

What Makes for Right, True Worship?

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[0:00] Take your Bibles and go to the book of Psalms.

Book of Psalms. Going to be in Psalms, at least for this Sunday, maybe next Sunday. If you're visiting with us or need a Bible, the Bible in the chair in front of you, you can pull that out. Go to the middle. It's about page 401. 401. You'll find, excuse me, Psalm 24. I've been reading quite a bit and preparing quite a bit for the book of Judges.

I've almost landed on a theme. I'm almost there for a theme. I don't know how many weeks are going to be in that book of Judges, but we shall see.

I'm in my third time reading it, though. I was reading it last night. So it'll be fun. It's a really fun book. It's a really sorry, dark book and yet it's a fun book and you'll see why.

[1:15] You'll see just God's faithfulness. But for this week and maybe even for next week, I'm not sure, we're going to be in a psalm. It gives me some more time to prepare to study more of the book of Judges.

Psalm 20. Did I tell you it's a psalm? I told you Psalm 24, right? Did I say that? Okay. Out of my sorts. So Psalm 24. Let's read it. Psalm 24, page 401 in that black Bible.

Psalm 24. I'm going to read it then we'll jump in. A Psalm of David. The earth is Yahweh's and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.

He's founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. Who may ascend into the hill of Yahweh? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart. Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood. He has not sworn deceitfully. He shall receive a blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

[2:23] This is a generation of those who seek him, who seek his face, of Jacob. Selah. Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the glorious king may come in.

Who is this king of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty. Yahweh, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates. Lift them up, O ancient doors, that the glorious king may come in.

Who is this glorious king? The Lord of hosts. He is the king of glory. Selah. Look at you.

Thanks, man. Thanks, man. Thanks, man. George Frederick Handel.

One of the greatest composers in the history of the church. He wrote his famous oratorio, Messiah. And it was performed in London on March 23rd, 1743, in the presence of King George II.

[3:31] When the hallelujah chorus was sung, containing the powerful words, For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, King George II rose to his feet in an act of homage.

This prompted the audience to do the same. And they remained standing throughout the entire chorus, recognizing the great sovereign king. From that time onward, it's always been customary to stand during the hallelujah chorus.

I don't know if some of you youngins from like 30 down, I don't know if you know that, but when they start singing the hallelujah chorus, hallelujah, people, they stand up.

That's customary. I remember Shepherds Conference. We did that. The choir, they started singing the hallelujah chorus. We all immediately stood. It's just, it's become tradition. And yet, if you know anything about the story of King George, about his life, King George II, his life displayed nothing remotely close to how this psalm describes true, right worship of God.

Nowhere close. Listen to what Stephen Lawson says, quote, This is the true heart of worship. A humble recognition of the sovereignty of our triune God and responding appropriately by presenting our praise, devotion, and lives to Him.

[5:03] Authentic worship involves beholding God's unveiled glory and responding to His splendor. He continues, true worship is an all-consuming desire to give ourselves to God, yielding all that we are to all that He is, end quote.

So as we come to the psalm, I titled it this, What makes for right, true worship? What makes for right, true worship?

The psalm answers that question. What makes for right worship? What is true worship? What does it entail?

And there's probably other things that true worship involves, but from this psalm, you're going to see three different aspects to that. Three ways. But first, something that you need to know about this psalm.

This psalm was most likely written when the Ark of the Covenant returned to its position of honor in Jerusalem after it was captured by the Philistines.

[6:13] Back in 1 Samuel chapter 5 and chapter 6, it was captured by the Philistines. 2 Samuel chapter 6, verse 12, recounts David bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

And Saul's daughter despised him because David was just exhilarated with enthusiasm. He was dancing. He was doing all these sacrifices.

And he was just, he was just going. He was just excited. This is his response. So, you have to get the emotion of this psalm.

It's highly emotional for David. And understand also, as well, the Ark of the Covenant and what it symbolized.

The Ark of the Covenant was the God-appointed symbol of his very presence with his people.

Where it was, there he was also.

[7:21] Now, Israel uses it as like a lucky charm. We're up to live. Here comes the genie, type thing. But, so that's wrong.

And you'll see David bring this up, this idea that just because you have the Ark, you're okay. You'll see him bring it up in just a moment.

But that's what this psalm is celebrating. His entrance into Zion. As well as the character of the one who may enter his presence. And even it's looking forward to when Jesus entered into the city of Jerusalem.

It's looking forward to that. Which, from David's perspective, was happening in the future. For us, we're looking back, obviously. So the question, by what right do we enter God's presence?

According to the psalm. And by what right does he dwell with us? What makes for right worship of God? Three ways we can rightly and truly worship the living God.

[8:32] And like I said, there's more probably. But from this psalm, we see three ways we can rightly, truly worship the living God. Here's way number one. Recognize God's sovereignty.

Recognize God's sovereignty. Look at verse one and two. The earth is the Lord's, Yahweh's, and all it contains. So notice, immediately, David's trying to get, the people who are singing this song, get understanding.

Understand this, that this statement, it keeps us from unholy views of the living God, restricting him to one place, or a certain area, aka Jerusalem.

It keeps us from thinking that way. It keeps us from thinking that, well, God's here, but he's not over there.

Well, that's stupid. That's dumb. What do you think that for? This is no more holy than your bathroom. He's trying to get you to understand, to not think that, well, God's just only here.

[9:50] And that's what, the nation of Israel, they thought, the Ark of the Covenant, was just a lucky charm. The Ark of the Covenant was, now that we have it here, oh, great, we're going to win. That's what happened in 1 Samuel chapter 5, and 1 Samuel chapter 6, and it was captured, because our hearts were far away from him.

See? The earth is the Lord, and all it contains. Notice he says, the world, and those who dwell in it, all live under God's sovereign dominion, whether they like it or not.

You know, people say, well, it depends on how you believe it. You can believe it, or you can choose not to believe it. It doesn't matter. It just is what it is. You can think that piano, is a big piece of steak.

You're more than welcome to think that. That's fine, you can believe that. But that's not what it is. It is what it is. God is sovereign, whether you like it or not. God rules.

This is a confession of God's, unchangeable dominion over all. His sovereign rulership. And no one may intrude uninvited, not recognizing His supremacy.

[11:02] Recognize the supremacy of God. It all belongs to Him. The earth and its fullness.

No one and nothing is outside His sovereign control. He declares the end from the beginning. He planned it. Well, verse 2 tells us, for reason, He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

The reason why He's sovereign, God is sovereign, because He created everything. He's the creator of all things. The owner. He owns us all, saved and unsaved.

He owns everything. See, He's really trying to get you to understand the great supremacy and the vastness of God.

He's not relegated just to this one little area. He has established the boundaries and they can go no farther. Politically, He pictures the world as an order of creation founded by God Himself.

[12 : 14] He's got the whole world in His hands. This is God's care for all humanity by fixing the boundaries of the earth for people to live.

His love and care is not just for you Jews, it's for Gentiles too. It's almost like, it's like a little bit of info as well, like a mysterious way pointing to Gentile inclusion into the gospel.

God rules everything. Hold on, nation of Israel. It's not just all about you. He does what He pleases. Psalm 135 verse 6. So God is not limited in time and space. He is the great sovereign ruler over all creation, including man and His will.

Understand that too. He's really trying to get His singers and His readers to understand true worship is going to start when you recognize His sovereignty.

[13 : 20] His sovereign rulership is over us, over what you plan today, what you plan tomorrow, what you plan next week, what you plan next month, what you plan next year. He rules. Recognize that.

Number two, recognize God's sovereignty. Number two, meet God's conditions. These are conditions one should meet with desire to come before Yahweh's face.

Who may ascend into the hill of Yahweh? Who may stand in His holy place? Who's acceptable in His sight? What are the requirements of proper worship of the King of all?

Of this supreme person who rules everything, everything, has created everything. With whom is He well pleased?

Whom does Yahweh receive to have deep fellowship? That's what deep fellowship from, you see, ascend to His hill. Stand in His holy presence.

[14 : 26] How do you, how do you stand? I mean, think about it. How are you able to stand in the presence of the ruler of all? How can you stand there?

I don't know about you, but I should be kneeling with my face to the ground. How are you able to stand in His presence? He gives five conditions.

Number one, righteous hands. Verse four, the first three are in verse four. He who has clean hands, holy hands, holy conduct, talk about a person's outward actions, and a pure heart, a holy heart, or character.

Their inner soul is undefiled. You cannot lose your heart and live. And this righteous, clean heart can come only by God Himself through His Spirit.

He does a heart change. And when He does that heart change, it brings about actions that worship Him. A pure heart.

[15 : 50] How do you get a pure heart? It's only by the gospel, from darkness to life. From darkness to light, from death to life, from impurity to purity.

It's only through Christ. He's looking forward to what's going to happen. He's looking forward to what Messiah is going to accomplish for sinners. It's the only way He can stand in His presence.

Spurgeon says this, true religion is heart work. We may wash the outside of the cup and the platter as long as we please, but if the inward parts be filthy, we are filthy altogether in the sight of God for our hearts are more truly ourselves than our hands are.

Is your heart dirty today? Do you need to repent and trust Christ today? He can change your heart. That's the condition.

If you want to come into the presence of the supreme sovereign ruler of everything, you must say, I need someone to change my heart. God, change me. I come humbly.

[16 : 55] I turn from my sin. I put my trust in you, Jesus. That's the gospel. That's the only way you can enter. Stand in the presence of God. Righteous hands, righteous heart.

Notice also verse 4, a righteous mouth. who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood and has not sworn deceitfully. That's why we sang the song, give us clean hands, give us pure hearts.

I'm not as dumb as I look. That's why we sang that song. Don't answer that. False, literally emptiness of speech, their speech should not be empty, false, vain. Their words are pleasing to the king because he's changed their hearts. So then there's actions that change. Their mouths speak, not deceitfully. It's a holy mouth that speaks truth and not treachery. A loyalty to God alone. What Paul says in Ephesians chapter 4, after you've learned Christ, we speak truth to one another.

[17:57] That's part of the effects of the gospel. When it changes your heart, it changes how you think. It changes how you speak. It changes how you act. It changes from the inside out.

Righteous hands, righteous heart, righteous mouth. Even notice this, verse 5, a righteous imputation. He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, from Yahweh.

Notice, it's received. It's not of their own merits. A blessing from the Lord. God's goodness and favor freely bestowed on His people were satisfied, happily satisfied with Him.

They received that blessing from the Lord. And notice he says, and righteousness from the God of His salvation. What's he saying here?

It seems like he's saying it's imputed to the one who repents and trusts and also imparted, which is shown by the way that one lives. A person who approaches God through repentance and trust will be imputed with God's righteousness and thus receive His salvation.

[19:15] That's why he says, the God of His salvation. The God who saves His people. He brings salvation by means of repentance and faith.

He credits them with the righteousness of His own. Notice how this is a small window of what Christ is going to do, of what the Messiah is going to accomplish.

That's what He's doing. He's looking forward to that. You see, David, knowingly or unknowingly, we don't know, prophesying about the coming of Messiah and what He's going to accomplish for us. righteous hands, righteous heart, righteous mouth, righteous imputation. Last, number five, righteous pursuit.

Verse six, this is a generation of those who seek Him, who seek your face, O God of Jacob, as we sing. Amen. True worship involves earnestly seeking after God.

[20:23] Notice, that's given to us by God because in and of ourselves we will not seek God. No one seeks after God, not even one. Romans chapter three, verse 11.

No one seeks after God. So this is given to you by God. God Himself is seeking worshipers.

That's what Jesus said in John chapter four, verse 23 and 24. These souls are awakened by the Holy Spirit. They truly seek after the Lord. They seek the Lord and they can't get enough of Him. They want more and more and more. There's that righteous pursuit who seek your face. No hypocrisy, only genuine true trust.

True worshipers who seek entrance before the face of God. They want Him. not about His blessings, not about His gifts.

[21:24] They want Him. Look at what David's trying to show and teach the people through this song. We as His people should want Him.

A righteous pursuit which is only given to us by God. God help us to pursue you. Notice He says, even Jacob, the Lord God decided to make Himself specially known, manifested Himself to His people, not to the rest of humanity.

I mean, it's Jacob who got this privilege. It's His grace. It's only by God's free, sovereign choice by which He in His grace chose a people for Himself and because of this grace, notice, David says, Selah, which is like a crescendo, a musical climax, like, ta-da, type thing, you know?

It's like, yeah, that's what it should be. So, there's a recognition of God's sovereignty. There's a meeting of God's conditions.

He gave five of them. Third way for right, true worship of God. Three, you praise God's glory or you can even put Jesus' glory because is He not called the King of glory, the glorious King?

[22:53] So again, now it's looking back to when they're bringing the ark in, when it's coming in and then also it's looking forward when Jesus comes, the triumphal entry. So that's why, verse seven, lift up your heads, O gates.

Do gates have heads? No. It's a poetic way of giving human attributes to things. It's called personification. So poetically, David gives human attributes to these gates to tell them, lift up your heads.

the idea is this, it was called to open up to prepare for the great triumphant entry of the great King. Enlarge yourself vastly for this great and glorious King.

And then he says, and be lifted up with ancient doors. May the doors of antiquity be opened high and wide for Him that the King of glory, the glorious King, may come in.

Notice, verse eight, who is this King of glory? Who is this glorious King? Yahweh strong and mighty. Yahweh mighty in battle.

[24 : 07] By His strength, we stand against the enemy. By His strength, we stand in the midst of trials. He showed Himself strong in defeating all of Israel's foes.

He shows Himself strong by defeating all the foes of His people. He is our strength. He is our power. He is our might. It's not in your abilities.

It's not in your background. It's not in the works that you do. He is our strength.

He is our power. He is our might. It's Him. And notice, you know, remember, get what's happening. The Ark of the Covenant is coming in. And the first reaction that people are going to have is to the thing. It's worshipping the thing. David's saying, no, it's not about the thing.

[25 : 12] Because remember what happened to the thing with the Philistines? It got captured. It's not the thing. It's what the thing symbolizes.

It's God. It's the supreme, sovereign God. It's Him. And notice, He repeats this for emphasis.

Verse 9, Lift up your heads, O gates. Lift them up, O ancient doors, that the glorious King may come in. Who's this glorious King? Verse 10, The Lord of hosts, Yahweh of hosts.

His rulership over the entire hosts have created things, including the hosts of heaven and the armies of Israel. Israel, it's not about your army.

Israel, it's not about your abilities. Israel, Israel, it's not about your warlike capabilities. It's not that. It's the Lord. He's the Yahweh, the one who's Lord and King of all hosts.

[26 : 19] Who is this glorious King? The Lord of hosts. He is the King of glory. Notice the climax, the blaze of glory, the glorious King. And then, notice how it ends.

Selah. Here's, the Psalm, it ends, the Psalm ends like this. You praise the glory of the King. I mean, here's, feel the emotions that's coming through from David.

Do you feel that? You should. I mean, there's, I mean, the man was dancing before the Lord. He was just so excited that God was going to be with him.

And the symbol of that was the ark and he was like, this is wonderful, this is great, it's in Jerusalem, I love him, don't you love him too, Israel?

Yeah, yeah, yeah. And there's, the soul's dark, you stupid dude, I want to kick you. I'm going to slap you when you come up here, you jerk. He's like, yeah, yeah, yeah.

[27 : 23] He's just excited. That's the feeling of the Psalm. True worship occurs when the whole person, mind, emotion, and will responds to the glorious King, humility, reverence, praise, loyalty, and devotion.

Lives devoted to him because we love him so. because what was David? He was a man after God's own heart.

David loved the Lord. Allie and I were just talking earlier that these truths that we see will not just stir your emotions, but it also will affect your will and direct us to obedience to him.

Not because we have to, but because we love him. The Psalm directs us to the fact that we need to have a high view of God.

A high view of God will lead to high and holy living. If our view of God goes down, the way we live goes down.

[28 : 56] What right do we enter God's presence? What right does he dwell with us? What makes for right true worship?

These are three ways. We recognize his sovereignty, meet those conditions, and we praise his glory. Who is this king of glory?

Who is the glorious king? It's Jesus. He is the glorious king. As we will sing soon, strong and kind. Jesus, thank you that you have been so gracious to us. Thank you that you're so kind.

thank you for your compassion. Who loved me and gave himself up for me.

[30 : 00] We are lost. We needed you to come to us because our hearts are not bent towards you. So thank you for changing our hearts, but we pray that give us an even greater pursuit of you.

Keep changing us and conforming us that our lives will display you with our hands, with our mouths, with our desires.

Israel pursued so many different gods, so many different idols. They pursued stuff. Nothing is new under the sun. Help us to pursue you. Lord Jesus, we thank you that really in essence you met all those conditions for us. And now we are united to you through faith, through trusting you. So we receive the grace. We receive the grace.