

What It Really Means To Worship God

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being a true worshiper of God, focusing on the examples of Abraham and Job who feared God, turned away from evil, and offered everything to the Lord without holding back. It highlights the distinction between religious practices and genuine spiritual worship, urging believers to prioritize God above all else and to offer their very best to Him, even if it costs them everything. The sermon challenges individuals to seek God wholeheartedly, to be willing to sacrifice all for Him, and to live a life of true worship in spirit and in truth.

Scripture: Genesis 22:12, Job 1:1, John 4:23, Acts 5:1, Luke 14:33

Topics: "True Worship", "Sacrifice for God"

Description

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Transcript

In the end of the Bible we find these two systems that you've heard of many times Babylon and Jerusalem and if you turn there for a moment this is how God's work with us concludes. Every person who calls himself a Christian he's either going to end up in Babylon or in Jerusalem. Babylon does not refer to non-Christians because Babylon is called a harlot in Revelation 17 and verse 5 Babylon the mother of harlots and in Revelation 21 Jerusalem is called a bride.

It's only those who profess that Christ is their bridegroom who claim to be the bride. No non-Christian says that Christ is my head or my bridegroom or my Savior so they're not the bride so they cannot be the harlot either. It's only a person who's engaged to somebody and then plays the fool with other men who becomes a harlot.

So what if you're not even engaged to Christ at all? He's not your bridegroom. You can't be a harlot to Christ, impossible. So it's very important to understand who is going to end up in Babylon and Babylon is described in chapter 17 and 18 as something very much connected with money and earthly goods etc things like that and I believe these are two systems that go right through the Bible that began right at the

beginning.

So when we in our church we concentrate on being free from sin and it's possible to be free from what we know to be sin and yet I believe end up in Babylon and I'll tell you why. If you turn with me to Genesis in chapter 4 this is where the two streams began. In Genesis 4 we read about Cain and Abel and from them started two streams that finally end up in the last book of the Bible in Babylon and Jerusalem and the principle is the same.

See when you come to the end of the Bible and you read about Babylon, Babylon is not a religious atheistic group. It's very religious but it's destroyed by God whereas Jerusalem is what I call spiritual and we need to distinguish between what is religious and what is spiritual. So in Genesis 4 we read about Cain and Abel bringing an offering to the Lord and there we see Cain was not an atheist.

He was not a worshipper of idols or some other God. Cain and Abel brought an offering to the Lord. It says in Genesis 4 in verse 3, Cain brought an offering to Jehovah, to the true God and Abel also brought an offering but the Lord, verse 4, had regard for Abel and for his offering.

Notice that it's a mistake a lot of people make particularly if you've gone to Bible schools who think that Abel was accepted because he brought a blood sacrifice and Cain did not bring a blood sacrifice. But it says here the Lord had regard for Abel and then for his offering. See how carelessly Christians can read it.

Almost everywhere I've heard in other churches when people speak about this. They say that the Lord had regard for Abel's offering and therefore he accepted Abel. That means he offered blood.

Therefore he accepted Abel because Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, verse 3, and Abel brought a sheep. But it's very clear in Scripture the Lord had regard for Abel and therefore for his offering and the reason why the Lord rejected Cain was the Lord had no regard for Cain, verse 5, and therefore for his offering he had no regard. So in other words it was the person more than the offering that the Lord rejected first and when the Lord rejects the person he rejects the offering.

You know Jesus also taught that, that you can come with your offering to the Lord and there you remember that somebody's got something against you, you got upset with somebody, you lost your temper at someone. It's in Genesis 5 verse 22 to 25. And you did not settle it, you did not go and apologize to him, you did not ask his forgiveness, and you come and offer to the Lord.

Whatever offering it is, you offer a prayer to God and Jesus said don't offer it, leave your offering there because God hasn't accepted you. So there's a case of a person, supposing he ignores that command in Matthew 5, what did I say, Genesis? No, Matthew 5 verse 22 to 25. Supposing a person ignores that command and comes with this prayer, he's wasting his time because God's not going to accept him.

I believe that lots of people who pray, God does not accept their prayer because there's something, they are not settled with somebody whom they've hurt or they cheated or harmed or some way. And Jesus said it so clearly, leave your offering there. Whatever offering it is, your prayer will not be accepted.

There are multitudes and multitudes of prayers that Christians pray that never go beyond the roof. God never listens to it because there's something unsettled in their life. So it's the Lord had regard for Abel, that's why he accepted his offering.

So when our offering is, we often think of money only, but even a prayer is an offering. If you pray, God doesn't even listen to it if he doesn't regard you. So it's very important to understand why God regarded Abel and he did not regard Cain.

So it says here that I see one difference, Cain brought an offering, whereas Abel brought the very best of his flock. So you can bring an offering or you can bring the best. And I think Abel also symbolically when he laid the lamp upon the altar he was saying, I give myself here completely to you, like this lamp, because that's what was symbolized in the later on in the when a person laid his hand on the offering that he was offering up to God.

So here was a person who was giving himself completely and here was a person who gave an offering. It's not a question of sin here. So that's why I said, you know, we can concentrate on just sin, okay, we avoid sin and we think we're okay.

But you know it's possible for two people to really be free from conscious sin in their life as far as they know. They can sit in the same church and be happy that I'm not aware of any sin in my life, good. But yet the offering you bring to the Lord may be an offering.

And another person sitting in the church may be one who brings the very best that he has. And there's a lot of difference between the two, even though both are not aware of any sin in their life. So it's not just a matter of being free from sin.

Jesus, when he came to earth, it was not just that he did not sin. Every day of his life he offered himself completely to the Father. There was nothing he withheld from his Father.

And that's why the Father accepted him. It was not just that I don't sin. I mentioned that because we emphasize sin so much in the church and that's important.

But what I'm trying to say is it's more than that. Babylon is the principle, is a system that emphasizes the principle of the business world. And that's very different from the Christian world.

If you turn to a verse that I don't think most of you probably even noticed in the book of Zechariah, let me show you that. It often comes to my mind, this verse. In Zechariah, in chapter... it's the last verse of Zechariah.

See, the last two, three chapters of Zechariah refer to the last days when there'll be a battle around Jerusalem, etc. Referring to the last days. Zechariah 14.2, I'll gather the nations against Jerusalem to battle and the Lord will go forth and fight against the nations.

Verse 3, that's referring to his coming second time. Verse 4, in that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. It's referring to Christ coming back.

And verse 9, the Lord of that day be king over all the earth. But when that day happens and the pure kingdom of God is established on earth, it says here in that day, symbolically, verse 20, even the bells of the horses will have holy to the Lord written on it. In the Old Testament, holy to the Lord was written on the forehead of the priest, the high priest.

But here it says even the horses, the bells of the horses, whatever it means symbolically, and the cooking pots in the Lord's house will be as holy as the bowls in front of the altar. So what I'm... in practical terms

what that means is there will be no difference between the sacred and the secular in that day. Today we call certain things sacred and certain things are secular.

For many Christians there is a division in their life between what is sacred and what is secular, what is related to religious work, Christian work, and being upright and all those things. And in the secular world many of them are not so careful to be upright. But in that day everything will be holy to the Lord.

There will be no difference between the sacred and the secular. Even in... comes even in Ezekiel saying in the final day it won't be just one small little compartment that's called the most holy place, the whole area will be called most holy, Ezekiel 43. But here it says another thing in verse 21, the last sentence, there'll no longer be in the margin of my Bibles a merchant or a businessman in the house of the Lord in that day.

In that day there will be nobody in God's house who's a businessman. The businessman means spiritually speaking. One... you see the business... the principle of business is earn as much as as much profit as you can for yourself, spending as little as possible.

And that's how every business operates. Expenditure to the minimum, profit to the maximum. That's the principle of business.

But there'll be no businessman in the house of the Lord in that day. There will be nobody who comes to the Lord's house to get any profit for himself. All those people will be eliminated.

That's Babylon. Babylon is a Lord, what I can keep for myself. That's business.

But there won't be any businessman in the Lord's house in the final day. Very important to remember that. So this has got nothing to do with sin.

It's got to do with an attitude of how we give ourselves to the Lord. What is my attitude to... do I feel that there's nothing I want to withhold from from Jesus. Everything is for Him.

There are people who are free from conscious sin, as I said, but who still hold back when they're giving to the Lord. Like Cain. They give to the Lord, sure, and they may be free from conscious sin, but it's not the best.

Many years ago, and say the Lord showed me something. I'm going back 55 years, when I was just baptized. There's a verse that the Lord showed me in 2nd Chronicles, in chapter 3, which I've never forgotten.

It taught me a very important principle of the Lord's work, because that was around the time I was thinking of quitting my job to serve the Lord. And the Lord pointed me to this verse in 2nd Chronicles, in chapter 3, where we read like this. Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem.

Now the exact spot in Jerusalem where the house was built, the temple, is described as Mount Moriah, number one. And secondly, in Mount Moriah, the particular place, which is a threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite, where the Lord appeared to David his father. Now why is that mentioned here? Why isn't it just mentioned Jerusalem? It was not Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is a big city, but it is a particular spot in Jerusalem, which even today they call the Temple of the Mount. And that particular spot is where the Lord said, that is where you must build the temple, not anywhere in Jerusalem. It must be the place, and Mount Moriah, you know, is the place where Abraham

offered Isaac.

That was a thousand years earlier, 1,000 years earlier, when Abraham offered Isaac on the altar, proving to God that he was everything to him. Like, he came like Abel and said, Lord, you can have everything. Isaac is everything to me.

I can give you 10,000 sheep and it'll cost me nothing, but when I give Isaac, I give everything. And that spot, the Lord said, that's the spot where my temple is going to be built. My house is going to be built with people who have that spirit, who hold back nothing, like Abel held back nothing.

And it's called the place where David offered an offering on the threshing floor around the Jebusite. And if you don't remember that incident, let me point it out to you in 2 Samuel 24. I remember this so vividly, because it's way back in 1962 or 61, I was baptized in 61, around that time, 1961-62.

The Lord pointed out this to me, and I've never forgotten it all these years, because it is very important and significant to me. You know, in 2 Samuel 24, we read of a time when David made the mistake of counting, taking a census of the people, and that was wrong in God's eyes, because the Lord, he was probably boasting in how many people he was king over, or measuring the size of his army, which indicated he was trusting in the numbers in his army, and not in the Lord. And in that sense, it was a sin.

It was a sin of not trusting in the Lord. And so they were punished, and a lot of people were killed. We read here in 2 Samuel 24 and verse 15, that God punished them, and 70,000 people were killed that day.

And then the judgment was going to go further, and then David prayed, and the Lord stopped it. And then the prophet came to David in verse 18, and said, Go and erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor around on the Gemezite. Notice this? That's what we read in 2 Chronicles 3, the same place where the temple was built.

You've got to understand this, whenever you read something in Scripture like we read in 2 Chronicles 3, you must trace back, just telling you a simple principle of Bible study, don't just read it and move on. You read there Mount Moriah, then you go back to Scripture and say, What happened on Mount Moriah? Why did the Lord choose this place to build his house? Or you read about the threshing floor of around on the Gemezite, you go back and say, What happened there? Why did God choose this particular place? And if you, if the Lord sees that you are eager to study the Scriptures, to find out, you will get a revelation that lazy Bible readers will never get. And most Christians are lazy Bible readers.

They read the Bible to ease their conscience, but they never take pains to find out why is it like this. And so I'm trying to show you why the Lord chose that particular spot to build his temple, because it has got an application for us today. The church is the house of the Lord today.

So here we read that David came to this threshing floor and he was going to want to build an altar there. And Aaron was just one of his servants in Israel. David was the king.

And Aaron saw David coming in verse 20 and bowed down to him and said, Why have you come to my humble home? And the Lord and David said, Because the Lord has told me to come here. And I've come here, verse 21, to buy your threshing floor from you, because I want to build an altar here for the Lord to stop this plague. And Aaron, like a true subject of David the king, said, Oh Lord, you don't have to buy anything from me.

Take it. Please take it freely. It's yours.

Here, take these oxen which I have. You can take them freely. And the wooden yokes that are on top of the oxen, you can use that to burn as wood.

Everything is free. Take it. Now you know how all of us love to get something free.

Even if we don't need it, you pick it up if it's free. That's our nature. And every one of us, without exception.

And he was offered something free. And David said no. And you have to see why he said no.

He said if I take something free from you and give it to the Lord, it's cost me nothing. What did it cost me? Even though I kept the word of the Lord to do it in your threshing floor, it didn't cost me anything. And he said no, I will pay for it because, verse 24, very important words, I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord which cost me nothing.

That is the phrase which the Lord impressed on my heart way back soon after I was baptized. It was one of the first words that I heard from the Lord to my heart from Scripture. I will not offer to the Lord that which costs me nothing.

It's not talking about sin here. It's talking about sacrifice. The issue in the case of Cain and Abel was not sin.

It was a question of what they sacrificed, what they gave. And for many of us, my brothers and sisters, the issue may not be sin. It's a question of how much you sacrifice.

How much of sacrifice is there in your life which has got a different answer to how much sin there is in your life. You may be free from sin. There are many people I know are free from conscious sin but whose life there's very little sacrifice.

They give an offering to the Lord but it is an offering. Whereas when Abel gave, he gave the very best. So when David had the same attitude, he said, I will never offer to God that which cost me nothing.

And the way the Lord spoke that to my heart those many years ago, more than 50 years ago, was all your life the Lord said to me, you must never offer to me that which has cost you nothing. And I said, Lord, please help me. I want to keep that all my life.

That I will never in my life offer anything to you that cost me nothing. And I'm not talking only about money, you know, in terms of convenience, health and many, many sacrifices. Not just money.

There could be many, many other ways in which when we give something to the Lord, when we serve the Lord, when we live for Him, you can do the minimum necessary, you know, to keep a good conscience. You don't need to do very much. You don't have to sacrifice much to keep a good conscience.

If I'm only interested in keeping a good conscience, I can give a little to the Lord and get away with it. But if I want the Lord to be pleased with me, the principle is here. What are you offering to the Lord? Anyway, and that is the same thing which was true in Abraham's time.

We noticed from 2nd Chronicles 3, the same spot is on Mount Moriah. And Mount Moriah was where God had told Abraham to offer up his son in Genesis 22. When Abraham, it's interesting how the Lord, where

and when the Lord spoke to Abraham.

Genesis 22. Now this, remember, if you see the timeline, this is about 50 years after God called Abraham first. Abraham was about a 75 years old when he called him out of Ur of the Chaldees.

And the Lord told him, give up your family, give up everything here. He was 75 years old, living a retired life in Ur of the Chaldees. Probably had built his house and settled down, decided to settle down there.

And then one day the Lord says, quit all this and leave. And he could have said very well, Lord, I just settled down here. I just retired and settled, built my house and lived here.

You want me to leave now? Yeah, leave everything, leave your family and come where I'll show you. I'm not going to tell you where I'm going to take you, but there's a land I will show you. I've often thought if Abraham had said at that time, Lord, I'll live for you here.

You know what God would have said? He said, sure Abraham, I won't trouble you, stay here. And he would have looked for somebody else. God's work will not be hindered because one man disobeys.

No, his work will still be done. If one man doesn't respond, he'll find somebody else. And I believe God would have found somebody else in Ur of the Chaldees or wherever and told that person.

And you'd never have heard of Abraham at all in your life. Somebody else would have been the father of Israel. So that the times in our life where God calls us and you can miss something, and if Abraham had missed it there, he had missed it for life.

That would have been a tragedy. But he responded and said yes. And because of that, though he struggled a lot, he had to give up his comfortable retired life.

And initially you read that he didn't take his, he didn't obey the Lord fully to leave his father behind. He took his father along. I don't know whether you know that passage.

Turn with me to Genesis in chapter 11 first. It says, first of all, in Genesis 12 verse 1, the Lord had said to Abraham, go forth from your country, from your relatives, and from your father's house to the land which I'll show you. Not only give up your home, but give up your relatives.

Go, come with me alone. And you know, he didn't go the Lord alone. It says here that Abraham, it says, verse 31 of chapter 11, Terah, that's Abraham's father, took Abraham, his son, and Lot, the son of Aaron, his grandson, and Sarah's daughter-in-law, and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldees.

Now that was completely wrong because God had told him to give up his father and come. He was not supposed to take Lot with him either. He had a lot of problems because he disobeyed the Lord in that small thing.

He had problems with Lot, he had problems with his father, just because he did not obey the Lord in one simple thing. The Lord said, leave your father, leave your relatives, and come with me. It's very clear in Genesis 12 verse 1. The Lord had said that to Abraham, but he allowed his dad.

You know, sometimes we can love our relatives so much that we allow them to influence us in things when the Lord is calling us some other direction. Our dads can have ambitions for us which are outside the will of God for us. My dad had an ambition for me when I joined the Navy.

He wanted me to go to the top. But when the Lord called me, I said, that's it. I didn't even consult my dad.

I said, I'm quitting. I informed him later. But I discovered that if I want to follow Jesus, I must not allow any of my relatives or anyone to come between me and what the Lord is calling me.

The thing is, you can miss something. I'm not saying that you'll go to hell, but to tell you quite honestly, I'm not just interested in going to heaven. This is the honest truth.

I can say that before God. I'm not interested in going to heaven. I'm interested in fulfilling God's will here before I go.

That's much more important for me, not somehow scrape it into heaven. I don't... I want the Lord to say to me, well done, good and faithful servant, when I see him. And not, oh well, you managed to get here, is it? Not that.

That's not what I want to hear. I hope all of you want to hear the Lord say to you, well done, good and faithful servant. So Abraham made that mistake.

And so, as you know, he had a lot of problem with Lot. But what does he do with his father? You know, God couldn't do anything for Abraham. So finally God killed his father.

You read there in Genesis 11, 32. Terah died. And then Abraham, verse chapter 12, verse 4, went forth after his father died.

So it doesn't happen one way, he'll do it another way. He'll still separate you from your relatives. And that's what he did.

He knew that God knew that I can do nothing with this man Abraham till I separate him from his father. He wouldn't do it himself and I have to do it for him. And God killed his father.

That was it. Then they moved on. So we read finally, 50 years after that, when Abraham is 125 years old, Genesis 22, verse 1, God tests Abraham.

When does God stop testing us? 50 years after you're converted and God gonna test you? Sure. He tested Abraham about 50 years after he was first chosen from who are the Chaldees. And God tested Abraham, Genesis 22, 1. And he called him Abraham and he said, here I am.

Now take your son. And you know this was in the middle of the night. Here was Sarah was sleeping somewhere and Abraham was sleeping and God called Abraham and Abraham comes out and says, what is it Lord? Very often God may say something to you which he doesn't want your wife to know.

Because your wife may not be willing to do what God's telling you to do. And so we know it was at night because we read in the next verse, verse 3, Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey and took his two young men. What the Lord told Abraham was in verse 2 was, take your son whom you love.

Why does he mention whom you love? He emphasizes that. I know you love him. I believe that Isaac, probably around 25 years old at this time, had virtually become an idol for Abraham.

If you get a son when you're a hundred years old, it's almost certainly your idol. He's your only son. And he had to drive away his other son which was born through Hagar.

Now he's left only with Isaac. And the Lord emphasizes, I know this is the son whom you love. And I believe the meaning is you love in an idolatrous way.

He's more important to you than me. There, way back 50 years earlier, it was his father who was important. Now it is his son.

And God detached him from his father by killing his son, killing his father. And now God says I'll detach you from your son by killing your son. God's very jealous.

There's a verse in James 4 which says he's jealous for our spirit. What that means is God is just like a husband who doesn't want his wife to have an interest in anybody else. Just me.

It's called a godly jealousy. Paul calls it a godly jealousy in 2nd Corinthians 11 verse 2 and 3. He says I'm jealous for you with a godly jealousy. It's the same we read in James 4, 4, 5, and 6. That the Spirit of God is jealous for our spirit.

So God was jealous for Abraham that he wanted to possess him exclusively. And I believe those are the ones who allow God to possess them exclusively that become part of Jerusalem and not Babylon. So he said that's why he emphasized this son whom you love, take him and put him as a burnt offering on the mountain which I tell you.

Now there were many mountains around there and the Lord could have told him to take a mountain nearby. But no. He told him to take him to a mountain which is verse 4 says on the third day Abraham reached there.

Three days journey to that place where he had to offer his son. Why? I learned something else there from these little things in Scripture. If you meditate on Scripture you learn something.

And that is that God doesn't force you to just suddenly take a decision without thinking about it. You know Jesus said sit down and count the cost when he talked about discipleship. Sit down and count the cost.

In my meetings I never tell people stand up and come forward. I say sit down and count the cost and come back and tell me one week two weeks later whether you want to make a decision or not. Because a lot of these decisions which are taken and this is my conviction which are taken by evangelists who say come on stand up now and come forward and sign the decision card.

Those guys haven't counted the cost. I remember of visiting a place in India where some big evangelist from the United States had come and had meetings and hundreds of people were signed decision cards and come forward and all that. And I knew the person who was appointed to do the follow-up of all these decision cards.

And he told me after a number of months going around visiting all these people that hardly any of them were following the Lord. And I learned something about all these people who signed decision cards and come forward and make decision so-called decisions for Christ. And he said people came forward with all types of reasons that he asked them why did he go forward that day.

One of them said I want to have a closer look at the evangelist who was far away from him. So and these are they come forward what do they what do they lose by signing a decision card nothing. And in India and all in the poor places they may think I'm gonna get some benefit if they got my address perhaps you'll send

me some money.

So it's a deception. So Jesus said sit down don't stand up sit down and count the cost whether you want to be a disciple or not. And you don't have to decide today take one month to decide or one year but count the cost and then decide and this is what why God told Abraham.

You take three days to think about it and decide whether you want to pay this price or not. Do you want to pay the price? And Abraham had three days to think about it as he walked out. Remember he's going to kill his son.

He knows in three days I won't see the son anymore. Is it worth it serving such a God? That was the question in his mind. Is it worth it serving such a God who's already taken me away from my relatives and my father and even a lot has been separated from me and now he's going to take away my son.

And at the end of three days when he walks up Mount Moriah he has decided it is worth it. It's worth serving a God who demands from me everything I have including my father and my son and everybody else. And you know what he calls it this action very important very interesting to see what Abraham calls this action of offering up the most precious thing he had on earth.

In fact everything. When he reached the mountain he told the young men verse 5 who were with him you all stay here with the donkey I and my son will go up there and we will worship. He was going to have a worship meeting there.

That's the first time in Scripture the word worship comes. I believe there's a thing called the law of first mention in Scripture. The first time the word faith comes.

Genesis 15 very interesting. The first time the word worship comes. The first time the word phrase fear of God comes.

Worship is not singing songs. It's not raising hands and getting excited emotionally. Abraham was not going up there and sing songs to God.

No. I'm absolutely convinced that the vast majority of believers today don't have a clue what real worship is. They have an understanding of what the old covenant in the Psalms calls worship you know bang the timbrel and break the drums and sound the trumpet and clap your hands and okay okay but new covenant worship I'm convinced that the vast majority of Christians do not know what it means and I myself did not know what it meant for many years till I did one thing and I can encourage you to do it I took a concordance the concordance is a book in case you don't know what it is but every time a word it's like a dictionary but it's not listing meanings it's a list of where all a particular word occurs in the Bible you know if you go to faith and show you all the references from Genesis to Revelation where faith comes or grace so I wanted to look up the word worship where all in the Bible does the word worship come then I could distinguish between Old Testament worship and New Testament worship now there's Old Testament worship most of 99% of what goes on in Christian today's churches today is Old Testament worship just like 99% of Christians are living in old covenant religion defeated by sin and no sin has doing it has dominion over them and when I studied what the New Testament spoke about worship now they're not my opinion we all of us have gotten our own understanding of what certain words mean for example you could sometimes think that a an English word means something particularly a word that you've never heard before I remember once hearing an English word called serendipity have you heard the word serendipity

and I thought I knew what it meant it didn't mean what I thought and I had to go to a dictionary to discover what does serendipity mean it doesn't come in normal English conversation or schadenfreude schadenfreude is a German word it's in English what does it mean it's like that I really believe for many people you need to understand what worship means so I went to the dictionary and discovered the meaning so I took a concordance sentence where all does worship occur in the New Testament and I discovered it was not what Christians were calling worship not even one reference was referring to this clapping hands and shouting that is in the Psalms it's old covenant worship it is not new covenant worship at all and then when I went back to Genesis 22 the law first mentioned where worship is mentioned first I saw worship is not clapping hands and singing songs it is offering to God that which doesn't cost me that which costs me everything it's offering to God the very best in my life that's why you read about people like Job when they worship God he fell down on his face he lost his 10 children and he lost his business and I believe Job was the first book of the Bible written because it has written 500 years before Moses wrote Genesis so in a sense the word worship occurs first in God's writing in the book of Job in the book of Job and in Job chapter 1 it says when Job lost all his children and all his property he fell down and worshiped God there again this principle is the same Lord and you know what he said to God he said God I came to this world naked I had nothing when I came not a stitch of clothing on me and when I go I'll go naked all whatever you gave you had every right to take away the Lord gave the Lord has taken away praise the Lord that is worship but I can offer everything to him it's the same principle I see with Abraham and Job so when Abraham laid Isaac on the altar he had no idea we know the end of the story but Abraham did not know the end of the story as far as he was concerned he was offering and he said I'm never gonna see Isaac again I'm sure there were tears in his eyes when he took that knife up to kill his son and he raises the knife and God says to him stop and he said go don't kill your son it says in verse 10 he stretched out his hand and took the knife Isaac was tied up there on the altar and he was ready to kill him God said stop the last minute you I want to see he says I want to see what he really put me first in your life am I more precious to you than the most precious thing on earth that's worship am I more precious to you than the most precious person or whatever you value honor and Abraham with tears in his eyes said Lord I'll prove it to you here it is I'll prove to you that you are more to me than everything on earth God said stop if you kill a ram took a ram as they took a ram and sacrifice instead of Isaac and see what the Lord says it's an amazing statement verse 16 the Lord said to the Lord appeared a second time to Abraham and said by myself I have sworn because you have done this thing because you did not were 16 withhold your son your only son from me it's almost as the Lord is saying there's no limit Abraham to how much I'm gonna bless you now you're going to be known for generations and for centuries around the world in your seed the whole world will be blessed because you did not withhold your best from me that's the spirit of Abel it's the spirit of Abraham it's a spirit that you read in Hebrews 11 we call the heroes of faith who gave everything and he says here I will greatly bless you because of one thing here's another thing that you see here for the first time because you have obeyed my voice verse 18 the Lord said to him now I know that you fear me and so I will greatly bless you and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies were 17 now all the nations of the earth will be blessed if you thought what I said earlier was in verse 12 middle of verse 12 now I know that you fear God see that's another expression but you read in verse 12 fear of God how do I prove that I fear God is it only by staying away from sin yes that's one proof and by the way this is the first time in the Bible that where God says about somebody I know you fear me first time it's a certificate now I know you're a fearer of God so the margin of my Bible says you are a fearer of God and I say to myself can God say that about me it's it is not that Abraham stayed away from sin like I said from the beginning you can stay away from sin and still not be a of God having a good conscience by itself is not enough that's good it's the first step but it's when we say I will not withhold anything in my life from God

he can have everything I'm willing to be detached from everything you know that's what Jesus said in Luke 14 33 you cannot if you want to be my disciple you cannot possess anything you must possess nothing you can have things which you can't possess them you must be willing to give up everything for me whatever I ask you at any time all that you have must mean an open palm not not something you cling on to I want to tell you brothers and sisters I've seen many people I mean we've been working with this message for more than 40 years in different parts of India and I've seen people are very sincere and so it's seeking to be free from sin but somehow the blessing of the Lord does not seem to flow through them like rivers of living water they're just satisfied keeping a good conscience regularly attending a church and being happy that I'm part of a New Covenant Church and everything's okay with me it's not meant to be like that John 7:38 says that out of every believer rivers of living water must flow not just through one or two and if you have if you really have a passion that that verse John 7:38 must be fulfilled in your life that he who believes in me from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water we know the other passage which says he who believes in me has eternal life we all accept that I'm very happy to hear that I believe in him and I have eternal life but it also says in John 7:38 if you believe in rivers of living water should be flowing out from you so if I ask a person do you have eternal life they say I believe in the Lord I believe what the Lord says I have eternal life I say what about rivers of living water that's also promised to everyone who believes in him yes it's not some special category he who believes in me out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water are they flowing out from you and most people say I don't know I said why are you so laid-back about that why are you so laid-back about the fact that rivers of living water are not flowing out from you would you be laid-back if you were not if you were unsure about eternal life it must be our passion that what God says in his word is fulfilled in our life see God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him if I feel half-hearted and lazy about seeking anything in scripture we'll never get there even overcoming sin I will not get there if I'm if I'm sort of laid-back about it I got to be passionate and say Lord this means more to me than everything else like the widow who went to the judge and said give me justice against my enemy he's encroaching into my territory drive him out and he go she keeps on pestering that judge you read in Luke 18 day and night the judge said okay I'll do it for you then and the Lord said don't you think God will do that for you so that that's the principle everywhere Jesus taught that he said about the man who went to his neighbor's house for to get bread for his visitor and knocks and knocks and the neighbor says please don't disturb me I'm in bed my children are in bed how many of us would keep knocking in a house like that if we heard that from inside don't disturb me anymore we'd give up and go home but not this guy he says I don't care if I don't wake you up I've got to get that bread and at the end of that parable Jesus said in Luke 11 if you pray like that if you're not like that it'll be open to you if you ask like that you will receive how much more will your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him like that who not like that and I've discovered through my life meeting different people that the only ones who experience that level of the fullness of the Holy Spirit in their life are the ones who keep knocking like that and who keep asking like that and who are determined to get it no matter what the cost and you be like that brother sister there's no partiality with God God is the same he's your father but everybody doesn't get the same amount from God because if I'm satisfied with what I have that's all I'll have so here we see God said now you're a fear of me there's no limit to what I'm gonna do for you now this fear of God and worship that we see here I told you it's the first time it occurs in the Bible turn with me to the book of Job you find those same two words come again in the book of Job and Job is the first book of the Bible written it was written before any of the other books 500 years before God Moses wrote Genesis and it's always struck me that when God wanted to write a book about for man he did not begin with the creation of the heaven and earth even though that comes in Genesis Job was written 500 years before that and when God wanted to write a book for man he said the history of how the earth was created

can wait 500 years till Moses comes let me write about a man who fears God first so the first book that God wrote for man in the Bible is about a man who feared God and turned away from evil and who was a worshipper notice these phrases the fear of God and worship which we saw in Abraham in Genesis 22 comes here in Job as well there was a man in the land of whose name Job was blameless upright one who feared God and turned away from evil and the Lord said to Satan or said have you considered my servant Job that he's a man who fears God and turns away from evil you know Satan is called the accuser I'm sure even in those days he was accusing people who claim to believe in God to him saying God look at these fellows over there that will say they believe in you and look at their lives they live so much for themselves and God said I agree I agree I agree but have you seen Job there are not many like that whom God could point out and even today there are not many whom God can point out but we should be among those few whom the Lord can point out and say have you seen in the midst of all of compromising backslidden Christianity have you seen that one have you seen that man have you seen that woman have you seen that family in the midst of all the compromising worldly families that are interested have you seen that church in the midst of other churches the Lord pointing us out to say it as a man who fears God and you know God allows Satan to test him and he loses all his children and all his property as you know the rest of the story in one day and when the news came to Job that he had lost all his children and all his property in a moment the very first thing Job does is verse 20 Job 120 he tore his robe shaved his head he was sorrowful naturally if you lose all your children you are sorrowful but he fell down and worshipped what is those two things again the fear of God and worship that comes in Genesis Abraham's case that comes in Job in Job's case and he said well the Lord is every right to take away what he gave me I had nothing when I came and I'll have nothing when I go and for the short time in between he's got every right to give me something and take it away that's a man who fears God who does not feel that I have a right on something I have a right on nothing here's a man who's given up his rights I don't have a right for anything Jesus lived like that on the earth he didn't have a right to be respected by people he didn't have a right that people should do this or that for him he had a right for nothing the world is full of people who feel they have rights a Christian one who says I have no rights I'm a servant of God and so I have no rights for anything the people they get away I'm not going to fight with them and it's amazing how God will honor and take care of such people God will not forsake such a man did he forsake Abraham did he forsake Job their memory lives up to today and the memory of a man who lived like who lives like this will continue through generations I'm not talking about great ministries no there are many famous creatures on earth who are very famous and well-known in Christendom I don't believe they're going to be at the top of the line in the day of rewards in God's eyes no they've got their reward here they become famous preachers and famous is that the other on earth but it may be someone else whom we don't know someone who is not so famous on earth who gave the Lord right to have everything in his life who said like David I will not offer to God that which cost me nothing those are the ones whom the Lord approves of that's the opposite of the spirit of business I read that verse to you in Zechariah there won't be any more businessmen in the house of the Lord the final day that last verse of Zechariah there'll be no more businessmen there will be nobody on in the church in that day who's thinking and what can I gain by coming to the church but rather what can I give I want to ask all of you I know you haven't come here to get money we face that in India people come to the church to get money but that mean you haven't come for that but have you come for something else that you can get for yourself this is a good church but I can bring up my children in a good way there's a good atmosphere here and this is the place where I like my children to grow up uh-huh is that why you come to this church Lord I've come here to be a worshiper not in think in terms of what I'm gonna get I did not seek that when we started our church but as a byproduct much all my children were blessed but that's not what I the reason why we started a house church no if that becomes your aim in life

you'll be a worshiper of your children there are people who choose that the various reasons why people choose a church parking lot has got more space I don't have to look for a parking lot if I go to this church or they've got a good children's program I go there or something like that Lord I want to be a worshiper I want you to be everything in my life and I will not hold anything back from you I don't want any rights you I don't want to love my father son daughter wife anybody more than you you are everything to me I don't want to love my job or my money anything more than you now I'll tell you something do you think God will make you lose when you put him first in your life I have tried for more than 50 years to put God first in my life and I'll tell you something I've lost nothing it's really true you put him first in your life and seek his righteousness and all the other things will be added God is a good God he's not a spoiled sport he's not trying to make life miserable for you because you gave everything to him on the contrary your life will be more relaxed you'll sleep better and you'll be healthier and everything will go well in your life because you decided to put God first because you decided that you'll never offer to God something cheap you will never offer to God that which cost you nothing and the wonderful thing is that's where the house of God was built so what I learned from that is that today the church is the house of God and it requires people with that spirit that I've just described today to build the true Church of Jesus Christ and if you don't have that spirit I hope you'll have it because if you don't have it I don't believe you can corrupt the church by sitting here but you can miss out on something like I often say back in my hometown in Bangalore I said if you come to this church I tell the people who come because not everybody who comes you know a lot of people come to listen to my message they don't come to follow the Lord they say oh we hear a good message here I'd like to come and hear this it's not boring it's interesting I see if you come with all those reasons you're gonna miss out on something we preach the highest standard possible according to God's Word in this church and I say if you listen to that and you don't want to live up to it it's serious your responsibility before God becomes more in that case if you're not serious about obeying I tell people who come to our church in Bangalore I say you better find another church you'll be safer there you know why Ananias and Sapphira were killed because they were hypocrites not because they didn't give their money to God God's never interested in anybody's money but they pretended when everybody else was giving everything they pretended that they were also giving everything that was their mistake there was a big line of people standing there bringing the proceeds of everything that they sold and they gave it and left it there and at the foot of the Apostles were all standing there and Peter was there and Ananias came in that line he didn't open his mouth he just came and left that money there and went away and as he went back Peter said come back the Holy Spirit prompted Peter to call Ananias back and he only told him one thing why have you decided to tell a lie Ananias could have said I didn't open my mouth you can tell a lie without opening your mouth why did you tell a lie to the Holy Spirit turn with me to Acts of the Apostles chapter 5 if you haven't seen it it's a great example of how you can tell a lie without opening your mouth Acts of the Apostles chapter 5 a man named Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of property and kept back some of the price with his wife's full knowledge and brought a portion and laid it at the Apostles feet that's all he did he didn't open his mouth if he had only opened his mouth and said hey Peter I know the others are giving everything but my wife and I decided we can only give 50% of the price we got for the sale of our property we've kept 50% back they would have lived a long life but they kept quiet and they died can you tell a lie without opening your mouth here it is Ananias Peter said why is Satan fill your heart to tell a lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price he could have said I didn't open my mouth Peter I didn't say anything but this is not a court of law this is the church where you speak without opening your mouth you've told a lie without opening your mouth you pretended when you sat in the midst of wholehearted people that you were also wholehearted that's the meaning you come into the midst of a wholehearted church and thereby you pretend that you're wholehearted when you're not now if Ananias and Sapphira

had done that in the church in Corinth nothing would have happened they lived a long life there but they were doing it in a church where people were serious radical wholehearted Christians in Jerusalem and it was the wrong church for them to be in that is why I said I've said to folks in Bangalore I said if you come to this church and you're not serious about following the Lord I would urge you for your own salvation go and sit in some other church don't come to a church pretending that you're wholehearted when you're not you're welcome to come in order to be wholehearted but be honest don't pretend God hates pretends the first sin judged in the early church was this hypocrisy pretending to be wholehearted when you're not pretending to be serious when you're not the house of God is built in the place where people say I will not offer to God that which costs me nothing not just I'm free from conscious sin good step one but now let's come to the place of offering to God that which costs us not something and I believe that that is what the Lord is saying to all of us at this time I was seeking the Lord saying Lord what shall I share today and this is what the Lord laid on my heart I pray that it will be a blessing to you that you will all become true worshippers may we worship in spirit and in truth and not just with emotion and our mind with words but with this attitude saying Lord here is my worship like the psalmist said in Psalm 73 25 Lord whom have I in heaven but the end there's nothing and no one I desire on earth but you if I have you I have everything and all the other things are extra that is the exclusive way in which the Lord wants to possess his bride and we are building the bride of Jesus Christ here we're not here to judge one another that'll be another sin if I judge you I'm not here to judge anybody because I don't know most of us we we don't know 90% of each other's lives God knows it all I pray that we shall live before his face and become true worshippers the Lord can say to us now I know that you fear me because you have not withheld even this from me may God help us let us pray Heavenly Father as we bow before you we pray that you will keep reminding us in love and lead us on so that we don't miss out on the very best that you have planned for each of us you know you had fantastic plans for Job and for Abraham which got fulfilled because they responded wholeheartedly to you and I know that you've got fantastic plans for every single person sitting here this this afternoon every single person without exception and I pray that none of them will move into eternity and discover that they missed out on your perfect will for their life because they clung on to something give us grace Lord to forsake it all and follow you help us we pray in Jesus name amen

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