

Thanks for the Gift of Worship

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[0 : 0 0] Why do we worship God? Why is it so important? You know, in the Bible we've got this book of Psalms and we're looking at one each week right through the summer and all of those Psalms and the one particular that we've just heard from Lorna just a moment ago actually have something to say to us about why worship is so important. I'd like to tell you a story which I think helps us to understand why worship is really, really important. And it's a story about an art gallery, a man who was in an art gallery, he was an art critic and he was looking at this painting, it was a very famous painting, it was painted in the 15th century and it had a pic in this painting that you could see the baby Jesus in the arms of Mary and there was a saint on either side with hills in the background. And yet the thing is, is that there seems something a bit strange about this painting. Everything seemed somehow wrong about it, everything was out of shape, out of proportion, out of perspective. It almost looked like Jesus could topple out of the painting at any time. And this painting had puzzled art critics for years and years and then this particular famous critic was in the gallery was in London, one particular day, looking at this painting for hours trying to work out why it was so unusual. And then a thought occurred to him, he thought maybe this painting was not wrong at all, it was rather the way that he was looking at it that was wrong.

And he thought maybe, just maybe, that the painting had never been intended to be put in a gallery, but rather it was meant to be in a place of prayer. And so at that point he decided to carry out a little experiment. Instead of standing looking at this painting, he got down on his knees as though he was praying. And the moment he got on his knees and started to look up at the painting, suddenly everything came into place. The faces in the painting all seemed right again. They seemed natural and relaxed and everything seemed into the right kind of perspective and proportion.

And so he suddenly realised there's something really important there for all of us to remember. When we worship God, everything falls into place. Things somehow seem right. It's really hard to explain to somebody else who's never worshipped God what it's like to really worship God. But when you do, when you're in that position of prayer, and by the way, you don't have to be on your knees literally to worship God, but when you do worship God, things take on a new perspective. I'm going to show you a quick magic trick. And it's a little trick just to help us to think a bit about when it comes to worship, we need to remember that worship is about all of our times in life, not just when we're feeling happy. God wants us to worship him when we're feeling happy, but also when we're feeling sad. See, when we worship God, we bring our hearts to God. We bring him ourselves, as we really are. And sometimes we will be feeling really happy, and sometimes we'll be feeling not so happy. See, as we go through life, sometimes things happen to us that make us feel sad. Sometimes people will talk of having a broken heart. Things go wrong. People feel sad and frightened and upset as disappointments and hurts come our way. The thing about worship is that we can know that whatever is going on in our lives, and no matter how sad or broken we may be feeling, we can bring all of that before God in worship. You know, there's an old saying that says that if you just bring God the pieces, he can mend any broken heart. And I don't quite understand how this works, but I do know that it's real. That even if you are feeling sad, especially when you're feeling sad, if you bring that before God, if you come to him as you actually are, not pretending to be something you're not, but as you are, even in your sadness, you will find that God has this mysterious way of putting those pieces back together again and making us whole.

[4 : 5 1] And that's why we worship God. It's really hard to explain unless you've actually experienced it, but when you experience it, it really changes things. Let's pray together now, shall we? Let's pray.

Lord God, thank you that when you call us to worship you, it's because you want us to form a friendship with you, a relationship with you, to know you, and to know the peace that you can bring.

So help us to do that this day and every day, to know your peace. Help us to give to you our hearts when we are feeling sad as well as when we're feeling happy. In Jesus' name. Amen.