

Worship Is Warfare

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of worship as warfare, fighting to prevail. It discusses how worship involves prayer and the inseparable connection between worship and prayer. The sermon delves into Revelation 11-15, highlighting the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and the significance of falling on our faces to worship God. It challenges listeners to engage in heartfelt worship, repentance, and prayer to experience God's transformative power.

Scripture: Revelation 11:15, Psalm 51:10, Hebrews 4:16, James 4:10, 2 Chronicles 7:14

Topics: "Worship as Warfare", "Transformative Power of Prayer"

Description

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Transcript

The title this morning is Worship is Warfare. Worship is Warfare, Fighting to Prevail from Revelation 11, 15 through 19. Bible students, you might be wondering how I pulled that out of this text, and you are correct.

What I'm doing, in Revelation, I don't like to just talk for an hour, oh, here's what this group says, here's what this commentary says, here's what might happen, here's what might not happen, see you next week. We need also practical application for what we're going through. And so, sometimes a word or a phrase or a verse or a principle will just really stand out in the book of Revelation that it's, I believe, something that we need to consider and think about, and that is this topic of worship.

It is warfare. You need to always remember that, and worship, of course, involves prayer. Do you ever worship and not pray? I mean, that's kind of hard.

I mean, you're worshipping, you're praying, you're asking God to change situations, to change your heart. So to me, worship and prayer go hand-in-hand. It's really hard to separate those.

Because when you're praying, in a sense, you're worshipping. Worthy. God is worthy of our adoration, of our time.

And of course, there's different definitions of worship, and I'll get to that in a little bit, but I think it's important to start with Revelation 11-15, where we left off. And also, with Christmas coming up, we'll probably have a Christmas message, a New Year's message, and so we might, after I think next Sunday, be out of Revelation for a little bit, for special messages for Christmas and different things. But I am coming up on Revelation 12, where the woman gives birth to a child, and that child will rule the nation.

So I don't know, that could tie into Christmas. We'll see. We will see.

So, Revelation 11-15. Then the seventh angel sounded. And remember, we're going through all these different judgments, all these different cataclysmic events.

And there was, and there were, loud voices in heaven. So this seventh angel sounded, and loud voices in heaven declared, the kingdoms of this world have become. Actually, it's the kingdoms.

The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. So you get to this point in Revelation where it's like finally, finally, we see this conquering Savior. The kingdoms of this world, and sometimes when that phrase is used, the kingdoms of this world, they do talk about different principalities or different areas in the earth.

You know, this kingdom and that kingdom. You know, David's kingdom. The kingdom of the Assyrians and Sennacherib.

And different kingdoms. So he's saying here, I think in my opinion, the kingdoms of this world have now become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever. So although God is sovereign over everything, Satan is finally crushed.

This is an interesting topic because sometimes we view Satan as being cast out and never to have any interaction with God. But then you see in the book of Job, where the sons of God, the sons of God, *bene Elohim*, something along those lines in the Hebrew, the sons of God, and the devil Satan is part of them, they go before God, and God says, have you not considered My servant Job? And that's where Satan began to talk and converse with God. Very interesting.

And then as we'll get into Revelation a little bit more, that Satan was cast down, and that's where that concept of cast down with one third of the angels comes from. And we'll get into that in a little bit, but we see that it appears that Satan, even though he's under God's sovereignty, the kingdoms were kind of still under his rule and reign. Because then you go to when Jesus was fasting.

Oh, fasting, here we go. He was taken up and what did the devil say to him? If you bow to me, I will give you all my kingdoms. At this point in Scripture, it seems like that is no longer the case.

Because these kingdoms that were under God's sovereignty, but possibly the enemy's control, and he was reigning over them, he will no longer reign over them. And as a result of this, the 24 elders who sat before God on their throne, what did they do? They fell on their faces and worshiped God. They fell on their faces and worshiped God.

And there are so many places I could have took this sermon because I hear this a lot from people who really don't like worship with music and worshipping and expression. And they're like, well, worship is really just a lifestyle. Well, that excuses a dull heart really.

Because throughout the Bible, when they worship, there was some type of expression. They fell down in the holy presence of God, or they fell on their face and they worshiped. The man coming out of the Gadarenes, he fell down and worshiped.

And the angels cry, holy, holy, holy is our God. And they would bow down and there was a reverence, there was a respect, something is moved in their heart. And so yes, worship is a lifestyle, obviously.

And what we do when we sing worship is not just worship only. Worship involves a lot of things, but there is something dynamic that takes place when true worshipers are worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth. And you know, some of you, I mean, some of us, we have to contain ourselves sometimes.

I mean, sometimes, some songs, if I was just in my house, I'd be kind of like, praise God, and there's something leaps inside of me. When the words and the lyrics hit your heart, and many times you'll see, especially those coming out of addiction and working with Teen Challenge and things like this, and they're weeping at the altar and they've been set free, they've been delivered, and they're singing Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I was lost, but now I'm found.

I was blind, but now I see. Two months ago, I couldn't see my kids. Two months ago, the state was gonna take my kids, and then God began to change me, and I fell down in the holy presence of God.

Could it be that God has not really changed your heart, and that's why worship is stifled? There's no worship, because when God hits your heart, the response is worship. Where I should be to where I'm at now demands worship. Come on, I need to get an amen from some of you guys.

You know, had it not been for the Lord on my side, worship is so powerful. It is warfare. When the Bible says pull down strongholds, do we do that by just exegeting the text? The devil doesn't care if I read the Bible, but when I begin to worship and pray and obey the Bible, that's where the power comes from.

And of course, I'm not dismissing Bible reading. Most of us do it daily and continue to do it, because that is internalizing, it's changing the heart, it's changing the mind. But if that doesn't prompt me and motivate me to worship, something is wrong in the inside.

Because the inflow is coming, where's the outflow? Something needs to break. Reminds me, we should do that song again in the future. Something has to break.

What is her name, Tasha Cobbs? Is she the one who? Man, talk about putting it on rewind. Something has to break. And so these elders, they fell down on their faces and they worshiped God.

Now this isn't something you just do. Like, oh well, it's worship, let me see here, okay. All right, I'm worshipping, everybody's watching me.

Look how, he's so, I hope I can get up. Man, Shane is so, this is what we do during worship, right? Oh, I'm so spiritual. Good, all right.

Well, now that was worried. I was worried for a minute. But see, that's not just doing that doesn't do anything.

Because my heart's not right. And there are a lot of churches where the higher you jump, the more spiritual you are, and running around, and just, it's gotta be something that happens in the heart. And you can't manufacture it.

And that's why I tell people just be careful when people are up here at the altar, don't judge them. That could be an expression of what God is doing in their heart. And early on in Lancaster, you know, deacons would come up and I know their hearts are right.

They're like, pastor, pastor, we need to go pray for that. That girl, I mean, she's really weeping. God's dealing with her.

How dare I interrupt that? How dare I interrupt that? How dare I? Now, later on possibly, right, when services are over, or if God is prompting, hey, let's take you in the prayer room and let's really, you know, go deeper and let the prayer team minister to you, of course, but we don't want to disturb. Because early on, I would do that at conferences and they're like, I'm okay, I'm okay, I'm okay, sorry. Sorry, I'm okay.

And I begin to say, sorry, you're okay. They're composing themselves for me. And I just interrupted what God was doing.

And that's why I love this topic. I've seen the deepest work, deepest work of God, by far, nothing in second place, is during times of worship and prayer. Nothing is even close.

Where the deepest work is taking place because the prideful human heart is surrendering on the altar and once that takes place, it's the joy that follows. Here's the thing you need to remember about emotions. God gave you those emotions.

God did. They're God-given emotions. Now, they don't control your decisions.

That's where we get in trouble, correct? I feel angry, so I'm gonna lash out. Okay, see, now it's controlling you. But the Bible says, be angry, do not sin.

This is, you know, it's just the truth. Jesus was angry a few times. Do you know that? Jesus was angry a few times.

Maybe more. Why is that? Because anger is a natural emotion when you see the wicked is prevailing or the wicked is doing something, especially to children, especially to those who can't defend. That's a, without anger, big deal.

You see an atrocity, what's the big deal? What's prompting all these resource, pregnancy resource centers? They're angry about what's going on. So if you don't wanna feel angry, you might not do anything. That's one reason with preaching, I feel the anger of what's going on in society and hopefully it directs my words back to God's Word and to prompt and to motivate.

But it's a very good emotion. What about the emotion of during worship that your heart just resonates with what you're singing? And you might begin to tear up a little bit. And you might begin to be impacted by the power of God.

And you just begin to just, oh God, thank you so much for bringing my prodigal daughter home. She was almost dead on the street. And you're just, that's an expression of thankfulness.

But then there's many that judge people based on that. And they'll say that's just too emotional. What is too emotional? I don't quite understand that yet.

Now if you're being weird and it's not biblical and you're just being emotional, yeah, I got it. But what many are trying to do is excuse their dark and depraved heart and their lack of worship with statements like that so they feel better. I don't worship and I don't feel much and I'm gonna put down those who do.

So they fell on their faces and what did they say? We give you thanks. We give you thanks. Oh, man, there's so much even here.

Look at their first worship should involve thankfulness. I'm rushing ahead of myself, but I'm excited. Why am I so excited? Because worship makes a difference.

Worship is incredible. Worship changes the rebel into the worshiper. Oh, man, that preaches.

When a rebel becomes a worshiper, that's the power of the Gospel and they were thankful. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord.

I should have died many years ago and so should some of you. Thank You, God, for what You're doing in our children's heart and our grandchildren for some of you. God, we thank You for where we live and what we have.

Oh, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come. Basically, He is everything. And that's why Jesus said the Alpha and the Omega.

It's the Greek alphabet. They're the beginning and the end of everything. Because you have taken your great power and you have reigned.

What they've been waiting for, what we've been waiting for, aren't you waiting for that? I can't wait until evil gets slapped in the face. I cannot wait. I cannot wait until all these people are mocking God.

I want them to be saved. My heart truly does break for these people. And that's a good indication of where your heart is at.

It's okay to be upset. It's okay to be, but there should be underneath that a heart of compassion. I'll say things sometimes, not too often, but for example, we'll use Biden as an example.

But my heart breaks, just breaks for him and his family. It just, oh my gosh, it's sad. And the people on Facebook, he does not deserve our sympathy.

You shouldn't be sad over it. Like golly, Pharisee alert, hello. Yes, there's anger about a lot of things, but underneath that anger, you better have that compassion because that is part of a Spirit-filled believer, not an angry Pharisee.

You've got to have both. Now, most of the time, it's not like that because you get, but it's like, man, my heart just breaks for these people. Because the Holy Spirit is not mocking them, correct? The Holy Spirit residing in me and residing in you is angry over sin, angry what's going on, but has compassion, love, joy, peace, contentment, long-suffering, gentleness, kindness.

I don't see too much about arrogance and anger in those fruit there. Well, you just said it's okay to be angry. Yes, holy, righteous indignation.

When you see what's happening, when I see that the rainbow flag's falling on churches and there's transgenders teaching in the churches, it's like, is lightning going to strike? You know, it's like, oh, that makes me so angry mocking God's Word. But then there's compassion for those people. You've got to have both.

And it will really reveal what is in our hearts. I wish I passed that test with flying colors every time, but I don't. So application for us today, stopping on this word worship because it's profound.

They fell on their faces and they worship God. So the application is we are in a warfare, are we not? A fight to prevail. Right now, let me just get you up to speed with everything.

We are in a battle, of course, for the soul of our nation, for the next generation. Lies are being taught. Lies are being manipulated and influenced in the news and false narratives and agendas.

You remember the time when Walter Cronkite, you know, just the news, non-biased. Now it's like everybody's spinning all these things to make you believe and me believe a certain thing. And then that has huge ramifications.

So in these times, in these times, we have to be in spiritual warfare. We have to be. And I know I run into people sometimes and they say, you know, I understand that, but I'm just going to stay below the radar.

I'm not going to worry about these things. I'm not going to get involved. I'm not going to get engaged.

And you know, I hate to rain on their party, but you're already engaged. As a believer, you are in a spiritual battle. If not, find me the verse that says you can be in neutral.

There is no verse. There is no concept. Darkness, light.

Kingdom of God, kingdom of darkness. So whatever kingdom you're in, well, I'm kind of in the middle. Well, then you're in darkness.

Well, I'm a Christian, but I'm just the simple life. I don't want to do anything. I don't want to get involved.

I don't want to stay out of everything. Well, that silence speaks volumes. So you're going to do nothing as you're being hit with the darts of the enemy? As he goes after your children and your grandchildren and you're not going to do anything? What happens if you jump into a river and don't swim upstream? You go with the flow.

And as Paul talks about, even in the church, carnality is what? Going with the flow. Lukewarm. When Jesus said, hey, be hot or cold, but if you're lukewarm, I'm going to spew you out of my mouth.

There's no lukewarm Christianity or going with the flow carnality. Now, be encouraged. Nobody does this perfectly.

I got to throw that in there every week, right? Don't want people leaving saying, oh, that's so depressing. It's depressing when I call it out and you don't want to change. If I call it out, carnality, lukewarm living, and you don't want to change, it's very depressing.

Absolutely, I'd be depressed because I don't want to be confronted of these things or with these things. It's much better now with this church, but I used to have people get up and leave all the time when I first

started preaching at conferences and different things. And I don't want that.

That's not my goal. But conviction sometimes can be so heavy with the Word of God. So heavy.

Because it doesn't give us an alternative. It's not like obey if you want or you can be in the middle, back to neutral. It's explicit on these areas.

In Ephesians 6.12, I actually use the Amplified Bible. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, okay? So for those who want to stay in the middle, remember this, your struggle is not against flesh and blood, contending only with physical opponents, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this present darkness. Against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly supernatural places.

Now of course, we don't fully understand it because we don't live in the supernatural yet. We experience it. We live in the world.

But our battle, okay, so my battle's not here. So my battle with a certain person that you're having conflict with, that's not necessarily the battle. The battle is taking place in the spiritual realm.

So if this person is a believer, the enemy's planting the seeds or the fiery darts and he's getting worked up and taking it out against you. And that's what happens to me too. Or even as a believer, fiery darts.

Fiery darts. Don't we also deal with those fiery darts up here? I can't tell you how many times Christians just stop talking to Christians or stop going to church because they've been offended. And that offense is a fiery dart.

Let me encourage you, deal with it. Deal with it. It doesn't mean you'll be friends again.

It doesn't mean you'll go back to that church again. But at least you dealt with it. Because that fiery, what happens, you remember in the olden days when they got shot with an arrow? If they left that in their skin? Or they just left that metal or even that bullet? It becomes very toxic.

Actually, you can die because of it. Or get gangrene, they have to remove the limb. And that's what happens if you keep that fiery dart in your heart.

It just keeps festering. And it gets toxic. It gets sick and spiritually sick.

Because God does not want us to hold on to these areas. So that is our fight. Of course, we don't quite understand it, but we know the Bible says, put on the full armor of God.

We have the breastplate of righteousness, the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, the helm of salvation. And we have all these. So you see, the weapons are spiritual.

And if you look at them, take some time and look at those in Ephesians, and you'll see that a lot of them can be put on during worship and prayer. Shield of faith? I don't know about you, but it's hard to just muster that up sometimes. Sometimes you have to worship.

Wield the sword of the Spirit. Wield the Word of God in worship and prayer. So we battle against the darkness.

That is our battle. We don't see it physically. We fight it spiritually.

And that's why even right now, deliverance is a hot topic. You guys seeing that a lot? Deliverance, deliverance is a hot topic. And I'm not gonna go into a message on that.

Of course, I just did a podcast. You can watch it. But just to give you a little snapshot, because it is important here as we're struggling with the spiritual battles.

And if you have kids at home or grandkids, or you know that sometimes there's a spiritual battle going on. And so as believers, can we be, the word is demonized. It's not possessed in the Bible.

I think the King James actually translated it possessed. And so maybe it meant something to them 400 years ago. But to us, what does that mean? You know, robot, I'm possessed.

So I have to do whatever. You know, I heard voices. So I have to follow those voices.

But the word actually is demonized. They have a demon. So, how do I have a demon? You know, and of course, that opens up a whole nother debate.

And with this topic, you don't want to get too far out there and start saying things that the Bible doesn't say. But we know that a demon, in Ephesians, actually Ephesians 1, do not give a place to Satan. Do not give a place to Satan, okay.

A foothold to the enemy. Huh. Resist the devil.

So if I'm resisting, that tells me there's some pressure. So that's why we don't say possession, but oppression. And there's a pressure, so I'm resisting.

So not only is the flesh against me, hello. Just without the devil, the flesh doesn't really like God. It's at enmity with God, at war with God.

So the flesh wants to be satisfied. And often, that's not a good thing if it's out of those boundaries. Isn't it interesting how the flesh, like some things are great, eating, hello.

But if it's taken to the extreme. And did you guys know that sex was God's idea? Not Hollywood. Did you know that? Just telling you.

Just like a fire, it's wonderful in the fireplace, but get it on the living room floor and you have problems. So all these things, that's where the word perversion comes from. It takes what is straight and they pervert it.

And so that's what the enemy does. He takes what God has made straight, truth, and perverts it. And so I believe as Christians, we are oppressed.

We can be harassed. And so it comes up with deliverance. Okay, well, we can pray for that.

Maybe sometimes that oppression needs to be lifted. And we would love to pray for those people in the prayer room. Sometimes it has to do with their spiritual health, where they're at spiritually.

Sometimes they've opened a door to the demonic. You know, right? If you open a door and you allow, you give Satan more ground into your heart. For example, in studies, and when I taught on this, I might touch on it again.

You open the door with pornography. As a Christian, you see often anger is a manifestation. You're angry more because maybe shame, guilt.

But now there's an open door. Now burst out, I haven't been angry in a year. What is going on? And anger now is, and there's an open door now to where maybe you want to go back to something you walked away from.

Because there's an open door. Now the influence is even greater. So it's a very interesting topic.

And the debate is often over the definition. But I believe that we can be harassed, attacked. And we have to wrestle against.

Look at these terms. We wrestle not against. What? Right, we're not going to get in a wrestling match.

With people. But we do, how am I going to wrestle with a demonic, with a demon? Not physically. So, possibly? Could it be that something can come upon someone and oppress them? And really, and we see that, and not only through Scripture, we see it a lot over the years in the prayer room.

Where people just, and they're just, this oppression or this fear and anxiety or this I can't stop. You put in the, you fill in the blank. And so, and we pray for them and something is lifted.

It just happens all the time. So we know, not that we would use that to interpret Scripture, but you look at that through the lens of Scripture. Oppression, fighting, wrestling, and you can see, okay, I can see how this really could happen.

And as that person is filling that oppression and it's lifted, sometimes what happens is there's normal fear and anxiety that the flesh will have, but then the enemy can even pump in more with those fiery darts. And so, I think it's a misunderstanding. When you pray for something to be lifted, it doesn't mean you'll never struggle with that again.

Like depression, you know, if it's lifted. Doesn't mean you might not ever struggle with it again. I remember, I've got to go and look.

It was right when I came back to the Lord on the radio. A pastor by the name of Steve Schell. Anybody heard that name? One that's really, really well known, I think within Foursquare circles.

KTLW, there it is. And I'll never forget, he was a pastor. And he would deal with depression, like he would go home from church and go in the room and close the door for three or four hours.

And his wife would say, hey, Dad's in there, don't bother him. And he would deal with this incredible depression. I'm going to try to find that message because it was so profound.

Spurgeon dealt with it too, and others. But with Steve Schell, sometimes it was hard to preach. You know, the depression.

Because most of you don't know this, but when you come up here, you kind of got to have some things worked out in your heart, right? You got to kind of go up in a good mood, and hey, I'm going to be here for a while, and I know I'm not filling that great, I'm not filling it. I hear that a lot. I just didn't fill it in worship today.

Well, what does that mean? I just didn't fill it today. And you got to be on your best behavior and smiling, and so it's tough. So anyway, I'll never forget this.

It was probably 20 years ago now. Fighting this depression, he goes to this pastor's event, and he's in line for food, and just kind of, because you know, if you've ever had that, it just kind of follows you. That depression, it's like a cloudy day.

And that's why people say that. When I was in Washington, it was depressing. And I'm usually not a depressing guy.

But just cloud and rain for three days, like I can see why people don't like this. I need some sunshine. But anyway, so he's in this meeting, or this line eating food, and this couple turns around, and she says, her husband's a pastor, and she's the pastor's wife, and there's just so much joy.

And it kind of bothered him. Doesn't it bother you too when you're struggling through something, and somebody else isn't? Why are they so joyful? And he goes, oh, and they're just talking, and he's like, well, where's your church at? And he said, oh, and he's like, I haven't heard of that one. He goes, yeah, we're just a small church of 30, 40 people, and it hit Steve.

He was worried about, he was always carrying around this weight of numbers. And the depression was a manifestation of his heart. And so once he, you gotta hear his words, he almost tears up.

Once he repented of that, and said, Lord, I want the joy of your, and he had like 1,000 people. But you know, you're always keeping up with the Joneses sometimes. It can happen in our hearts too.

You know, I came back from a sales background, and that's how they measured success for years. Shane Idleman, top of the list. Shane Idleman, number three.

Numbers, numbers, numbers, numbers, always. And so you have to pull away from that. And so he repented, and never suffered from depression again.

But see, that was the stronghold that the enemy brought in more depression on that one area. Worried about appearance. Worried, rated himself on numbers.

Rated his, and it was just amazing to him telling that story. And I've heard of many other Christians who said when I finally just let go and trying to control my family, the depression lifted. You ever heard that term helicopter parents? Or helicopter mom? Have you heard that before? What does it mean? I'm hovering over my kids, and I'm not gonna let them do anything.

And I'm just hovering, helicopter. And it can be very depressing. Because there can be an aspect of control in there.

So there's so many things, that's why we have to let God show us. Let God reveal if there's something in our hearts. What about Paul's thorn? I don't know if we have that verse in 2 Corinthians 12.

I don't think we have the verse, but I might just have the reference. But oh yeah, Paul's thorn. Have you ever thought about this? I mean, I read lots of commentaries.

Nobody seems to know what the thorn is, because thank God, we all can relate. But a messenger of Satan, the apostle Paul. So all these people say, oh no, a Christian can't be harassed by a demon, they

can't be delivered.

Well, what happened with Paul? A messenger of Satan was given to Paul for the buffeting of his flesh. Now you can read, he was taken up into heaven, had this incredible vision of things that he can't even utter. And this thorn, whatever it is, could it be a physical ailment, or could it be a, I mean, if you struggle with anything, you call it a thorn, right? No matter what it is, a lust that there's an addiction, that's a thorn in my flesh.

And he prayed and prayed and prayed. God, please take this away. The apostle Paul! And God said, my grace is sufficient.

Now that doesn't mean that Paul caved in to this thorn. Hey, God's grace. Actually, it's the opposite.

My grace is sufficient to get you through. In this weakness, you will become strong. Be careful of anybody who doesn't think they have a weakness.

Or they're overly spiritual. It's that limp that will not leave that keeps you humble. Have you ever had that? Oh, every pastor better have a limp.

That weakness keeps them humble. If it wasn't for the grace of God, there go I. God, please take this away. Please take this away.

Some of you probably came in this morning, please take away this desire for alcohol. Or marijuana, or pain medication. Or pornography.

God, please take this away. Take away this anger. Take away this stronghold I have.

Could it be the saying, my grace is sufficient? And that doesn't mean continue in it. Actually, there's a discourse where he says, well, should I send more now that grace is even more present? He goes, God forbid. All that means is, God, take this away.

Take this away, but even if you don't, even if you don't, I will not cave in. This temptation is not going to overtake me. God, your grace will see me through.

Your grace has covered me. I'm not going to live in shame and guilt. And you don't cave in anymore, but that grace covers that past and that pain.

Because we all want to be delivered from whatever has us, and sometimes that just doesn't happen. Sometimes you gotta carry this thing along a little bit on your journey. Well, it was removed for that person, why not me? I can't remember the name of the book.

He kind of went woke. I think it's Russell Moore. The book is Tempted and Tried.

I'll never forget. I think I mentioned it in my book on addiction. There's a paragraph he says, is it any less a miracle that the person who is delivered completely from alcohol never touches it again? Or the person who says, every time I hear the clink of ice in the glass, that desire comes back.

But I say no. Is that any less a miracle? I would say that's harder. Hello? Because the one person has been removed.

Huh, praise God, never again. But the other person, there's something that they might have to fight. And God could be using that to keep them humble.

That's why he said, in my weakness, I am strong. The weaker you realize how weak you really are, the stronger you can become spiritually. The reason is, you go, you know, I'm pretty weak.

I'm not gonna go there. You know, I've fallen in that area. I'm pretty weak.

I'm not gonna go there. That person fell last week. Give them my phone number.

I want to encourage them because I've been there. So in that weakness, you can become very strong. And then we do wrestle against these things.

I just saw this week, Mike Tyson, remember him, was being interviewed. And they said, you said you cried. You cried before every boxing event.

Remember, he would pummel him. And he was like, it was a demon fighting. Golly, I've never seen anybody hit that hard.

But then they asked him, why would you cry? And he said, because I'm about to turn into someone I don't like. Because in order to go out there and kill those people, basically, he became turned into somebody he didn't like. The hate and the rage.

And that's giving over to the demonic. Now, of course, it's a whole different thing with a believer. I mean, an unbeliever, they're caught.

And I believe they are controlled a lot more. Not necessarily possessed. But a lot of these mass shooters, right, that you hear about.

I finally had to cave into this voice. So when you're an unbeliever, the battle is not even on the same playing field. It's more intense.

And that's why some people just can't stop. Because they've given themselves over. Can you imagine there's no Holy Spirit in your heart? Can you just think about that for a minute? That's why David said, do not take away your Holy Spirit from me.

And that could happen in the Old Testament. Did you know that? Spirit could come upon. Spirit could be withdrawn.

Whoa! Incredible. But they fell on their faces and they worshiped. It's been said that Christianity is a transformation of rebels into worshipers.

I knew I remembered it from somewhere. That's what's interesting too, just as I'm preaching, I've kind of been meditating on this all week, so a lot of these things will come up in the notes later. And then it kind of flows a little bit better.

But because we're on this topic of worship, and it's so important, worship is warfare. I know of no better way to go to battle for your families and for yourself than worship. Well, what about getting into the Word of God? Oh, yes, please do.

Please get into it, open it. But you have to apply it and you become a worshiper. You who read the Word a lot, it's not too hard to worship, is it? When you're reading and you're getting, I got into ecclesiastics this week, I'm like, oh my goodness, Solomon, you are a mess.

I tried all the finest women and all the finest, can you say that? Or all the whatever. And all the wine and all this, and vanity, vanity, vanity. It's all nothing.

And you begin to pray and worship, God, I don't ever want that to happen. There's a time to give, there's a time to take, there's a time for peace, there's a time for war. And let the Word of God, if it's living and active, it should do something in your heart.

It engages, right? You get emotional. And I just finished the Gospels. I try to go through the Gospels every four months or so.

And to where Jesus is in front of a Pontius Pilate and I feel myself getting kind of choked up, like, man, how dare they? How dare they do? And you begin to worship Jesus. Thank You. Thank You for the cross.

Thank You for Calvary. And I would even think, why couldn't you just kill Pilate right then? All those Roman soldiers who mocked you, slap those mockers in the face. And I love to get to the part where as soon as he said, it is finished to telestai.

It is finished. It's done. The earth shook.

The veil was torn. Even after His resurrection, the dead in the graveyards got up out of their graves and went into Holy City. And then it says, and the Roman centurion said, surely this was the Son of God.

Oh my goodness, I would have loved to have been there on that day. And see, it fires you up and you begin to worship and you begin to maybe close the Bible and get in your prayer closet. This is a living, engaging Word of God that fires you up and brings you close to your Savior.

Folks, this is the only way to get through these difficult times ahead. So because it's so important, let's talk about it for just a minute. Biblical facts about worship.

Number one, worship involves more than just singing or listening to worship music. So it is, worship is not just singing or listening to worship music, right? It's our lifestyle. But again, don't use this as an excuse to hide spiritual apathy.

And I've heard it a lot. I've talked to people like, hey, you're not really, you know, you're just kind of bored during worship. You never worship.

Oh yeah, well, you know. Worship is my lifestyle. Okay, okay, that makes you feel better.

But I don't want to say, well, you got to get emotional and cry all the time and oh, I fell down in prayer. It's not that, but there's something, right? Like we all express joy differently. I mean, for example, if we say, hey guys, you're not going to believe this.

Elon Musk, stop by. This is incredible. I can't believe it actually.

Every one of you gets a million dollars cash today as you're leaving. Oh, you're not going to act like this. Give me a break.

Right, see? Correct? Some of you, and some of you be at this altar crying. Thank God, thank God. Some of you jumping up for joy.

You're not even staying for the service. You're out that door to get the money and get out. See, we all express things differently, but there should be emotional engagement.

There should be something that rocks your boat. There should be something that hits like a fighter's punch. There should be something where your heart is entrenched in worship.

And then number two, true worshipers worship God in spirit and in truth. BibleStudyTools.com. Worship in truth. Worship in truth connects the heart of worship with the truth about God and His work of redemption as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ and the Scriptures.

Are you saying that if I'm not a believer, I'm not truly worshipping God? Absolutely not. Absolutely, absolutely. Nobody who rejects Christ and the Scriptures is truly worshipping God.

They're going through motions, and God will hear your prayer and your worship if you say, oh God, I've been wrong. Save me, I need to know you. Now your heart is engaged to the one true and living God.

The true worship of God is essentially internal. It's a matter of the heart and spirit rooted in the knowledge of and the obedience to the revealed Word of God. That's a good definition.

And then in spirit is the internal working of the Holy Spirit in your heart, often drawing us to repentance and obedience. So that is really worship, is you're worshipping God in truth. You have a right relationship with Him.

You know Jesus Christ, you've repented, and worship is the outflow. Worship is the outflow of what's going on internally. Because out of the abundance of my heart, my mouth is going to speak.

False worship is not connected to the true God via repentance and faith in Christ. So anytime you can, it's a pretty interesting study, probably a couple hours you can pull up online, all the mentions of false worship in the Bible. And a lot of those times it was not just pagans.

It was God's people. God's people had false worship. Giving their heart, their expressions, their time, their energy, their adoration to something that's not God.

Remember months ago, somebody posted on Facebook and me and my wife were shocked. Like I would have never, and I can't go into details on who, but they're going to a Taylor Swift concert. I don't want to get legalistic, but that's demonic.

Have you seen the devil's hat she puts on and the lustful lyrics and this enticement? I mean, music is getting so, it's like cut and dry. Lil Nas X, all I need is 30 seconds of watching that video. Right, there's something that, and how could you, you're being drawn away.

It makes you wonder, where's the spiritual discernment? Because we can become so carnal, so carnal, so quenching and grieving the Spirit of God that we no longer hear His voice and instead we drift away. We drift into those things and we make excuses. Oh, my kid's laughing.

I'm going to spend some time with them. Well, that's a problem right there. Teach them, show them.

And false worship was even connected to God's people. God's people would be involved in false worship, giving their adoration and going through these rituals and these motions to pagan deities. And that's why I'm sure the Old Testament's clear when it says don't even follow their practices.

Don't even follow their practices. That's why you have to be careful. You don't want to just, you know, I remember I was a pastor.

Well, it was probably right when we planted the church, now 13 years ago, it was in a church in our area. And we just obviously disagreed on everything. He was part of something called the emergent church movement.

And I'll never forget, I just like, Lord, this conversation's over. But Shane, we can learn a lot from Muslims. We can learn a lot from Hindus and Buddhists.

Exact words. Can you kind of unpack that for a minute? Well, we can learn how to pray more and meditate more. Look how devoted they are.

I'm like, all that shows me is your lack of spiritual appetite for God. None of those things should be lessons for you on how you can get closer to God. You're supposed to have the true living God, and your passion, your worship, your desire does not have to be motivated or gauged by other religions.

What can we learn? Now, maybe he's just trying to be gracious, but that's a dangerous statement. How many of you would be here next Sunday if I came in here and said that? How many of you would be gone next Sunday? Dave, I know you would. Heidi, you're gone too? All right.

Now, most of you. If I said, hey guys, we need to stop being so rigid and legalistic, and I'm learning a lot. You know, I've been kind of enlightened lately.

I think we can learn a lot from Buddhists, and here's what we're gonna learn in Hindu. And even that's why some people are careful with yoga, because it's poses to their gods. So I'm just saying, I know the people, just be careful.

You can never err on the side of following God too much. Now, you can get legalistic and rigid, right? And judging people, but hey, Lord, I just wanna follow You unconditionally. Because it's a gray area, maybe that's a sermon title in the future.

Get rid of the gray areas. Because a gray area sometimes is what makes us fall back into the black. Because it's gray and cloudy.

Now, I'm not telling you, go cancel your yoga classes. But I would call them Christian stretching. Right? I remember it was so hard.

24-Hour Fitness, when I was leaving in 2000, they were starting to bring in yoga classes. I was coming back to the Lord, like a year, and I'm on fire for it. I'm like, and I got legalistic about it, and it's a secular organization.

But I'm like, can't we just call it stretching? Why this term? You know why? And if you look, that's what they're, all these poses to this God and that God. It's like, now that I know that, see, that's everything. Once you know it, see, now that's why some of you are now in trouble, because now you know.

Now you know. The truth has been revealed. But you have to be careful of false worship.

Wood, stone, and precious metal could not save Israel. And it cannot save us. They begin to worship these things.

I mean, God says, you'll cut down a tree. You'll bring it home. You'll burn some of it, and then you'll fashion some into this idol and put it there and begin to worship it.

Give it your time, your adoration, your attention, your prayer requests. Okay, glad we don't do that anymore. Well, now it's called a 50-inch entertainment center.

Is there anything wrong with it? No, there's not. But what about if it's getting all your adoration and all your attention? Because worship isn't just hands held high and singing. Right, it's where am I giving my attention and my focus? And that's why entertainment is not really neutral.

Whatever is entertaining you is influencing you. If I start to turn on things that are entertaining but not helpful, it's going to influence me. Because if it doesn't repulse you, or I shouldn't really do this, you're like, ah, you open.

That's what, open yourself up. Open yourself up. Number three, worship involves thankfulness.

As we saw earlier, there's always thankfulness with worship. Number four, worship can be exciting or deep and contemplative. You can contemplate.

What I mean by that is we can't judge worship by emotions and how a person acts. I would never do that. Because early on, God showed me a lot of different things from a lot of different churches.

You know, I would see people who I thought were so, so mature. Right, they're usually the loudest. Their hands were the highest.

They were jumpers. They're going down that aisle, or they're like, just praise the Lord, praise the Lord. And you get outside the building, it's like, oh, see, that can just be show.

Or it just can be that's who they are, you know? And so worship isn't necessarily, it's often exciting, but it's also deep. And you're contemplating things. Is there any different than the young adult raising their hands up here and crying out to God than the older gentleman back in the pew and kind of bent over and leaning and remembering where God brought him and just his tears and just, he's contemplating his life.

See, they're both worshiping. And then number five, God gave us emotions as forms of expression. And or to reveal what's going on inside.

So that's why I don't think emotions are bad. I mean, they're neutral depending on the situation. Would be to God we had more people emotionally worshiping God, amen? That's where the term frozen chosen comes from.

Or cemetery church. They're just, get me through this. Ah, Chick-fil-A's closed on Sundays.

Dang it. How many of you guys have driven over there and found that out? But God gives us their forms of expression or to reveal, can you imagine if we had no emotions? We just all kind of had the half smile and no, they reveal what's going on. You know when you see that look in your spouse's face, what's wrong?

Right, because the emotions are revealing what's going on.

So why should that not also play a role in worship? Shouldn't our emotions play a role in what's going on? And I only say that because right now there's a big push on emotional worship. And I'm like, can you please define what that means? What do you, ah, that's emotional worship. Okay, what's the, okay, if it's not emotional worship, what kind of worship is it? I mean, dead? That's the only other option.

Statue worship? So what's the opposite of emotional? What they're saying is they don't like all these younger people expressing their hearts to God and being an hour, hour and a half long worship service is crying out to God, because they see they lack that in their own spiritual life. Instead of repenting, they have to come up with some term. Now, when that term, when they're using that term that right way, is they mean, you know, emotion, you're just trying to get the emotions, right? And we actually, when did we cancel the fog machine last week? We had a fog machine coming, and it was gonna be, oh, it was gonna be great.

And we talked to the top musicians in the United States, and they told us just how to camp out for a while. You know I'm joking, right? Okay, some of you are like. But that's what they, that's what I can see that term being used correctly.

You know, you got the smoke machines, you've got the, you know, the worship leader, we gotta get that guy that charges \$5,000, and wears the skinny jeans, and drinks his latte, and he's got that worship look, and then just camp out, and you know, and number C on guitar or whatever, you know, just kind of, just do that for a while, and see, now you're playing on emotions, and you can, and that's why they mean you're just playing on, because you can. You can, you know, anytime you hear the national anthem, do you ever get goosebumps? Or just me? Man, so there are things that can be, but that's not necessarily bad. God gave us emotions to express things.

It's where that expression is going. And I think worship should be a little bit more lively when it comes to worship. Think, I mean, think about what we're doing.

We come in together, corporately, and we worship the God who died for us, and gave up His body, His blood as a ransom, paid our debt, now I can stand before Almighty God. Now He's gonna watch over my kids, and your kids, and our grandkids. Though you might fall, you're gonna get back up.

The God of the universe is going to guide us and control us, although all hell may be breaking loose, and I might be dying of something, or I might be going through hell, that God is holding me together, and we're gonna come in here and just, think about it. Think of what's really going on in a lot of our hearts. Help us is a good thing to say right now.

Pastor, you're convicting me. Yeah, not me though, it's not me. What's convicting you? Knowing, knowing there's a deeper life, knowing there's a deeper heart.

But on this note of emotions, they do not determine the truth, but they often reflect the truth. So when I hear the truth, or singing about the truth, it's gonna be reflected in my emotions. What a beautiful name it is.

Man. And could it be that God gave us instruments and things that would spark emotion? It's not always a bad thing, guys. I think I read somewhere in the Bible, heart, and loop, and tambourine, and this, and make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Come on, frozen chosen, we gotta wake up a little bit. Now, that doesn't mean you're gonna turn into some emotional worshiper. How many guys out there that are conservative like me? Right, you're probably not gonna look like the lady up front with the flags.

Right, that's emotional. It's the same emotion, they're feeling the same thing, they just express it differently. But there's gotta be something that rises up in us and says I gotta get to that altar.

I've gotta raise holy hands unto the Lord. I've gotta pray and contemplate, or get on my knees, and there's something that expresses what God has done for me. I think it's a dishonor to come in and act like we're bored, I really do.

We're getting more excited in Cinemark. Or when I went to the Dodger game, what an example of emotion. Why aren't these guys emotional? I mean, why don't you call them emotional? That's truly emotional for the things that aren't of God.

Paint their face? Loud as heck? Get these little horn things? Roar! So here's the key. Emotions are a thermometer, not a thermostat. So let me explain that.

My emotions as a thermometer are going to measure or gauge the spiritual vitality in my heart. A thermometer, you know, you put it in, come on, you guys, you know, you put it in the meat, or it's in your house, and it says, okay, this is what the temperature is. It does nothing to change it.

So that's what my emotions are. They're a reflection, a thermometer of what's going on in my heart. But they're not a thermostat.

Meaning they control now the temperature. And now our emotions are controlling us. I'm going to have to shoot you guys honest this morning, like over seven, I know it sounds crazy.

But if I only came to church when I felt like it, you might not see me a lot. Now, I'm excited I'm here. Absolutely excited.

Because see, my emotions followed. They didn't control me. This morning, I decided to leave when my wife and kids leave.

My four-year-old does not want her hair combed. And she's screaming bloody murder. Like, what is going on? Just comb her hair, it's easy.

Well, you do it. And then the 10-year-old doesn't want her in her room. And then it's like, golly, I just want to stay home today.

I can't, that's right. Dang it, I can't. We used to do that all the time.

Can we just be honest this morning? How many of you fully intent on going to church, and then all hell breaks loose in the morning, I'm not going now? Me and my wife went to Central Christian and Hope Chapel and Calvary Chapel while we were married, and we missed a lot of services because I'm just not going. I don't feel like it anymore. Good, fine.

See how that, blame yourself. Everybody, if you can't relate. So I do laugh sometimes.

The reason God made me a pastor, too, is to get my keister to church and to, right? I mean, there's just no way around it now. Unless I'm sick, like real sick, there's just, I'm here. But I've learned a great lesson that when I'm like, thank God, when I just walk in and hear the practice, or drive, and you think, oh, thank God.

And see, now the emotions follow me. They come later. So that's when we get in trouble, when your emotions are the thermostat.

They're controlling the temperature of your heart. Love your spouse even when you don't feel like it. Should I get out of that one or keep pressing in a little bit more? Right, don't our feelings? If you act on the feelings, and they're leading you to the thermostat, that's when you get in trouble.

I told Pastor Abram, I'm on the 405 yesterday. Me and my daughter are coming back home, and you see the Highway Patrol start doing this on the 405? I'm like, yeah, I know what this means. I'm only eight cars, and I'm thinking, if I just kind of act like I didn't see them, right? But no, it took a mile, and we're all stopped for over a half hour.

Doors are open on the 405, I couldn't believe it. The same spot just about I saw OJ when he was down in that Bronco. I was going to Cheesecake Factory, and I saw the Bronco going, I'll never forget.

And that AC Collins was driving, and it was funny, but kind of the same spot. And so, doors are open, and people start honking. And do you think I just was really joyful about that and happy? Do you see the Highway Patrol blocking the freeway? What in the world do you want me to do? So a couple more, and I'm like, Lord, see, so if I allowed the emotions to go, I might not be here this morning because I was arrested.

It probably wouldn't have been that, but I said, sir, where would you like us to go? It's miles backed up. And so these emotions, they can't be the thermostat and control you. That's why all the great books on leadership will say never leave a job when you're upset, or mad, or stressed.

Rest on it, take some time, make sure it's the right decision. Because then emotions. Have you ever had to go back and apologize to the boss and rehire you? Just me? Nobody else? Two or three honest people.

This is incredible. But see, okay, have you ever had to go back and apologize to anyone because the emotions got the best of you? Every hand in this place ought to go up. So when it comes to worship, that's why this is so important.

Emotions are great. They're God-given. Thank God for them.

But they can't be the thermostat and control you. Number six, a posture. The posture during worship can be genuine or deceiving, but fruit doesn't lie.

So I'm not gonna hang out here because I just explained that. Going to different churches, you can see how people express themselves. And oh man, they're at the altar.

They're worshipping, they're crying to God. They must be so, so spiritual. No, they could have just blown it.

Right? So that doesn't always negate spirituality. One of the most godly people I ever knew for sure was my mom. Without a shadow of a doubt.

Like, do you ever get upset at anybody? I want to ask her. Like, oh, son, it'll be fine. I nice it.

Man, it'll be fine. God's got it. Can't you get frustrated with me? But never saw her really as an emotional worshiper.

Never came to the altar. Never, just was very simple and quiet and in that back row, usually back over there by that exit. And so you can't gauge it on actions alone.

And number seven, worship reflects on the awesomeness of God. So if you're having a hard time worshipping, push out your problems and push in the awesomeness of God. Often the only response to life's challenges is worship.

Did you know that sometimes you don't have the answer? You don't have the answer. Lord, what is going on in my home? What is going on in my marriage or to my kids? I have no answer. The only response is worship because that's when the heart gets right before God and begins to cry out for God.

God, take my anger. Take my bitterness. Take my challenges.

Take my fear. And I just come and I fall down in Your holy presence and I worship You. Sometimes it's the only answer.

I can't tell you how many times that worship was my only answer. I had no other backup plans. I had no options.

And number nine, worship is a heart cry that changes the heart. Worship is a heart cry that changes the heart. It recenters the heart and it renews and it restores our relationship with God.

Gotta hurry up, huh? I actually came up 20 minutes early thinking it would help and it didn't. I talk too much. You guys have got to give me boundaries.

But let me close with this. Maybe we'll pick up next week. In order for worship to flow through us, the conduit often needs to be cleaned.

Anybody in construction? Do you know what a conduit is? Let me show you a picture of some of the water pipes I used to see. Could it be that that's why only a little bit of the Spirit's flowing out of you? The rivers of living water, is that why they're stopped up? Think about that. When that's empty, the pressure is amazing.

It's just blowing out water. Thousands of gallons per minute. Sometimes, depending on the size.

But look, only a little stream. And that's the heart right there of many Christians. What's building up? What's clogging that? Pride.

Pride. What about bitterness? You're just so bitter? So angry? And the reason I can say these things is I've been there. These same things can clog up my pipe too.

Exactly the same things, but what is stopping that outflow? Maybe the opinions of people? Maybe your concept of worship? And what happens over time is things begin to catch on the side. Usually it's the calcium and hard water spots and different things. But they begin to build up.

They begin to build up and over time, it begins to even constrict it more, the flow more. And that's what happens in our heart over time. Our hearts begin to get clogged up with things.

And we can't really come and worship God because I'm caught in sin. I'm just an angry, prideful, or malicious, or gossip, or envy, or backbiting. All these things are in the Bible, and all of these things, if we're not careful, can be in us.

But what opens this? Repentance. Repentance opens this clogged line to God. Repent and renew those spiritual disciplines.

Repent and renew. Like David. David had this clog.

Remember that? No communion with God. He was in that sin in Bathsheba, and a year had gone by. A year had gone by.

And finally, he was confronted. Confronted. See, it's okay to confront.

And I often think if there had been no David, or no Nathan, there may have been no repentance. David's just going, because you can just go through life, can't you? Going through life, everything's good until you're confronted. And what happened? He said, oh, God created me a clean heart.

Renew a right spirit within me. I'm going to skip ahead to verse 19, and we'll close with this. The temple of God was then open in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple.

And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, and earthquakes, and great hell. So the bottom line is, if the ark was seen, then the holies of holies was open. Remember, the holies of holies is a place nobody could go except the priest to make the sacrifice.

And then when Jesus died, that veil, that big, thick veil was torn. Now, access to the Father is granted. That's why we don't believe you need to go to a priest at all.

What's the point of the cross? That you go directly, you go boldly to the throne room of grace. So the ark was seen, the holies of holies was open, the temple is open and ready. Again, for all of us, all of you, those listening, those even listening, the temple is open and ready.

All who repent and believe have access to the Father. All who repent and believe have access to the Father. And so this morning, I just want to close with this thought.

Don't let the power of pride sidetrack you. Don't let the power of pride prevent heartfelt worship. Or for some of you, don't let the power of pride stop you from coming to Christ and fully surrendering your life.

What do you mean the power of pride? Something that today still amazes me no matter how many times I read it. Jesus would go into a place like the temple, and the Pharisees, this is just laughable, they would say, let's watch Him to see if He heals today. Let's watch Him and see if He heals today, how dare He? The Messiah is before you, healing all around you, and all you do is come with a judgment, all they do is come with a judgmental spirit.

The power of pride blocked them from heaven. So maybe this morning, for those of you who don't know Jesus, you need to repent and believe and be baptized. Repent and believe and be baptized.

And for many of us believers, believers, we have to repent and clog, let that clog, that conduit open up again. Let it come, let it come and open up your heart. How we would clean a lot of those pipes is we would actually increase the pressure.

60 pounds per square inch up to 120, you'll clean that pretty quick. The pressure, repentance is the pressure that releases and cleans the heart. You are actually engaging in warfare right now after the service.

This is why we go into worship and go into prayer. And I hear this a lot, well, other churches don't do that. Well, honey, I don't know what to tell you.

Hey, see you next week, when now is the time to do battle. Now, how do you know your prodigal son isn't coming home if you get your face on this altar or come into the prayer room? How do you know the wayward daughter isn't being healed or set free? How do you know that breakthrough isn't right around the corner as we press into God? This is not time to go home. It's time to ramp it up and call down heaven.

And this is how I fight my battles, through prayer and worship.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/G17WCBO2nug.mp4>
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