

Worshipping God In Spirit And Truth

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living with a clear conscience before God at all times, striving to be conscious of nothing against oneself 24/7. It delves into the true meaning of worship in the New Covenant, highlighting the need to present our entire being as a living sacrifice to God, offering every part of our body, soul, and spirit in true worship. The sermon challenges believers to enter into the most holy place, where they are alone with God, free from the distractions of the outer court and the holy place, and to rejoice in the Lord always by rending the flesh and choosing to walk the way Jesus walked.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 4:4, 2 Corinthians 2:14, John 4:23, Romans 12:1, Job 1:20, Genesis 22:5, Psalms 73:25, Hebrews 12:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Topics: "Living with a Clear Conscience", "True Worship as a Living Sacrifice"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living with a clear conscience before God at all times, striving to be conscious of nothing against oneself 24/7. It delves into the true meaning of worship in the New Covenant, highlighting the need to present our entire being as a living sacrifice to God, offering every part of our body, soul, and spirit in true worship. The sermon challenges believers to enter into the most holy place, where they are alone with God, free from the distractions of the outer court and the holy place, and to rejoice in the Lord always by rending the flesh and choosing to walk the way Jesus walked.

Transcript

Okay, I hope we can meditate on what we heard in our last session about being accepted before God. I want to show you the testimony of the Apostle Paul and I want to ask you to strive with all your heart to have the same testimony every single day of your life. Please listen to it.

A man who understood what it is to live with a clear conscience at all times, not once in a while. 1 Corinthians in chapter 4 and verse 4. Nobody in the Old Testament could say this and unfortunately most Christians cannot say it either. 1 Corinthians 4 verse 4, I am conscious of nothing against myself.

He could say that 24-7 and if you are a true disciple of Jesus, you should be able to say that 24-7, not once in a while, 24-7. I'm sorry to say that for many years of my life nobody taught me that and so I could not say it for years but it has become more and more my testimony now. I am conscious of nothing against myself.

People can call it arrogance. They can say what they like. They live defeated lives and they try to cover it up by saying, oh don't be so proud.

Well, you got to accuse the Holy Spirit of being, of making Paul proud then, to testify to something like this. But therefore I'm not acquitted. Verse 4. Why is that? Because I've still got unconscious sin in me.

It's so balanced, the teaching of Scripture. I'm still not fully like Christ but I'm conscious of zero against myself. That means in my entire conscious area of my life I'm clear.

The blood of Christ has not only cleansed me, it has justified me. I've kept my conscience clear before God and before men. The one who examines me is the Lord.

It is very important to say this and also one other verse, 2nd Corinthians in chapter 2. This should be our testimony all the time, 2nd Corinthians in chapter 2. Verses that you will almost never hear taught in most churches. 2nd Corinthians 2 verse 14. Thanks be to God who always, the important word there is 24-7.

Always. There's no other meaning to always. Not most of the time, not once in a while.

You should be a Christian who should aim to say this. Thanks be to God who 24-7 leads me in triumph, not in myself, in the power of Christ. If you haven't got there yet, determined to get there.

Paul got there. This is not becoming like Christ. That is when he comes again.

This is right here on earth in the conscious area of our life. I thank God that he leads me, not I live in victory. He leads me.

I remember when I used to sometimes say I got victory over sin and the Lord said don't say that. Say Jesus keeps me from falling. Same message but it's got a different ring about it.

When I say I got victory and when I say Jesus keeps me from falling, this is what he's saying. God leads me in triumph in Christ. That's the balance.

Aim for it my brothers. If you don't aim for that, you're living an old covenant life. The standard of the new covenant is very high and it is attainable.

Paul is an example and every now and then we come across one or two here and there who are living examples of that. Why can't we be like that? Paul said follow me as I follow Christ and that should be your aim to be able to say to others follow me as I follow Christ and say Lord I don't care how many years it takes. I'm going to get there.

That's what I said to the Lord many years ago. Okay now I want to come to another thing in this session and that is I'm going through everything very quickly as you'll see. Worship.

One of the most misunderstood words in all of Christendom. Every church talks about praise and worship. That may be praise but it is not worship.

It's praise and thanksgiving which they call praise and worship because that's not what the Bible calls worship. And people may say well what does it matter brother Zach whether you call it this or that. Supposing somebody says I brother I bought you a brand new Cadillac car.

Here's a receipt. Now you've never seen a Cadillac car in your life. So you go to the shop to get a Cadillac car and he gives you a little bicycle and written on it Cadillac and you come home with it.

Hey it's written Cadillac. What does it matter? Well you got fooled that's all. And so if the devil has given you a bicycle and called it a Cadillac and you missed out on worship you say what does it matter if you call it worship? That is not worship.

You missed out on something very expensive because the devil fooled you to call something worship. It is not worship. He made you call a bicycle a Cadillac car.

Would you do that in earthly things? No. In earthly things we are so shrewd and careful. It is in biblical things that we are careless.

And I've challenged people this. I said this is not Zach Poonen's teaching. Go to any concordance and see the occurrence of the word worship.

God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. I diligently sought God to find out what is the meaning of worship in the new covenant not in the old covenant. Go and see all the words worship in the old covenant and go and see the words of worship in the new covenant and you will see the difference yourself.

You don't need me to teach you. The thing is vast majority of Christians are just born lazy. That's why they don't find it out for themselves.

Otherwise you could take concordance. You could find out what I'm saying yourself. The Psalms are full of examples of worship.

What it is? Raise your hands, clap your hands, shout hallelujah, all that type of stuff. It's all physical and from the soul. The mind, the emotions, all excited.

This is all old covenant. Do you know that you can worship God without being emotional or with being emotional? You can worship God raising your hands or without raising your hands. You can worship God clapping your hands or with clapping and I can do it both ways.

I can worship God without being emotional and with being emotional. I can use my intellect to worship God or I can set aside my intellect and worship God. So in the new covenant, worship is in the spirit.

Turn with me to John 4 and verse 23, 23 and 24. Very important words which most people have not understood because they haven't cared to study it. Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, an hour is coming.

Read carefully. It is coming and it has already come. Two things.

Sometimes Jesus had the amazing way of saying contradictory things. Is it coming or is it come? Yes, it is coming and it has come and I'll explain to you in a moment what it means. When the true worshippers, do you want to be a true worshiper? Will worship the father in spirit and truth.

Truth means reality, not unreality because the father seeks to be his worshippers. That's the sentence that gripped me. I said, dad, my heavenly father, are you looking all over the earth for true worshippers and you don't find them? I want to be one of them.

Do you find a longing in your heart to satisfy the heart of God who's looking around the world for true worshippers and those are the ones who will worship him in spirit. God is a spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. So to worship in spirit is something that we need to understand and then you need to understand man's nature.

Man is made of body, soul, and spirit. There are three parts like God is a trinity, God made man in his image, body, soul, and spirit of which spirit is the most important. Now it's very interesting that in John chapter 3, to the great professor of theology, Nicodemus, Jesus talks about the elementary thing like being born again.

But to this five times divorced woman, he talks about the most exalted subject in the Bible, worship. Isn't that interesting how God picks up the uneducated, illiterate, sinful woman and teaches of worship, which means it's got nothing to do with intellect. If it had to do with intellect, he should have taught about worship to Nicodemus and about being born again to the Samaritan woman.

God says my ways are not your ways. One Thessalonian, so if any of you are very clever, you better set aside that cleverness if you want to understand worship now. Be like the Samaritan woman.

One Thessalonians 5 and verse 23 says God wants to sanctify us entirely spirit, soul, and body. There you find the total man is spirit, soul, and body. Just like in the tabernacle, which is a picture of man in the old covenant.

It had three parts, most holy place, holy place, outer court. The outer court was visible, symbolizing our body, which is visible. The holy place and most holy place was covered, symbolizing the two parts of us, which are covered, soul and spirit.

Nobody can see it. And between the holy place and the most holy place was a veil. You couldn't go into the most holy place, symbolizing that between man, soul, and spirit, there's something thick, which is there, which prevents God from entering into our presence.

That's why the Holy Spirit could not enter into man's spirit in the old covenant. But we read in Hebrews in chapter 10, in Hebrews in chapter 10 and verse 20, that when Jesus died, He rent the veil, that veil between the holy place and the most holy place, and made a new and living way, which He inaugurated for us through the veil. And here is this says the veil symbolizes His flesh.

Whose flesh? Jesus' flesh. And I don't have time to go into that. It basically means His own will.

The flesh symbolizes my will. Jesus crucified it faithfully all through His life. And when He died on the cross, God rending that veil from top to bottom was saying, here is one man who never did His own will at any time.

His will was crucified, the veil was torn, and He could open the way into the Father's presence. But it says here, this way has been inaugurated for us. So if we want to go into the Father's presence, that is where true worship is, in the spirit.

Worship in the body is out in the outer court, sacrifice on the altar, you know, kill the animals and all that's worship in the body. Then you go into the holy place, which is worship in the soul, mind and emotions, burn the incense and with the table of showbread and so many other things, and the candlestick burning, the lampstand rather. But worship in the spirit is something altogether different.

In the outer court, there are thousands of people, you like to be with people to worship. In the holy place, there are those who are serving God, the priests. But in the most holy place, it's only God.

And if you're bored with God, you'll never become a worshiper. If you find that you're happy to be with people, you will never be a true worshiper in the spirit. Because in the most holy place, there's nobody but God.

It's for those who are not bored with God. Those who don't want to always be with people, you ask yourself, would you rather be alone with God or with people? That shows whether you are fit to be in the most holy place or not. If you always want to be with people, you're fit for the outer court or the holy place.

In the most holy place, it's only God. Jesus was so long to be with his father all the time. And that's one of the wonderful privileges we have in the New Covenant, to be able to come into God's presence and it doesn't matter if nobody else is there.

I want to be all alone with God. That is the mark of a man who's entered into the fullness of the New Covenant. It's a privilege for you and me.

And when we live there, overcoming sin is easy. Knowing the will of God is easy. Having power to do his will is easy.

Having power to serve him is easy. Any ministry God calls us to do, we'll be able to do it. We won't be shy and reserved and hesitant to speak or testify.

No, that's all for people in the outer court and in the holy place who are seeking the honor of man. They want to impress people. No, in the most holy place, you're not trying to impress a single human being because it's only God who is there.

Have you come there, my brother, sister? Jesus inaugurated the way for us to come in there. And the devil has robbed people of that privilege. He's given them a bicycle and called it a Cadillac car and they go around saying, we got praise and worship, praise and worship.

Absolute nonsense. It is thanksgiving and praise. It's right to thank God for what he's done for us.

It's right to praise God for who he is. Thanksgiving is thanking him for what he's done. Praising him is praising him for who he is.

Worship is something altogether different. And I'll tell you what it requires. It requires that rending of the flesh.

That's what it required in Jesus and that's what it comes to us as well. Hebrews 12. It says here, let us follow the example of Jesus.

Let us run the race, verse 1 and 2, fixing our eyes on Jesus who, have you understood this verse, for the joy set before him endured the cross. Let me paraphrase that. He was willing to let the veil be rent, that is endured the cross, 33 and a half years of his life, because of the joy set before him.

What is the joy set before him? Psalm 16 11. In the presence of God, that is fullness of joy. Fullness of joy is not in the outer court, not in the holy place.

It's in the presence of God. Psalm 16 11. And Jesus wanted that fullness of joy and he knew he could only get it by the rending of the veil.

So he went there. And I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, Paul could say in a sitting in a rotten Roman dungeon, rejoice in the Lord always because he lived in the most holy place. That was the most holy place for Paul.

And if you cannot rejoice in the Lord always, you have to say it is because you're not willing to rend the veil of the flesh. You're not willing to go the way Jesus inaugurated for you. The veil, the way has already been opened, but it's a way that you have to choose every day, to rend the flesh.

And I guarantee if you rend the flesh, you'll enter into the most holy place and you will rejoice 24 seven, believe it or not. If you make that your goal. So how shall we get there? What is worship in the new covenant? Romans chapter 12.

In Romans chapter 12 we read, Paul says, after having proclaimed this wonderful gospel, beginning with sin people in chapter 1, 2, and 3, explaining justification, explaining overcoming sin in Romans 6, explaining life in the spirit in Romans 8, and the sovereignty and faithfulness and righteousness of God in chapter 9, 10, and 11. He then comes in chapter 12 and says, in view of all these mercies of God, I want to teach you how to worship. Present your body a living sacrifice and a holy sacrifice which is acceptable to God because this is your worship in the spirit.

You see what the Lord told the woman of Samaria, as explained here. Worship is in the spirit, is when you present your body, every part of it. You know in the Old Testament they had to cut the bullock in pieces.

And so when I present my body, don't just say, Lord I give you my body. Say, make it piece by piece, then you'll know whether it's true or not. Lord, I give you my eyes.

I never again want to look at or read anything that is displeasing to you. Eyes. Lord, I give you my tongue.

I never again want to say a single word with my tongue that will displease you. That's another piece. Lord, my hand.

I never want to do anything with my hand that will displease you. Piece by piece by piece. Put it on the altar and you'll discover that you're fooling yourself when you say, Lord, I give my body to you.

Cut it up. The bullock had to be cut up in the burnt offering. Then the fire will fall.

If the fire has not fallen, there's some part of your body you have not given. And that's why you can't worship. You can sing and praise and thanks as much as you like and fool yourself with that bicycle that you got a Cadillac car.

You spend all your life. There are multitudes fooling themselves like that. Don't be in that crowd.

Come into real worship. Present your body, every part of it, as a living sacrifice and make it every day of your life. Be a worshiper.

Make sure you don't pull something back from the altar. Not only that, the mind, body, soul and spirit. Present your body to your mind.

Let your mind be transformed, renewed. How do I renew my mind? By aligning my mind with the word of God. Whenever God says something and my flesh doesn't quite agree with it, I say, crucify my flesh.

And I say, that is God's way. And I accept it. For example, when God says, do all things without murmuring and complaining, Philippians 2.14, I make it the goal of my life that my tongue will never murmur or complain, that my heart will never murmur or complain, even if I control my tongue.

You see, I can control my tongue with yoga. Yoga teaches people to control their tongue, but they can't cleanse their heart. Murmuring and complaining is in the heart.

Even if you control a tongue and you're a good Buddhist or a good Yogi, it doesn't mean you got rid of murmuring and complaining. But if your goal is, I don't want to ever murmur or complain in my life. I want to make my mind think like God thinks.

Jesus never murmured or complained about anything. Dear brothers and sisters, God has called us to such a fantastic high calling in the new covenant. And the devil's always told people, it's not possible.

It's not possible. It's not possible. You can sit in new covenant Christian fellowship church all your life and never even aim for this.

If you don't determine, Lord, at any cost, I'm going to enter into the new covenant. And it doesn't matter. You have to say this.

It's what I said in the churches I sat in. It doesn't matter if all the people sitting around me are not interested in this life. I'm determined to get there.

Because I don't think you'll find a single church in the world where everybody's interested in this life, even if you hear about it. It's an individual thing. You have to choose individually.

If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross. There is no joint taking up of the cross. We can have joint prayer meetings, but you can't jointly take up the cross.

That is an individual thing. You have to choose every single day in your life. As soon as you get up in the morning, all the way through the day to walk the way that Jesus walked, which he inaugurated for us, the veil being rent.

This is true worship. And in closing, the first two instances of worship mentioned in the Bible. First of all, Job.

Job chapter 1. I believe Job lived before Abraham. Job chapter 1, we read that when God took away everything from Job, everything, his property, his family, his wife was left. And the devil would have taken away his wife also, but he felt that she's more useful there.

I can use her to irritate Job all the time. That's the only reason the devil didn't kill his wife. But God took away everything, his 10 children, all his business, everything lost in one moment.

And we read Job chapter 1 verse 20, the first mention of worship in a human being in the Bible. He fell down and worshipped. What sort of praise and worship meeting was that? It's not like the type that goes on in many churches where a man's lost everything on earth and says, I worship you saying, when I came from my mother's womb, I had nothing.

When I go, I'll have nothing. Blessed be the name of the Lord. That, my brothers and sisters, is worship where nothing on earth means anything to you anymore.

Not your children, not your property, not your bank account, not your stocks and shares, nothing means anything to you. You can say, Lord, you can take it all away. And be careful before you say it because he may do it.

So don't say it lightly, but mean it. I used to use my imagination to think of my having lost everything and I see, you know, five coffins with my wife and four children dead. And I say, Lord, I'll be a worshipper.

I'll follow Joe. You can use your imagination really seriously to find out if it's true. Second example of worship is Genesis 22.

The first mention of worship in the Bible, Genesis 22 and verse when Abraham took Isaac to Mount Moriah and he told his servants, you stay here. I'm going to the top of the mountain and there, verse five, Genesis 22, five, I will worship and return to you. What was he going to do on the top of that mountain? He was going to take the most precious thing in his life, more than 10,000 sheep or anything, and he was going to kill him and say, God, here I'm proving to you that you mean more to me than my son.

And he said that he called worship and there was nobody to watch it. It was a unique worship meeting with nobody there, just Abraham and God. And he was proving to God, God, here I am.

It's not empty words. I'm proving to you that you mean more to me than the most precious thing on earth. That's what Job did.

And dear brothers and sisters, nothing less than this, this true worship. When you can say to God, you mean more to me than anything and anyone on this earth, you can take it all away. When you've lost everything on earth and you've got nothing left, but God, you'll find that God is more than enough.

That's what a true worshiper discovers. So don't be fooled in thinking that empty words is worship. You can worship with song, with words, or the most best part of worship is in silence.

Silence, where you examine your heart and see whether you're offered everything, your entire body, all your property and your relatives and family members and say, Lord, you can take it all away. I want you. Psalm 73 25 is a great verse, which I've always felt is the mark of a true worshiper.

The Psalmist says, whom have I in heaven but thee? There's nothing and no one on earth I desire, beside thee. If I can say that every day of my life, Lord, I don't desire anything or anyone on this earth, but you. And when I get to heaven, I'm not looking for mansions or crowns or freedom from sickness or rubbish.

I'm looking for you. I want you. If I have you, I don't want anything else.

That is the true worshiper. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the wonderful new covenant life that Jesus experienced and he wants us to have too. And I want to say that most Christians don't live it because they are not willing to pay the price.

They would rather just sing a few songs on Sunday morning and call that worship. So don't fool yourself. Let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we know that the deceiver of men has done a great work, but your word exposes the deceiver so that we need never be deceived. Help us to have boldness, Father, when we come before you because of what the blood of Christ has done for us. And as we realize that by your grace, you give us also, you work in us to willing to do your good pleasure, to hold back nothing from you, but to join the great worshipers like Job and Abraham and to worship you in spirit and in truth.

Thank you that you give us the privilege to do that, to walk the new and living way that Jesus inaugurated into your presence. Pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/fQB2l7j2axM.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/worshipping-god-in-spirit-and-truth/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net