the Holy Spirit truly upon you? Because this amazing scripture that when Jesus came up to preach, He actually just came up to read a sermon.

The scroll of Isaiah was handed to Him. I just heard this Friday, and all weekend it's been on my heart. I can't imagine, Jesus comes up.

We have the Bible, the scroll's open, Isaiah. And He's looking at the people. The Bible says the eyes of the people were fixed upon Him.

And He said, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. Not financially poor, poor of heart, poor of spirit, humble.

I've come to set the captives free. I've come to let those loose who have been dealing with strongholds. And He sits down, He says, today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.

I mean, that just gives me goosebumps thinking about that. The Son of God said the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him because God has anointed me to preach the gospel. See, we talk about anointing often.

You hear that word in charismatic circles maybe, anointing. You know what all that means is the Spirit of God is upon a person. He has anointed us.

And it does beg the question, is the Holy Spirit upon you? Is this endowment of spiritual power to where you, because I go expecting God to move. Because you have to expect God to move or expect something

because the Holy Spirit doesn't check with you first. Well, Shane, what do you wanna do today? I don't know, let's do this.

So you even come to church with the spirit of expectancy to expect something from God. So on this title of the message, Cemetery Circus or Christ-Centered Worship is the opposite of a cemetery. Worship is the opposite of a cemetery.

And I've been many churches over the years. I've spoke at a lot of different churches. And you do see the cemetery or the circus.

And you see Christ-Centered sometimes often in the middle. But who said worship should be formal and dead? Just going through the motions, piano, keys, guitar, whatever it is, it's just dead, there's no life. In a powerful worship service, there is life, there is health, there is strength, everything that is not found in a cemetery.

So there is life in the worship. There is health in the worship. There is strength in the worship.

And this point really came home to me yesterday and Friday when I went to this event. But people are worshipping like I probably wouldn't. I mean, I guess if I were to be honest, they're a little too excited.

Man, what is, golly. But boy, did I get hit with a sledgehammer when the testimony time came around. The guy who was just worshipping and so excited, his story is that he had stage four cancer throughout his entire body a year ago.

The doctor said you've got months and you're declining, there's no hope. And now, over a year later, free of this, worshipping God. You know, you might worship a little different, right? Just throwing it out there.

You might worship a little bit different. The reason many don't worship is they haven't been powerfully touched by God. So there's not much to worship other than some lyrics on a screen because they haven't been touched by the power of God.

They don't have this power, this dunamis power in the New Testament which comes from the word dynamite. This Holy Spirit's power residing in the believer. So it shouldn't be a cemetery type environment.

There should be life and health and strength. Worship must be true is the next point from John four. Worship must be true.

Posture, our posture. Oh no, I'm sorry, our direction. Yet, Jesus said this, yet there's a time coming.

He's talking to a woman that he met. And he said there is a time coming and now has come when the true worshipers, the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. For the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

These are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. Think about this, God is seeking worshipers. God's looking for worshipers.

Okay, who am I gonna find? Who am I gonna fill with my spirit? Who am I gonna descend upon? Who are those worshipers? The rock of Gibraltar? Or the person acting crazy who's just looked at pornography and they think they're just gonna come and worship and they're planning on doing it again tonight? That kind of worshiper? No, God says I'm looking for worshipers who are worshipping me in spirit and in truth. In power

and in truth. See, this is why you can't have ecumenical movements.

Can't all the different religions get together for lunch? Yes, but not for worship. Because God is looking, to me that would be blasphemous. Because he's looking for true worshipers who worship him in spirit and in truth.

Worship is not external, it's internal. It has to be, to the title of the message, Christ-centered. True worship is Christ-centered.

Worshiping in spirit and in truth. And no matter what theologian you read, a lot of different people have different twists on this. Well, the in the spirit means this.

And worshiping in the spirit means this. And what do we know? We do know that you have to be in the spirit. Do you know him? Do you have a relationship with God? The right spirit in you.

I guess there's a better way to put it. Is the right spirit in you, do you truly know God? Because I know people, they worship and they dress in their hippie garments and they go out in the desert and they put flowers in their hair and they're worshipping. And they look just like a church worshiper.

But what are they missing? The spirit, the Holy Spirit. And they're not worshipping according to truth. So whether, I don't know who you are or where this will go out later, but it does beg the question, do you have a true relationship with the true one and living God? Are you worshipping the right God? Back to what I said earlier, Jesus quoting Isaiah.

These people draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on mere human rules that they have been taught. So in spirit and in truth.

So when we come to worship the Lord, I'm sure it's fine at this service and possibly the 11, but sometimes there are people coming who don't know God. And they think because they feel something. Do you know a lot of unbelievers come here and they come back because they feel something.

They'll use funny terms like there's some power there. Or there's something there, I just don't know what it is, but there's something magnetic that's drawing. They say these interesting things.

The Spirit is working on them, convicting them, but in order to worship God in spirit and truth, they've got to submit to that God, surrender their lives, and be filled with that Spirit. See, all worship really is is the Holy Spirit within me jumping and leaping for joy and wanting to worship God. It's not Shane Idleman worshipping, because if Shane Idleman was gonna make his decision, he'd hit the nearest liquor store, right? He'd sleep, come on, let's get real.

This is Christian church, right? Or sleep in, or do what? What would the real us inside of us do? Anything but worship God. So it's when the Holy Spirit comes in, takes over, and begins to worship God that real change takes place. And then the next point, worship is an offering.

Worship is an offering. And so what I said when we opened, in case you weren't here, we still bring an offering today to the Lord. Did you know that? Turtle, dove, pigeon, ram, she-goat, heifer, those are all the things that were Abraham's sacrifice.

But we don't bring those things, because that was a temporary sacrifice. Here's my goat, and the blood of the goat was shed for the sins and the remission of the people, temporarily. Or if you're a poor pigeon, or

without the shedding of blood there's no remission of sin.

So this blood had to be required. And we don't keep bringing this. What do we bring now? Romans 12, therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, in view of God's mercy, you see God's mercy.

Paul's saying this, listen, you see God's mercy. He'd tell us the same thing. Church, you see the mercy of God.

The only reason you're sitting here worshiping God is because the sheer mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Should that not prompt worship? Should that not prompt an offering? So he says because of the great mercy of our God, offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. You know what holy and pleasing to God is? Because we don't teach, I don't believe in perfectionism, where I'm up here preaching in a perfect state of holiness and you guys need to keep working on it.

You know, some of you in the audience are. You've reached that point of holiness perfection. But a lot of you keep striving.

It'll eventually happen. You'll wake up one day and say, blessed be the name of the Lord. I am holy and set apart and I am not, I am sin free.

And as soon as you say that, you're prideful and arrogant and you're sinful. So what he's saying here, this is a beautiful thing about worship. You can unlock this key.

Most people don't worship because of sin. But if they would come and take the sin to the worship service, lay it on the altar, then they could worship. See, that's all it is, it's saying, God, I have a sin issue.

God, please, would you take this anger? Would you take this worry and this anxiety and this fear? God, I'm looking at things I shouldn't have looked at. I'm thinking things I shouldn't have. I've done things I shouldn't have.

I lay it at the altar, now I can worship you. And now holy hands can be raised up to a God who sees the heart that is right. So that's what he means by holy.

Holy and pleasing to God, because who in the world can worship God in pure holiness? But we do come in the righteousness and holiness of Christ. Because of what Christ has done, I can worship him. And so can you.

So be encouraged in that area, because sin prevents worship. But worship can help eradicate sin. Most people don't come to the morning worship, or to Wednesday worship, or different things, because they don't feel like it.

Have you been there? Shane, you don't know what I went through this week, I've made some really wrong choices, I can't go and worship God. That's actually the person who should be there. Because that's, how do you clean house? You think I just come to these worship services, full and pumped and holy before God and haven't sinned in three weeks? No, we come and that's what we do, we get our hearts right before God.

How about the sin of prayerlessness? It can be convicting morning, right? The sin of prayerlessness. The sin of not worshiping. Because we're too busy.

You know what I learned yesterday in different things? I cannot necessarily like the music and still worship. That might not be my favorite song, but I can still worship and sing to Christ. So we still give an offering today.

This is your true and proper worship. So Paul says, give your bodies as a living sacrifice. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Then you'll be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing, and perfect will. And I often wonder if people that say God's will is so hard I can't find it, are they worshipers? Are they worshiping and saying, Lord, whatever you want me to, the reason often God's will is so hard is because his agenda is not fitting my agenda. This isn't working.

What's his will? It's so confusing, so confusing because you're at odds with his will. A living sacrifice is, Lord, move me where you want to move me, keep me put where you want me to stay put, keep me at this job, open a different door. Lord, I'm just an offering.

Take me where you want me to go. That's very, there's a lot of peace there because if something's happening, God, it's your problem. Not mine, it's your will.

You're showing me, you're leading me. Hey, I just got noticed, I'm fired next week. It's your problem.

I'm in your will. Sacrifice, here's what the sacrifice is of Romans 12. Burn up self-centeredness.

Personal agendas must die. Consume my sin, God. That's my sacrifice.

The sweet-smelling aroma of the burning flesh. Not literally, right? Because I was just moving a pan the other day and it got my hair off a flame and that does not smell good. It's like I'm burning here.

But there is a sweet-smelling aroma of the flesh being crucified, of the flesh burning on the altar. And something takes place that is awesome. It's a wonderful smell to God because what you're saying is, Lord, you are worthy.

I worship you. You're worthy. That's why I'm here.

You get all the glory, all the credit. No flesh shall ever glory in his presence. The flesh should be crucified in his presence.

We're also to lay our mind on the altar, to renew our thinking to what is God honoring. This is so important because a part of sacrifice is what is God honoring in your mind. Lord, I renew my mind.

How do you renew your mind? You think about things that are noble and honest and just and upright. You renew your thinking by thinking about things that are God honoring. If you think about things that are not God honoring, what's going to happen? Now, it's interesting.

I don't want to take a long side trail here, but looking at a lot of the shootings and different things and shooters. You know, you'll see things sometimes in the paper. I don't know if you catch or not, but things addicted to video games.

You think those video games were Pac-Man? They're very violent games where you're actually shooting and killing people with AR-15s. There's video games that kids can play and they'll shoot and they'll kill

other people and they're constantly reinforcing this. Now, I can already hear the parents now that have these and let their kids do it.

Oh, come on. Well, I'm not saying that happens in all cases, obviously, but what are you programming? What are you putting in the mind? Listen, you're not gonna go to one of these kids' Facebook pages who just did this and see they're watching reruns of Leave it to Beaver. They were at church Sunday and Worship Group Monday and it's always feeding their minds on things that are anti-government, anti-authority, anti-establishment, shooting and mayhem and violence, confusion and chaos.

It's creating this culture. So going into the schools, you should bring the light, not continue to allow the darkness in. This is so important, conforming our minds to what is God honoring.

So it's not a circus for this very reason. Come and let us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. And it really doesn't apply here too much, but there are churches, this type of message is for all churches, but you have the cemetery environment, you have Christ-centered, and you can't have a circus environment where there's people, they think, because they lack the Spirit of God, they lack the anointing of God, that they have to preach really loud all the time.

They have to sing really loud all the time, have the volume cranked all the way, and they've gotta have people running and shouting and jumping and all these things, and it's not bad if it's legitimate, but sometimes we think the more emotional we get, the more God's Spirit's going to be there. Actually, sometimes you'll see the opposite. Have you ever heard the phrase, you could hear a pin? That's often when God's Spirit's moving.

Jesus didn't come up with that scroll and say, oh, believe it or not, here we go! And he just starts getting crazy, right? I'm not putting that down, but now some of you woke up, though, that helped. But he didn't do that. The eyes of the people were fixed on him.

Just he walked up. Why didn't he have to get loud? Because he already had the spiritual authority. Now, sometimes people get worked up.

I've tried to stop it, but I can't, because there's a passion there. There's an excitement. And when you hear that pin drop, when you hear the Holy Spirit moving, you hear weeping more than laughter.

You hear traveling at the altar more than jumping up and down. Now, there's nothing wrong with that. Don't take this in the wrong direction, correct? I'm not putting down anything.

But you have to be careful to make sure the heart's right. Because God doesn't say, boy, that church sure is loud. Boy, that pastor sure is loud.

Let me come down and fill him and come upon them. That's not necessarily the case. God says, my eyes go to and fro throughout the whole earth to show myself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to me.

I'm looking for a broken, oh, see that broken and contrite heart? You see those people at the altar? That's where I'll be. Most revivals I read about didn't start at large, powerful church services. They started in basements, in prayer rooms with a half a dozen people on their face before God, praying and crying out for God to stir and revive.

That's genuine revival. That's not a circus and it's not a cemetery. It's Christ-centered.

That's true in biblical worship. But it does cause a few things to question. But on the flip side, those who have been forgiven much worship much.

You can't stop a worshiper any more than you can stop Niagara Falls. Could you tell the prodigal son not to, be quiet, settle down. You see the prodigal son running home to the father.

And you see the father running to the son. Excitement, excitement. There should be excitement.

See, and I know I can't work it up. God's gotta bring it down. All I can do is chip away at that hearted heart and hopefully God will fill you with the spirit.

Listen, they just filled the Rose Bowl with Taylor Swift. Couple days, did you know that? People say, oh, I can't do anything. I'm going to the Taylor Swift conference.

They'll leave at three in the afternoon and get home at midnight. Seven, eight, nine, 10 hours for that. That edifies nothing spiritually.

But why shouldn't we be worshipers? Why are we in a hurry? Why are we, just, I can't get into this. My heart, you know, I just, I don't know. I'm bored.

The reason is maybe you haven't thought about how much you've been forgiven. Because we look, we read, the woman at the well, oh. Five husbands and the one you're with now isn't your husband.

Or the woman caught in the act of adultery. We look at them as if. But if it wasn't for the grace of God, there go I. And actually, I was a prodigal son who ran home.

It's interesting, you'll watch a 14-year-old, they can't worship. Often, they're bored of worship. You meet a 24-year-old, still bored of worship.

You get them at 34 when they've had a few kids and they realize that their idols do not give them dividends and there's no fulfillment in life, they become worshipers. It happens. Because we realize that everything I was chasing is empty.

And I've been running from the one true and living God. I have to worship him. So that's all you have to do.

Listen, the reason many people are not affected by worship is you've gotta get your mind on what God has done. And don't come in here so prideful and arrogant like I used to, thinking I'm a good person, I don't need this. It's amazing, 25 years ago, I thought I was a better person than I think I am now.

Where does that thinking come from? I would tell my mom, I don't need to go to church. That's for weak people, mom and women and stuff. Christ, it's a crutch for those people who can't get through life.

You know, big tough guy in my 20s. And you know, whoo-hoo. When life gets done with you, then you'll bow at the altar of repentance.

Then you'll say, oh, you're God, you're the only true living God, and I'm not. Well, how can you not worship? I'm so excited right now, we could just keep worshipping. And you know what's sad is often, and this is just something I have to work through, often, I come up and I won't continue in worship or do things because I'm worried about what people think.

Oh, that's too much worship. Come on, we got things to do, really? Oh, I'm not gonna be able to go easy on this sermon. See, emotions, when God is moving, you are moved.

That's the difference. If you're not moved in worship, is it because God's not moving in your heart? I don't say it to rebuke, I say it to challenge. When God is stirring, you are stirred.

When God is cutting, you are cut to the heart. Our heart. That's why I said, and I wasn't joking, that a worshiper is not the rock of Gibraltar.

If you don't know what that is, the famous huge rock, but sometimes we think that a worshiper is the rock of Gibraltar, just standing there strong. No, you need to let the rock break you. You show me one true worshiper in the Bible, worshiper that was just a rock of Gibraltar, not emotional.

I can take you David who danced and embarrassed his wife. Don't do that if it's not in you. But I can take you to, they would fall down in the holy presence of God.

They would come, even a man filled with demons would fall down and worship Christ as he came. He got up out of the boat, and this man filled with demons. How can that happen? They worship Jesus Christ.

Anytime you come into people and you see them worshiping God, there's a posture where they're either on their face or they're lifting up holy hands and they're worshiping. Why? Because their hands, sometimes I wanna reach heaven, but I can't, this is all I can do. And or they come down, they humble themselves.

This is all they can do. I went to a church, I would love to do it, but I think it'd embarrass half of you. The rows of peers are way back there and they have the whole front opening during worship.

People are on their face before God. They're kneeling, they're laid out prostrating. God is moving, God is setting free.

There's drug addicts being healed. There's prostitutes coming for wholeness and freedom. And we in our comfortable churches think the church is just for us.

We think the church is just for the dignified. The church is just for the dignified and the reserved. Be careful because that's also the characteristics of a Pharisee.

If this hurts, I hope it hurts. I hope it, I hope it hurts because I can't preach with handcuffs on. I don't know who the tithers are and I don't care.

I don't know who's not coming back again because they don't like this and I don't care. First Timothy, I want men in every place to pray and to stand quietly. No.

Lifting up holy hands. And see, I don't want to, you can't force this, but to me, it's just an act of full surrender. I can't touch heaven, but I'll try.

I can't touch heaven, but I'll try. Psalm 63, four, so I will bless you as long as I live. I will bless you as long as I live.

You guys ready for this, the last half of that sentence? I will lift up my hands to heaven. I said, Lord, just for fun, let me just do a search here. Five times in the book of Psalms, I will lift up my hands to almighty God.

I will lift, and we think we're Mr. Tough Guy. These guys are tough guys. You ever killed an army and circumcised Philistines? No, don't, these were tough guys that would worship.

They would kill men and not think twice and worship God and get excited. Moses, oh, we read about Joshua. Joshua was a warrior.

He goes, Dan, go around this wall. When it falls down, you kill everything inside because we have this idea of men. Real men don't worship.

No, the real men I read in the Bible worship. That's a man who's filled with the spirit of God. They have to worship.

There's no way around that. You try to find a loophole. I've tried, and every time I read the worshipers, I get convicted myself, and then finally, obedience and worship.

This might flow into the second service, so. Obedience and worship, I have to talk about this. 1 Samuel 15, 22, it's a scripture I read often.

You'll see it up there. Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifice as much as in obeying the Lord? Imagine this, these people are coming. It's not easy to bring a bull or a goat, right? And you're gonna sacrifice this, and look, here's the blood that's gonna come out.

It's not gonna be covered for my family. And they just got rebuked. He's actually rebuking the king in this context, but he's saying the Lord doesn't care about all these sacrifices if you're being disobedient.

And this one probably stood out more than all the other verses this week, because I like to meditate on these. How many of us are coming in, worshiping, but staying disobedient? How many? And we think our worship is gonna bypass our disobedience and overrule it when actually the opposite is true. How many millions are worshiping God in this state, right now, this morning? God, why don't you answer me? God, why don't you answer me? Why don't I feel your presence like I used to? Why, God, why I'm worshiping? Ah, that's just outward.

What's going on inside? See, sin has to be kept on a very short leash. Right, when God says do something, just do it. We like to make excuses.

Yeah, but they haven't really forgiven me. Yeah, that's my one little vice. But I really like that.

God, why don't you bypass that? And let me just come and worship. And he says, no, obey me. Listen to me.

Puritan author John Owen. You can read his book on holiness if you want to be really convicted. But he said, secret lusts lie lurking in your own heart which will never give up until they are either destroyed or satisfied.

J.C. Ryle said, the true Christian hates sin. He flees from it. He fights against it.

He considers it his greatest plague. He resents the burden of its presence. He mourns when he falls under its influence.

And he longs to be completely delivered from it. Why? Because it affects worship. The biggest thing affecting our worship service right now this morning is the sin inside the hearts.

But see, it can actually be used, what the enemy is intending for evil can actually be intended for good because when a worshiper lets go of the sin they've been holding onto, then they really start to worship. You might see some tears flow. Is that okay? It's okay to cry, right? You would, in 2009, the amount of grown men crying when the stock market crashed was alarming.

Grown men, high profile figures, not just crying, jumping off bridges. Emotion over the wrong thing because of their sin. Why is this point so important? Why is this point so important that I'm talking about right now? Here's why, our spiritual health depends upon it.

Did you know that? Your spiritual health depends upon this point right here, the spiritual health of this church. Everything depends upon this. Do you cut down your spouse? Are you constantly irritated? Is your heart hard, cold, and callous? Has your passion faded? Are you rarely talking about Jesus? Is besetting sin depressing you? Is pride hindering your worship? It can.

So we can come into a worship service and not worship. Talk about an oxymoron. We come into a worship service and we do not worship.

And let me just give a message quickly to workers who are involved, they're busy in things. You need to be worshipers first. You need to be worshipers first.

And it goes back to what we said earlier. What are you filled with? Like I said, the Rose Bowl. How can we love Taylor Swift but not Hillsong? Rap but not worship.

That might not apply to this congregation, but some. Rodney Atkins singing Caught Up in the Country, but when were you caught up in God's presence? I have to go on the internet and figure out the top 10 songs in order to be relevant, but isn't that true? Why do we avoid worship services? How can we be bored in God's presence? Well, I'm gonna give you an illustration I was holding onto until I get to the Holy Spirit part of theology, but let me put it up here on the four silhouettes. And this is exactly what can happen.

The unbeliever doesn't worship. The lukewarm person will worship if it's comfortable. I mean, if it fits their lifestyle.

Comfortable Christianity. Notice how you have everything but the heart and the head. They're not gonna worship much.

The only person that can truly worship God is the last person because that filled with the Spirit, it comes out of you. That's what worship is. It's an outward expression of what's going on in the heart.

That's why 100,000 young adults will run to Taylor Swift, but not the church. What are they filled with? Because what you're filled with, you worship. All right, thanks, Jason.

So I'm just gonna close with this. Worship is the thermometer of the heart. God, make me a worshiper needs to be your prayer.

Because you know you can't just do this on your own, right? Oh, man, there's some good points in there. I'm gonna try, come tomorrow. Tomorrow, Shane, I'm gonna really try that.

You're already destined to fail. Because you have to pray, God, I've not been a worshiper. I've been stoic, I've been strong, but I haven't been worshiping you.

I've been prideful, I've been arrogant, I've got handcuffs on. Isn't it interesting how we express ourselves like this? A man who will never raise their hands in church, you'll see him, what, what are you doing? Oh, whoa, whoa, whoa, what was that for? To show emphasis, right? Kid, you just made a mess, I just did that this week. You just made a mess in the backyard.

Who's gonna clean that up, right? But when I get in church, oh, no, sir, uh-uh. Anybody got the key for these? I'll tell you what the key is, telling God, remove the key. And again, I'm trying to, you don't have to do anything, because then it's just pushing.

But there's such something in the heart that has to worship you. Is it okay to kneel? Is it okay to worship and express what God has done for us? And let's not forget about the weapon of worship as we go into worship in just a minute. The weapon of worship.

I talked about the armor of God, but forgot about this important point. The weapon of worship, it brings light into darkness, it brings praise into depression, it brings hope into despair, and it brings joy into chaos. I double-dog dare you to put on worship the next time you're in a situation.

You put on that Hillsong song, old rugged cross. The old rugged cross, who will deliver me from this body of sin and death? Oh, nothing but the cross of Christ. Let it rain, let it rain.

Let the spirit of God come and flood this place. We sing these songs, but have they genuinely impacted our heart? And think about these things. Who am I that the highest king would welcome me? Who am I that the innocent will give his life for the guilty? Who am I that God would love me unconditionally? If that doesn't fuel worship, nothing will.

Nothing will. That's how you become a worshiper, is you see what God has done for you. We need to get off of our high horse and think we're a gift to the church.

Should I just stay here a minute? I've been a Christian 30 years. I know what this is about. Oh, and then we just get caught up in our own... That's just a stench in God's nostrils.

He doesn't have nostrils. He's a spirit. Those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

But I think even grown men who have been seasoned Christians often need to come to worship as newborn children, infants, worshiping God. Sometimes I'll see my kids getting so excited over worship at home, it brings me to tears. I say, God, help them not lose that simplicity.

Hearts that are touched by God. My kids wanna tell my neighbors more about Jesus than me. No, I don't think we should get too excited.

I think that should embarrass us. They'll leave VBS in a wanton telling, can I tell this person about, mm-mm, mm-mm, mm-mm. They're a waiter, I don't want them putting anything in my food.

No, don't tell, but think about it. No, don't tell them about Jesus. But see, we have to go back to Christ with childlike faith.

Oh, if I could just go back to 1999, 1999 when the spirit fell upon me, I didn't know about Calvinism, Arminianism, the rapture, amillennialism, postmillennialism, premillennialism, gifts of the spirit, cessationism, continuationism, eschatology, pneumatology, soteriology, I just knew Christ. And then knowledge comes in, it puffs up. We get in our little camps.

We like to argue the Bible more than worship God. That's a sure sign you're not a worshiper. If you like to debate this more than worship God.

Because what, well, let me just, personal confession. The reason I like to debate this is to show you my knowledge. I can, my argument can beat your argument.

And that's not worship. That's self-exalting self. Let's have the worship team come up.

I don't know if I can harness my tongue much longer. In a good way, though, right? You hear my heart. That's my frustration.

A lot of my frustration. And a lot of my frustration, folks, is not on you. It's on me, it's on the church in general.

And I've been debating saying this as well, and sometimes I don't know if I should, but I actually had an email prepared for a lot of the staff, a lot of the helpers here, about 115 people, helpers. And I was gonna express my, just, disappointment on people not coming to worship mornings and Wednesday nights, even though it's a good turnout. I mean, that's what they were designed for.

Of course, you know, with every good man is a great woman. You might wanna sleep on that. Right? Just make sure you didn't have any coffee before you send it, right? So it's still sitting in draft folder four days later.

I went on a long walk. God just showed me, we love the Bible, but do we love him? Says, Shane, a lot of people at Westside love the Bible, they love my word, they love truth, but they're not worshipers. We've gotta get the people to be worshipers.

And he gave me a different plan. It wasn't a rebuking email. He said, you pray and you fast, and you watch what I do.

So that's how I'm gonna handle this, is, and I know people are busy. People have kids, I'm not talking about that, but a church this large, dedicated to the truth, loving the truth, why aren't we worshipers? People say, oh, 6.30 in the morning's too early. Okay, I'll do 6 p.m. Wednesday night.

Oh, I'm busy on Wednesday night. You see the problem. It's not the calendar, it's the heart.

Because something's a priority, it'll happen. There's some things on your calendar next week that hell or high water's not gonna knock it off the calendar. You're gonna get it done.

You're going to do it. Why shouldn't worship be the same thing? For God. All right, come on up, worship team, and let's do what we've been talking about for 45 minutes.

And I didn't want to share that email because I didn't want you to think wrongly of me. It's a godly frustration. If I could get 100 people here worshipping God, when you get up on the altar, that problem you had with the other person is gone.

So I know that can cure division. I know that can cure broken marriages. I know that can cure problems, besetting sin.

That's the cure. Coming here and going, oh, that's a good point, Shane. Yeah, that makes sense.

That's not the cure. Preaching is just fueling the pump for the fire that needs to take place within your heart.

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