

# Discussion of "The Purpose of the Church: Worship"

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good evening, good to see you all tonight.

If you have your questions from this morning and want to pull those out, I encourage you to do that. Again, from Scripture this morning, we're kind of, we're all, we hit on a lot of different Scriptures, starting in Malachi, and looking at, the sinfulness of Israel and going through the motions and the rituals and the worship of God and His displeasure with all of that, and then going through talking about what the Bible says about worship. The Bible says a lot about worship.

There's a lot that could have been in that sermon that wasn't, just because there's so much that God has to say to us about worship, and the type of worship that He wants to see exhibited from us, the type of worship that we should desire to give to Him, because He is God and because He's worthy of it.

But, you know, I do think that two things, you know, the two principles, truths, whatever you want to call them this morning, are demonstrated throughout Scripture, that God calls us to live a life that is worshipful.

God calls us to be in community and participation with a community in worship. And so, if you have your questions, the first one is, why is God worthy of your worship?

[ 1 : 33 ] I'm going to have a mic up here. Why is God worthy of our worship? Why should He ask to be worshiped? What's so special about God that we should worship Him?

Let's see. Wes. Josiah, is Josiah around? Josiah, do you want to be the microphone man? Oh, Julie will?

Thank you, sir. Back to Wes. Thank you. He's the almighty creator of heaven and earth and every atom that's out there.

And He's in total control. It's His universe. And He created it all. He's in charge of it all. He's keeping it all sustained. And anything He says goes, basically. He is worthy of all our praise.

He's the only one. Amen. Good answer. Because He's God. And there's none like Him. And because He is the creator, as Wes said, He's sovereign over it all.

[ 2 : 41 ] Without Him, we don't have life. Without Him, we have nothing else to worship. So we should worship God. And this is really a softball question. Because He's God. Because He's worthy.

Totally and absolutely worthy of our praise and our worship. And so, okay, up here to Julie. And so it's the sinful mindset that would think that there's anything selfish about that.

Because as we see that, when we worship God, we find satisfaction as well. Because we are doing what we've been created to do. And it's good.

It's a good thing for us. It keeps us centered. And it keeps us focused on what matters. Okay. Go ahead, Julie. Well, I think for me, yes.

All of those things. He's the creator of everything. But I think for me, one of the biggest aspects of my worship is the fact that man is not in fellowship with Him from the fall.

[ 3 : 48 ] And I would never be in fellowship with Him without His moving toward me. He is desiring to be reconciled to me, to be in relationship with me, to forgive my sins, to utterly change me.

And then when you juxtapose that against who He is, the God of the universe, the creator of the heavens and the earth, the one who flung the stars into the, you know, who is me and that you're mindful of Him.

I mean, that is the thankfulness for His plan of redemption and His grace and His salvation through Jesus Christ.

Amen. Good answer. God is worthy of our worship, not just because of who He is as far as being our creator and sovereign, but also because of His character and what He's done for us, the kind of heavenly Father that He is.

He's worthy of our praise because He's worthy of our praise because He's been gracious to sinners and to think and to know us, to desire, to send His own Son to die, that we might have that fellowship restored with Him, that we would be renewed, that we'd have our sins forgiven, that we'd have eternal life.

[ 5 : 09 ] And it's all because of Him, nothing because of us or who we are. And so, of course, He's obvious of our, He's worthy of our worship. Anybody want to add to that?

Cameron back here. We're really moving you around the room tonight, Josiah. So I actually kind of thought of this in two ways.

You know, when you ask, you know, when church people ask church people a question like this, like we all think it's kind of this obvious answer, right? Like we come up with creator and savior. But then I thought about, okay, what if somebody's asking me this question that's not a Christian or who is asking me about my faith? And why is your God worthy of your worship? And you know, this morning we, you know, went through the Romans road in Sunday school and it's, you know, I was dead.

And even while I was still a dead sinner who was offensive to my God, He put His Son on the cross for me.

[ 6 : 16 ] Why would I not worship that God? Because He gave so much for us. And, you know, it's just a perfect picture of the gospel that He died for us while we were sinners.

He sent His Son to the cross, put Him in the grave and raised Him again. And, like, our whole eternity is based on His actions and His free gift for us.

It's just, for me, because I am a Christian, it's obvious of why He's worthy of my worship. Good answer.

Up here to Doyleen, Josiah. Right here in the front. Keep going, keep going. And then hotter, hotter, hotter, hotter. Just some of the Old Testament names for God.

And I apologize. I'm sure I'm going to butcher them. But Elohim is the God, His power and might. El Elyon, the Most High God. El Olam, the Everlasting God.

[ 7 : 28 ] El Royai, the Strong One Who Sees. He's the Al Shaddai, God Almighty. Adonai, Lord. Jehovah, the Lord Eternal Nature.

Jehovah Jireh, the Lord Will Provide. Jehovah, the Lord, our Sanctifier. Jehovah, Jehovah Nisi, the Lord, our Banner.

Jehovah Rapha, the Lord, our Healer. Jehovah Raal. My bifocals are going crazy. The Lord, my Shepherd. Jehovah Seboah, which is the Lord of Hosts. Jehovah Shalom, which is the Lord of Peace.

Jehovah Shammah, the Lord who is present. Jehovah, Jehovah, the Lord, our Righteousness. Who else are we going to worship? I mean, God has created us with the need to worship something. And why would I trade all of that for something else in the world? Good. So we see from Scripture, and in all those answers, we've seen, you know, God is worthy because He's, because of who He is, being Creator.

[ 8 : 41 ] Again, and because of His character and all that He has done for us, that we have not deserved to receive from Him. So it should be obvious to all of us that He is totally worthy of our worship.

Unfortunately, we also know that we don't often ascribe to Him enough of the worship from our lives that He is due, which moves on to the next question.

So we all know why. I think we can answer that one. We've answered that one really well. Well, we know what Scripture says, but we know also that at times we don't worship Him rightly. So why is God right to be displeased when our worship is empty, when it's formulaic, when it's ritualistic, when it's steeped in tradition, and we're just getting into the mold of, well, this is what I do on Sunday.

I come into this building. I kind of park in the same place. I sit in the same spot, you know, and then I come here, and we sing these songs, and there's Scripture, prayer, more songs, sermon, and then I'm usually out of here by this time, and then I go to this restaurant on whatever.

And we are like that, though. We're creatures of habit as well. We form habits, and we can get into rituals and routines. I think, again, using the illustration from this morning of driving a car, we can

get to the point where we just sort of go through the motions of things without really thinking much about what it is we're actually doing.

[10:15] And why is God right when it comes to our worship when we're doing that? Why is He right to be displeased with that when our worship is empty? And that's what I mean by empty, just going through the motions.

Going through the motions. Why is He right to be displeased? All right, we'll go. Brandy and then Julie. I would say because it's not coming from our heart, and, you know, our worship is usually a result of who He is and what He's done in our lives.

And when it's empty, I mean, there's just nothing there. It's not coming from our heart. So that's what I would say. Well, because He's worthy to be worshipped.

And when He, I mean, He's worthy to be worshipped. And, you know, man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

And if we're not glorifying Him with our worship, that's, I think it's just like an insult. You know, God is concerned about our heart.

[11:35] He's concerned about what we're thinking when we're worshipping Him. He's concerned about the motivation behind our service, our being here. What we're saying and what we're doing matters to Him. And I think you made a good point as well, Julie, that He is God.

And as you said, there's no other God. And all of these things that we pour worship into aren't capable of satisfying us like God is capable of satisfying us.

And, you know, we can head back to Wes if you don't mind, Josiah. But we could go around and talk about all the different things that we pour our heart into and worship and all of the ways that eventually they let us down.

You know, but God doesn't ever let us down. And so God wants us to worship Him wholeheartedly, again, with an understanding of what it is that He's done for us. And like you said, we find rest.

We find satisfaction. We find joy in that relationship that has been restored by our Creator and ascribing to Him the glory and the worship that He is due.

[12:41] We gain from that too. And He wants that for us as well. And it is an insult to Him. There is no other gods. You've got to think of it from God's perspective, you know, and using the example I used of a basketball game.

I mean, how pathetic is that? You'd think. These people are pouring their hearts and souls into this game. They're living and dying on every basket that is made and every basket that is missed as if this is what life is all about.

How tragic. And it is an insult, I think, to Him for sure. Wes? Well, Brandy stole my thing about God looks at the heart, and then you stole my, what I was going to say about worship.

But God is a jealous God, right? And so when we're, you're talking about your basketball game, it's almost like they're worshipping the game. And if He's a jealous God, it's like you're putting that stuff above me.

That would give Him a reason to be displeased with the way we're acting and stuff, that we're putting something above Him, anything above Him. So it couldn't necessarily be a basketball game, but you think about idols that we set up as far as money maybe or just different things that we put God above.

[13:53] He's a jealous God, and that does not please Him to see us worshipping something else. It's offensive to Him that we would worship idols, that we would have things other than Him, that we would pour our worship into all of those things.

Amy right here? I don't know if I saw another hand. And He's right to be displeased. Another thing about this, about why it's displeasing to God when our worship is empty, is because it gives a bad example to the lost.

Because anybody can go and play church. We used to play church when I was a kid in the yard, you know, get one of our cousins up there to preach and that kind of jazz.

And when our worship is empty as a believer, it also gives people false confidence, because they're doing all the right things.

And it also could give you false confidence, too, because you're doing all the right things for the right reasons, but there's also a reason in there is I'm checking off the boxes.

[15:07] So we have to be careful in ourselves. And when you're here every Sunday, like Doreen and I are and others, and we do our job and stuff, you've got to be so, so, so careful to be here

doing it with your mind set where it's supposed to be and not on what you're going to fix for lunch. And for women, I know that's hard. Because we've always got something, Mary and Martha, we're always going to do something else after this. But we need to just take the time and breathe and then worship.

Take the time. Be prepared when you get here to worship and set aside the time and the purpose for why we're here together to worship.

That's it. Good. Good points. Thank you. If we're not careful, well, we lose our witness. Like you said, first of all, it's something we want unbelievers here with us.

We want them to hear the gospel. We want them to experience in their time with us that we love the Lord. And we love him because we understand that we've been saved by his grace.

[16:32] We have eternal life and eternal hope in him. And we want them to experience that when they're here instead of seeing people just kind of going through the motions. But I think you also made a good point that we've got to be aware that it can become legalism if we're not careful.

And we can. It can be check off this box, check off that box. I came to Sunday school. I brought my Bible. I sat through church. I didn't fall asleep. Anything like that, you know. And think that that somehow warrants salvation when it absolutely does not.

Josiah? Josiah? Also, a reason why he would be displeased is because he commanded you to follow him with your whole soul, heart, and mind.

Yeah. Yeah, he made it pretty clear, huh? Absolutely. He's absolutely right to be displeased because he's God again.

And he's worthy. Absolutely. Absolutely. And so whenever our worship is empty or misdirected, he's absolutely right to be totally displeased.

[17:42] And I think we ought to be amazed how gracious and patient God is with his people. You can go back to the Old Testament. You see it even true today that, you know, how often I wonder if we just surveyed an average congregation in our country.

Are they just going through the motions and going through the rituals? And that's not good and that displeases God, yet he's gracious and he's merciful still.

There's more reason to give him praise. Right back here, sir. Teresa? Teresa? If we are worshiping is empty, it is not personal.

And we are, what comes out of our mouth and our mind should be uplifting to Christ and to God.

And it isn't if it's just empty. Our worship music tells the story. It extols how important he is and what he's done for us.

[18:55] Your message does the same. And we should, it's to uplift us and to show how we care for him. And we, it's not personal.

He knows every hair on our head. We need to be personal. Aaron, will you, and you think about any relationship that you have, any meaningful relationship that you have.

And it's a relationship where one person is just going through the motions. And there's no feeling behind the words. There's no actions that indicate there's compassion and love there.

You know that that relationship is not healthy. And it's not good. Cameron? You know, when I think of, you know, growing up, you know, it's God, our Father.

You know, he gives us that picture of, you know, that parent relationship. And I can always remember growing up, you know, sometimes you just wish your parents would yell at you. But then when they come and say that, you know, like, I'm not mad, I'm just disappointed.

[20:04] Like, that hurts so much worse. You're like, just ground me. Just yell at me and get it over with, you know. And so how much more should we be cognizant of when we're disappointing or displeasing our Heavenly Father?

When our heart's not in it, when he's done so much for us that we can't come once a week and put our hearts into our worship?

A pretty important thing there, too, that we witness a lot is a lot of times what gets sacrificed in our life when life is busy is church.

Church is often the time that thing that gets sacrificed up here to Doylene. Real quick, just to clarify, I would yell, he's the one that is.

Okay, okay. A lot more pain. Good to know. Good to know. But, yeah, I mean, we see that a lot with Christians kind of thinking that, you know, church is there.

[ 21 : 12 ] And it'll always be there. And if I miss out to go do this or miss out to go do that, now sometimes things happen. And that's the case. And if it is, you know, we want to be welcoming when that person returns and not scolding them and making them feel bad as if salvation was dependent upon their perfect attendance or anything like that.

But we've got to be mindful as well because I think, you know, a lot of times church is what goes first whenever life seems busy. Devotion time with the Lord often is something that we cut out because, you know, I know I've got to be at work at a certain time or I know I've got to drop kids off at a certain time or whatever the case may be.

But in order to get there, you know, I'm just going to have to skip this Bible study this morning or skip this time of prayer. And that's not good for us.

We need that. We need the Lord to center us. We need to worship him. And it's good for us to do that. And that's what God is communicating to us as well. It's harmful when we don't.

And it displeases him in part because I think, one, he totally is worthy. But, two, you know, when our focus isn't on him, we tend to fall into temptation and to sin.

[ 22 : 27 ] And that hurts us, causes our witness at times to diminish. And that's not good for us either. And God cares for us and doesn't want that to be the case.

Any other answers for this question? Why is God right to be displeased when our worship is empty? Dana? I was going to say, as Christians, you know, we need to remember that.

Just say for myself, I'm not just a Christian that, a person that works at Dollar Tree that's a Christian. I am a Christian that works at Dollar Tree. That should come first in our lives always and foremost. You have to remember who we are.

We're not, we're not, that's just not, we are Christians. You know, that's who we are, not what we do. You know, and we worship him not just once a week.

We worship him every day. So, we have to remember, I think. Good, good answer. As you were talking, it made me think in Colossians 3.17, whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

[ 23 : 34 ] I think that was a great attitude in everything, whether in my job, in my marriage, with my family, in my friendships, in my church, in my volunteer work, wherever that may be.

Whatever I'm doing in word or deed, ultimately, everything I should do should be for the Lord, giving thanks to him. And if you can cultivate that attitude, I mean, God has a way to use that in mighty and powerful names to bring honor and glory to his name.

And so, I think in everything, right, again, just thinking, even with your work, you know, I'm not here just to get a check. Hopefully, I'm here to be a light for Christ in this place.

And if that's your greatest goal, I think that that characterizes an attitude that is worshipful. Absolutely. A life that is worshipfully lived.

What about, remember, in Malachi 2, I think one thing I want to bring up, too, why God was so displeased. Remember, they were offering God offerings, but what kind of offerings were they?

[ 24 : 43 ] Yeah, the leftovers, the stuff that it didn't really cost anything for them to give. And so, when we think about that, too, you know, God has given us his best, and we know that.

And so, I think we've got to be careful as well to think about, you know, our own time, our own, you know, time, talents, and treasures, everybody knows.

But your time, your money, the gifts that he's given you, are you presenting those to the Lord as a living sacrifice every day?

Here's my best, Scott, and I'm giving it to you. You know, do we do that? I think oftentimes, again, in some of these matters, we think, well, the first person that gets cut out is the Lord.

And we've got to rethink about that, you know. And then, if that's the case, then what are we really worshipping? What are we really fearing? Are we truly as devoted to him as we ought to be?

[ 25 : 52 ] Is our faith really where it needs to be? So, let's move on to the next question. What does it mean to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth?

So, if you have your Bible, turn to John chapter 4. And this is Jesus' meeting with the woman at the well, the Samaritan woman, if you remember. And Jesus breaks all kinds of social norms in this exchange that he has with her.

Because we know that, you know, as John tells us, Jews and Samaritans had no dealings with one another because they hated one another. Especially a Jewish man would never address or be seen alone talking with a Samaritan woman because Samaritans were so despised.

And so, Jesus meets with her. This is a divine appointment, right? She's just going, thinking she's going to get water. Jesus is fully aware that he's going to meet with her. And so, he talks to her. And when he talks to her, he begins to reveal slowly his true identity to her. And as part of that, he identifies or he reveals that he knows her sins.

[ 27 : 10 ] And he knows them well. Right? You're right. You've had five husbands. And the man you're currently living with is not your husband.

Now, let's think about this, too. I mean, in our society today, as loose as morals have gotten, for a person to be married and divorced five times and to live with somebody who isn't their husband, I think even in our society, as loose as our morals have become, this woman would be considered somebody who you would kind of be like, I don't know about them.

But it seems to me in this conversation that this is a woman who has poured her worship into what? Men. Relationships.

Seeking that satisfaction. Consistently finding failure after failure after failure. And we know from the time frame of where when she goes to the water that she was also avoiding being seen by other women within that community.

Because, again, she was probably the one who was talked about a lot. Or she probably didn't feel welcome in just about any place that she went because people knew her past.

[ 28 : 24 ] And so it wasn't a comfortable thing for her to be around other people. And so here Jesus is talking to her. Jesus reveals to her that he's fully aware of her past. And then what does she do?

Well, she does what a lot of us would do when we're talking about ourselves. And something that we probably don't want to talk about is we shift the conversation to something else. And so that's what she does here.

Let's pick up in verse 19. The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say in Jerusalem is a place where people ought to worship. And so she automatically shifts the conversation over to their differences between Samaritans and Jews in worship. And if you remember this history that they have, the Jews, why do they hate Samaritans so much?

Because they saw them as being a mixed breed, as being lower than them socially because they had intermarriages with people in that region who they were forbidden to.

[ 29 : 30 ] And so they were looked down upon. And then we know the history between Israel when it was split. And you had the northern kingdom and you had the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom. And they were worshipping on Mount Gerizim.

And they were saying, this is the location. This is the place where God wants to be worshipped. And the Jews were like, no, it's in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the place. And so she's caught up really in places, right? We say that God should be worshipped here.

And you say that God should be worshipped there. So what is it? And Jesus responds in verse 21, woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. And so the question is, what does it mean to worship the Lord in spirit and truth? These are the kinds of followers that the Lord is seeking.

[ 30 : 37 ] Followers who will worship him in spirit and truth. What the heck is Jesus talking about? All right, Wes.

Well, I did some research in several study Bibles that I got and a couple commentaries. And Tom Holland admits that he does this all the time.

So I'm going to quote from John MacArthur. But some of the gist I got out of some of them was it was saying that spirit is not the spirit of God. It's it's talking about the human spirit.

But here's what John MacArthur says. So the spirit does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but the human spirit. Worship must be internal, not external conformity to ceremonies and rituals.

And that kind of ties in what we were talking about this morning. They're just going through the motions and stuff like that. So we're on this mountain and you're in Jerusalem. And that's like a lot of tradition more than what what he's looking for.

[ 31 : 44 ] It says it must be from the heart. Truth calls for this heart worship to be consistent with what scripture teaches and centered on the incarnate word. So what I was getting out of that, too, was it also says not to be worshiping in spirit, meaning anywhere you really are at, you could be worshiping.

It doesn't have to be in Jerusalem and on the mountain, but it has to be truth. So you think of false gospels and people preaching things. You might be so sincere and just praying out to God. But if you're not praying something that's centered on scripture, you're wrong.

And then the converse is same thing. You don't want to be preaching truth, but it's just out of, hey, I'm in Jerusalem and I'm worshiping in the right place. It's like you're wrong.

That's not what it is. Anyway, and it finishes out and says, The worship of neither the Samaritans nor the Jews could be characterized as being in spirit and truth, even though the Jews had a more complete understanding of the truth.

Both groups focused on external factors. They conformed outwardly to regulations, observed rituals, and offered sacrifices. But the time had arrived since the Messiah had come when true worshipers would no longer be identified by where they worshiped.

[ 32 : 56 ] True worshipers are those who worship the Father in spirit and truth. You brought John MacArthur in here and, you know, that's hard.

Oh, you do? Yeah. Awesome. Yeah. Good. Did you guys understand that part or you have anything else to add to it? What does it mean to worship in spirit and in truth?

And that was a great, I mean. You referenced him. I'm going to give you credit. You won't be caught for or marked down for plagiarism.

All right. Willard. Truth literally is the idea of a true concept that comes from the true knowledge of God. True knowledge of God from the Word of God and experiential knowledge.

Yeah. Not just a false concept, but a true concept that comes from the Word of God. Yeah. Yeah. Truth.

[ 33 : 58 ] Or worshiping him. So, you know, if somebody says, well, if they're worshiping, because we know there's a lot of religions and they all worship God, so can't God just be content with that? Well, no, because they're not true.

He cares about us worshiping him for who he truly is. Worshiping in truth. The truth that we know of who God is as revealed through his word, as ultimately revealed through his son.

That matters. It matters that we know what we worship and that we worship what is true. That makes a big deal. So, yeah, God isn't content to just say, well, they're worshiping, you know, Buddha over there.

And, well, I guess that counts. No. I mean, it's important. The truth matters. And it matters here. You know, it matters that when we gather together, that when we're gathering and whatever it is that we're doing, whatever we're singing and praying and the sermon, that all of it is truthful.

[ 35 : 02 ] You know, that it's biblical. And that matters a lot to God. And we should care about that as well.

We shouldn't be content. All right, Willard. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I think what would do us all good from time to time to take a good search of our own heart and mind, compare it to Scripture, and make sure our concept of God is in accordance with what the Word of God says. Yeah. Yeah. It's amazing how our concepts are formed by our own mind through experiences of whatever.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that's a great point too, because often we know what human beings do is that we create a God in our own image, a God who we feel more comfortable with.

And we end up saying things like, or we hear about God having wrath, or there being a hell, and thinking, well, that doesn't sound like God to me. Well, it may not, and if it doesn't, it's because you've created your own God in your mind.

[ 36 : 15 ] And you've picked and chosen what you like, but what you're worshiping is not totally true. It's not true. So, good points. So, it's important that we worship God in truth.

It matters to God. It matters, it should matter to us. I think Willard made a great point that it's good to do those kinds of regular introspectives, you know, times of prayer, times where we're thinking over, okay, am I, and whom I'm serving, and what I'm believing, is this the God of Scripture?

Is this the true God of His Word? True concept of God will give us a true concept of ourself.

Because a lot of times, if we have a wrong concept of who God is, we have a wrong concept of

what we are.

Yeah. Yeah. A true concept of God gives us a true concept of ourselves. And somebody needs to make a quote of that and put it on, attribute it to Willard.

But that's true. That's a good point. And part of also why God wants us to worship in truth, because the more we're aware of who He is and who we are, the more worshipful we are going to be, aren't we?

[ 37 : 37 ] Because we realize of how unworthy we are of the love that we have received from Him. The grace that we've received, that makes us want to worship Him and pray. And that was like talking this morning about that heart, your heart being hot, your heart boiling over.

It's because, you know, again, that understanding, this is who God is and this is who I am. And I'm so unworthy and so undeserving of the love that I've received from Him through Jesus Christ. And you just worship.

Good. In truth. Yeah. Their hearts were strangely warm. Weren't they then? Yeah. They observed once they realized it was Jesus.

Didn't? Our hearts were warm. Our hearts were burning whenever He was with us. Yeah. It's a good kind of heartburn, right?

It's the kind of heartburn that we want to have. Yeah. Amen. Amen. What about the spirit part? And I think that, you know, Wes had a good, and I agree totally with what John MacArthur observes about the spirit part, because I think that's where we can get confused.

[ 38 : 46 ] We understand the truth part, I hope. But the spirit part can sometimes confuse us. It's nice to know it's a lowercase s.

Lowercase s. Keep that right for a call. I agree. Lowercase, not uppercase, referring totally to the Holy Spirit. Okay, Doyleene.

I think sometimes we can come in here. You know, I've come to church to worship, but we don't get our minds prepared and ready.

We don't get our hearts ready. And I think we would worship more in spirit if we came in first with a mind to be sensitive to how we need to confess and get right with God.

I think worship is such an activity and not just to be sitting in a pew passively. You've got to prepare yourself to come into worship. It needs to be something that just bubbles up inside of you, and you're getting excited to come in here and be able to worship together, and knowing I'm going to see more truth coming from that pulpit.

[ 39 : 59 ] And the music preparing me to receive that word, sometimes we get so caught up with, did I get the roast set at the right time? Or is all the kids dressed? You know, I got to church.

Is my slip showing? You know, you're going crazy. But do we really prepare our minds, get ready, anticipating that I'm going to meet God in a fresh way?

We've just got to be more active and more aggressive in coming in here and looking forward. To having a fellowship with the Holy Father. Good.

I'm going to come back to your point, because I think Doyleene had hit on something that I want to add a question to here. We're talking about worshiping in spirit, yeah. The heart. The faith.

The trust. That we have in Christ. That's why the inner man, the whole being, the mind, the soul.

[ 40 : 57 ] To worship God fully. And we can do that because we have received his spirit. Though, you know, that hadn't happened here at this point yet. Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman.

But I think that's exactly what he was saying. He wants to be worshipped in truth. He wants to be worshipped by you entirely. All that you are. Using your mind. When you're thinking about him and worshipping him.

In your heart. That burning. That yearning inside. That desire for him. God wants that too. And I agree totally with everything that Doyleene said.

That when we come in here, we do need to prepare for this time that we have. So what can we do better to prepare for that time?

To be together in community as we worship the Lord. Is there anything? I mean, maybe you have some things that you're like, hey, this has helped me. Or I've heard somebody do this before.

[ 41 : 59 ] It seemed to help them. Anybody? Because I think if we're... Okay, Nick. Nick. Nick. Oftentimes in the morning, I wake up thinking about the last thing that was on my mind the night before.

So if I watch like a particularly graphic war movie or something like that, I can be sitting in service and, you know, you're preaching. But all I'm seeing are Vietnam war scenes or something like that. So years ago, I decided, it's like, you know what, I'm going to pull back and I'm going to limit some of the things that I'll, like, say in movies or something, that I'll watch the night before church. Because it helps me prepare. It helps me still my mind during the church service. Another aspect of that I found is that when I am underslept, it is more difficult for me to focus my affections and my attentions on the Lord.

So it's a good thing for me to try to go to bed earlier on Saturday night so that I wake up Sunday rested, excited to come to the Lord's house, as opposed to waking up thinking, oh, my gosh, I can't believe it.

[ 43 : 13 ] We're going to be late. Let's get there. You know, that type of thing. Those two things really help me a lot. Preparing yourself, not just mentally and spiritually, but physically to be here, to be involved, to participate.

That's really, really good observations. And don't we do that for other things that we think are really important, you know, for an important job interview or something like that? I'll make sure I'm rested, that I'm up, that I'm ready to go, that I'm there on time.

Good. Mike Dersham, Sunday school class, will get you ready? That wasn't what I was going to say.

One thing that I think helps me a lot is in Sunday school class on Wednesday nights, we have a list of prayer requests.

And it always helps me, like say, go to bed Saturday night, think about, okay, Lord, who have I needed to pray for this week that I've been negligent in doing that?

[ 44 : 21 ] How can I pray?

How will I see God working? And that gets you excited. I hate it when I miss church. We go on vacation, which is a lot of fun. But I don't care if we're gone one week or two.

It seems like forever since I've seen my family here. And I really miss that. And I think that type of anticipation of, Lord, I want to see my family.

I want to hear from your word. I want to see how my prayers are being answered. You guys thought before that too, that preparation before, the night before even.

Getting yourself ready mentally, spiritually, physically for what's about to take place the next day.

[ 45 : 42 ] Okay. Very good. Wes? I was going to be a simple one. But just I pray about it Sunday mornings. I pray not for when I pray for the service, not that it's orderly and everything happens on time, but just that the word gets preached, that hearts are touched.

I pray for the singing part that people, and even in the back when we pray as a choir, that the congregation will start, you know, more or less getting into it.

That they would get connected to God through us singing, that we're all lifting him up and praising him. So I just, as simple as it sounds, just I pray for all that to happen, that when we come here, we're all ready to go, and that I'm ready to go, and you're ready to go, and that all that happens, that we're prepared to just lift it all up to God.

Paul just said right up here. There's a Spurgeon story, and they kind of get mixed together in my mind. I don't know if he was with D.L. Moody when he came to visit or if it was a young pastor or whatnot, but the story goes that, you know, Spurgeon is showing this person around the building. It's impressive and everything. But, you know, he says to whoever the person was, I can't remember if it was Moody or a younger pastor. It doesn't matter. But asked him, he said something like, do you want to see where the boiler room, you want to see where the power comes from?

[ 47 : 07 ] And he, you've heard this story, and they went down, I think, into the church, and there was a down, there was a room down under the sanctuary, and they opened up the doors, and it was just hundreds of people who were praying there before the service was going to start.

It's like, this is where it starts, right here. This is the boiler room. This is where it begins. Paul. What I was thinking about a little bit when just I see the phrase, in spirit and in truth, I was reminded again this evening that Jesus said, I am the truth.

And not only did he save us, but he sent his Holy Spirit, who is also truth, to live within us. And we have to be reminded once again that nothing of our own human effort actually praises God.

It needs to flow from the Spirit himself through us. And that we need to depend upon that Spirit within us to even worship God correctly and strength and might and all that we have.

And it's nothing that we can even do on our own. Yes, we need to put forth the effort, but we need to look to the Spirit to help guide us in that effort. Spirit, right?

[ 48 : 34 ] Spirit of truth, just as you said, which convicts us of sin, who reminds us of truth, who God uses to steer us in the way of everlasting life, everlasting life to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, to give us those new desires, that transformation that we've undergone because of the Holy Spirit's work.

And I like something that you said too is, God is truth. And when we come into this place, we need to be true as well. Don't you think?

The Pharisees weren't true, were they? They pretended to be, have it all together. Our lives are perfect. We follow the law perfectly. God loves us.

Why wouldn't he? Look at who we are. But Jesus says you're a bunch of whitewashed tombs, full of dead man's bones. And so I think that's important for us too when we think about what it means to worship in spirit and in truth to come in here being true, not putting on some kind of facade.

If you're not doing well and you need prayer, then ask for it. And I know that you're surrounded by people who would want to pray for you if you have questions.

[ 49 : 49 ] And again, we say it a lot. Church should be a place where it's okay to not be okay. And I think that's part of what it means to be true. I'm true. I'm here. Lord, I need you. Lord, I need to be fed from your word.

Lord, I need to be loved by your people. I need to be in that community. And just so I encourage that as well. I think as we look at this question, a couple applications is one to be praying and preparing before the time of service begins for others and for yourself.

And also to be true when you come in here. To be true. And, you know, if God is, you know, that particular song is really speaking to you, then, you know, I know we're Southern Baptists, but, you know, raise your hand if so need be because that's what you're, that's, my dad used to do that all the time.

And I remember just looking up at his hand and asking him, why do you raise your hand at certain times? And he says, because God just, there's something in that song or there's something about it that I just totally agree with and I'm thankful for it.

You hear something in the message and you're like, man, that's good. That's true. Amen. Truly, truly, right? Amen. That's truth. I like it. I encourage you guys to say that as well, to have that participation with the worship.

[ 51 : 12 ] You're not just here going through the motion, being a part of a concert. We're here. But I think also we've got to keep in mind when we're worshiping, God is the audience. We're worshiping God. And I think it's good to keep that in mind, too.

Let's move on to the last question. I know we're running out of time. Why does participation in corporate worship matter? So you can worship, you should worship God with your whole life. But there's also this aspect that the Bible says, God says, that it's important that we also be a part of a local body, part of the church, worshiping corporately together.

Why is that important? Why do we need that? Why does God say that's important? All right. Back here to Cameron, Josiah. Yeah. I kind of have a two-part answer, and I'll try to make it quick.

I like your basketball analogy because even, you know, we're called to be kind of a, we are just a communal species. We like being in groups.

We like being accepted. We like being somewhere with people who are like-minded. So when you go to a basketball game, and that's why sports are so popular in our culture, is because it's a place where for a couple hours we belong to something.

[ 52 : 29 ] It's not just a bunch of random people. And, you know, it gives us that sense of belonging. So church is that for Christians. It's that sense of belonging. It's that encouragement.

It's a place where we fit in with like-minded people to help us grow in that like-mindedness, to help us grow in the truth, and to help us grow in our lives.

And then the second part for me, it's, and I like what Dana mentioned earlier, we're not called to be Christians on Sundays. We're called to be Christians every day of the week.

And so for me, I've noticed something that has changed with how I approach like people at work, is you get into those conversations, what did you do this weekend?

Well, I went to church. And how easily just me participating in corporate worship, you know, hopefully my mind was in it. Hopefully my heart was in it. Hopefully I was doing it for the right

reasons. But then that also can help lead into those conversations throughout the work week.

[ 53 : 32 ] You know, on Tuesdays, what did you do last night? I went to church. Why did you go to church on a Monday night? Well, let me tell you. And so how much being part of corporate worship helps with spreading the gospel throughout our everyday lives.

Good. I think you hit on something really good too at the beginning about us being created for worship. is we also have the sense we've been created for community to belong in a community that's greater than ourselves.

We also want to be, and sometimes it's sports. And you do, you go, we're all wearing the same clothes. We're all cheering for, I mean, not the same, the same colors or whatever. But we're wearing the same colors.

We know the chance. We're all in this together. And I've been to plenty of games, and I'm sure those of you who are, the person next to you, you don't know who they are. But we score, and you're my best buddy, you know.

I don't even know your name. But, you know, slap hands. Let's go. Because we have that. We have that sense of desire to be in community and be a part of something bigger than ourselves.

[ 54 : 41 ] Because God has put that within us. And it may not be sports. It could be politics. And we've seen that a lot, too, in political regimes that have risen to power. People want to belong to something greater than themselves, feeling like they are achieving or a part of something that is good.

Now, we've seen in all those other situations, there's failure, isn't there? Your team, only one team is going to win that championship. And no team in one sport wins the championship every single year.

There's going to be failure. There's going to be letdown. Same thing with government. You're trusting in human beings. Human beings are fallen. They will eventually disappoint you. But you're trusting in God? God who is holy?

God who is righteous? Pure? He's not going to disappoint you. He's not. You're never going to be dissatisfied pursuing after the Lord.

Pursuing after truth. And, yeah, so being a part of his church or part of this community because you know that you're not and you should not be the center of your entire life. That that's not a spot for you or for anybody else.

[ 55 : 46 ] That it's Christ and Christ alone. God has made you for that. It's made you to be in community. You think about God and who he is. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There's community there. Three in one. He's created us for the same thing.

And so when we're a part of that group, we're collectively realizing that we belong. We belong for a purpose greater than ourselves. And we understand what that purpose is when we're in the church. That purpose is the Lord and the purpose that he's given us to be his disciples, to make much of the name of Jesus Christ.

We find satisfaction when we're a part of that. Wes? Wes? Just real quick. I used to be in sales and we had meetings every once a week. And it gets to be like, we're here again.

Why am I here? And all this kind of stuff. What they used to say is sometimes you need the meeting and sometimes the meeting needs you. So when you come in, you could be all hyped up.

I shouldn't say hyped up, but you're ready to worship. And, you know, you're just really wanting to worship God. And someone else kind of they're down and just feeling bad. And, well, they're seeing you. And we get encouraged when we sing in the choir loft and people down here singing along.

[ 56 : 49 ] It's like, that's what we want to see. It brings me up. But sometimes it's the other way around. And you might be the person that makes someone else just be glad that they're there and just pull them out of a spot that they might be in.

So. The thing is, this is good. It's past 730. And I'm willing to continue on as long as you all are because this is good.

But if you need to leave because it's past 730, feel free to go. We'll go to. Okay. Nick, Amy, Brandy and Michael.

Okay. Sorry. I was just going to say two things. I think participation in corporate worship. One reason it matters is accountability. I have not seen other people whose lives were, you know, had major issues who were blessed by falling out of corporate worship at church.

Rather, that always just precipitated a swifter race to the bottom in their life. Additionally, in that with accountability, when we're together corporately, we hold each other accountable for what we believe and what we say that we believe.

[ 58 : 00 ] If I just worship the Lord individually alone, it will be very easy for me to fall off into false teaching. I need all of you to hold me accountable, to hold on to the faith as one's delivered to the saints.

The other was corporate worship is our destiny. So when we look at descriptions of heaven, we see the Lord worship my choirs of angels with people from every tribe, nation, and tongue gathered around the throne.

Why would I worship alone here on this earth and prepare myself to worship corporately in heaven? Rather, I should be worshiping with God's people now because in 10,000 years, that's also what I will be doing.

Amen. There's another quote, too. Corporate worship is our destiny. Good. Use the language of heaven and start practicing now.

Amen. That's not what I want to say. Okay. Ah, from our brother Paul in Hebrews. Okay, I'm sorry.

[ 59 : 05 ] Well, whoever wrote it? Oh. Okay. It said, let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir one another up to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another.

And all the more. That's the part I like. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. And all the more as you see the day drawing near. Mm-hmm. King James, as you see the day approaching.

Mm-hmm. And the day is approaching. Mm-hmm. And I think it's important. We need each other right now. We need each other. We need that encouragement. Big time, bad time. Absolutely. We need each other. Good.

All right. Brandy? I was just going to say that as well, like how you've been preaching, we are a body. And like we do need each other.

And if you kind of look at it like, you know, none of us are here by accident. God has called all of us here. So our gifts, our talents, you know, even going back to what we were saying about, you know, the last question, doing the things to prepare yourself.

[ 60 : 17 ] So when you walk in these doors, you don't miss all that. If you're coming here frustrated like me, good example, trying to get all these seven children, you know, to church on time. And I'm frustrated, you know, not doing the things the day before to help myself so things aren't as frustrating in the morning.

And so you can come here prepared, you know, if you miss all that, you know, we are a body of believers and we really need each other. So, you know, if you look at it like that, you know, using your talents, your gifts, we all need each other.

That's all I can say. Amen. Good. We just need each other. Good job. Yeah. Good answer. Yeah, we do. We need that. We need that support. I think it's also part of that, too, and you're talking about your children.

And I think for me with mine, I need them to be taught by others as well what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

Be able to, what a blessing it is to be able to send them into rooms with people I know who I could trust, who love and care about them, who are going to share the word with them and be a positive influence. Michael.

[ 61 : 22 ] There's a, oh, Ben intercepted it. I intercepted it. I want to tag on to what you just said because it is a privilege. It is a privilege for our children to see the body worshiping together.

And I love that my kids who have not had that opportunity, they've been in a small church environment. We're talking few families. And for them to come back to America and see a corporate body of worship, that's an incredible thing for them to see and to witness and to say, yes, I'm a part of something bigger than just something small.

I'm part of the global church. And so, yeah, it's something that we shouldn't take for granted. Wrap us up.

So Nick actually stole my answer. He was right where I was going to say. It definitely holds us accountable as Christians, and it helps us grow, too, as well.

In our faith, it deepens because apart from another believer, body of believers, we're not going to grow the correct way. Good. Very good answer.

[ 62 : 33 ] So, you know, obviously, as you see, and everybody's pointing out, this is really important. So don't let it be something that you allow to slip. Don't let it be something that you sacrifice for other things that aren't eternal.

We need the church, and thank God that he's given us the church and the opportunity to meet regularly together and have that fellowship, but more importantly, to worship our Lord who's worthy of our praise.

So, good deal. Let's close in prayer. Lord, thank you for this time of discussion. I thank you for the really good discussion that we've had, for the really insightful answers that have been shared to these questions, and for the way that I believe that we've sharpened one another in thinking about something that's really important, our worship of you, and making sure, Lord, that we give that priority, that it not be something that we think that we do once a week, but it's the way that we are to live.

Always giving worship to you. Always expressing our gratitude to you, Lord. And we know from your word that when we do that, we find satisfaction. We find purpose.

We become less anxious and less selfish and less stressed, less angry, because we know that we have received Christ, and in Christ we have all that we could ever need, could ever want.

[ 63 : 56 ] And so, Lord, I pray that this conversation that we've had tonight would stick with us as we think about the fact, again, that we are to be living sacrifices, that it's a blessing and a privilege to be a part of your church, and that we would prepare ourselves beforehand when we gather in this place, in anticipation, Lord, that you're going to speak to us, and that you're going to use us to be a blessing to others, which ultimately, Lord, we know will please you, and again, you'll be pleased with it.

So, Lord, again, we thank you for all that you are, that you are worthy of our praise. And that in praising you, Lord, we find the hope, the satisfaction, the sense of belonging that nothing in this world can provide to us, only you.

And so we give you the glory, and we ask these things, Heavenly Father, in Jesus' name, amen. And God bless you all, and I hope that you have a great rest of your evening. Thank you.