

Worship - Tech issues re sound

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[0:00] We're going to go to a bit of a subject here tonight, the subject of worship.

The subject of worship. And maybe just start with 1 Peter 2 verse 9. 1 Peter 2 verse 9. We'll come to that in a little while. But you might want to just turn your Bibles there.

1 Peter 2 and verse 9. We might just read that to start off. 1 Peter 2 verse 9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood and holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

He's called you out of darkness into his marvellous light and he's ordained that you should show forth the praises of him. The topic tonight I wanted to talk on is the subject of worship.

Worship. What is worship? Firstly, what? Worship is not. Worship is not. Worship is not entertainment.

[1:26] Now we know that we live in an entertainment culture, don't we? Where it's all geared for entertainment. Everywhere we go today we expect to be entertained. Now you go down the shop and there's entertainment.

Entertainment. You can't have a fast food meal without some big screen and some music playing. There's TV shows that are all geared to entertain us, to keep us on the edge of our seat, to keep us glued to the screen, whatever that screen might be.

Entertainment. People like that. They want to be continually on the edge of their seats or made to laugh. We all do. It's human nature.

And if we're not watching something that satisfies us, just press the remote, don't you? Find another channel. Change station. We want to be entertained, don't we?

And if we're not careful, even committed Christians can get geared that same way, as if our Sunday meeting is a quest for entertainment. It's a quest to get another high, some emotional excitement or some experience of such.

[2:33] It's as if some people come to church and say, here I am God, entertain me. And it's all geared, or many churches gear it that way.

And as human beings, we're wired that way. We want to be entertained. But worship is not entertainment. It's something different from that. So what is worship?

Some definitions of worship. What does the Bible say worship is? Worship is bowing down. It's adoring. It's serving. The Bible word worship is always a verb.

It's always something you and I do. When we gather to worship, it's something that we do. You do. I do. We do it together. It's never something we go to, to observe.

You know, in some quarters these days, it's like there's a platform there with entertainers and professional people. And God bless them.

[3:34] They're doing the best that they can, I suppose. But we're not there to come and watch them perform. That's not what the Bible really shows to us.

It's not something we go to. It's something we, not something we observe and go to. It's something we're part of. We enter in.

It's really in both the Greek and Hebrew to fall down or to bow down before. Worship means to fall down or to bow down before.

Of course, there's different words that underlie lots of our words and there's manifold meanings. But certainly at least one of those words in the Greek and in the Hebrew means to fall down and to bow down before.

So worship is about reaching towards God. It's a pouring out of ourselves in thanks, in praise, in adoration, in love to our Lord for what he's done for us.

[4:35] What mighty works he has done in saving us, in redeeming us. He's created us and we owe him everything to love him, to owe him everything that we are.

Here's another definition of worship. This is what some old-time preacher said many long years ago. And it really wraps it up in a real good descriptive way.

He says this, To worship is to quicken or make alive the conscience by holiness of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God.

All this is gathered up in that emotion which most cleanses us from selfishness because it is the most selfless of all emotions, adoration, adoration.

We come to adore him. Adore him. Worship is the opportunity for busy people to touch the eternal. We take that time aside from all of our busy running here and there to spend time with the eternal one.

[5:46] And for sinners to glimpse the holy, for broken people to be enfolded in his love and to know that perfect love.

Worship. Another definition, Worship is moving beyond our self-centered lives to meet the one who created us for something better.

You know, we get wrapped up in that self-centered life. Worship is about adoration and finding God's purpose for the one who's created us for something better than what this world has to offer. Clement of Alexander, now this is in, I think, the second century, said this, Worship is celebration.

God is everywhere present.

On all sides, we praise him as we till the ground. We sing hymns as we sow the seed. Feel his inspiration in all that we do.

[6:46] So it's not just in coming for a gathering time, but worship through our lives as we sow the seed, as we till the ground, as we go about our work days, our weekdays.

We can worship him, our eternal one. A man called Strong said this, I think it's the one who authored the Strong's Concordance. He said, Worship is formal communion between God and his people.

God speaks to man and man to God. Worship is that two-fold interaction, that interplay. What do we worship?

We all know we're prone to worship. Even people in pagan lands have got forms of worship.

Worshipping the wrong things, sadly, idols and other things.

And in the West too, we can worship idols, can't we? You ever heard of the almighty dollar? Some people worship that, don't they? They worship other things, things other than God.

[7:46] You know, we can worship our program. You know, even as a church, we can worship our preacher. I hope you don't do that. I'm not worthy of your worship, that's for sure. But there's some places where it's almost geared that way, where they put the man or women on a stage and worship them virtually.

And that's not good either. And we've got to be careful. What we worship, it's biblical, it's true worship, it's godly worship. You know, Charles Spurgeon was one of the outstanding preachers of the 19th century.

And some 6,000 came on a Sunday morning to gather in London to hear him preach. And one day, Sir Spurgeon was going to be out of town. And he had a fellow preacher fill in for him.

And as the service progressed that morning, it soon became apparent that Spurgeon wasn't there. And it spread like wildfire throughout the congregation. And it seemed like literally hundreds of people were getting up out of their chairs and heading for the doors.

Spurgeon's not here were going to go home. And this visiting preacher that was there that day, he had the gumption to jump up in the middle of the service. And he said this, Stop!

[8:56] If you are here this morning to worship Charles Spurgeon, then keep on going. But if you are here to worship Jesus Christ, then we invite you to stay. It doesn't matter who's the preacher.

We're not here to have a man. We're here to meet with God, to worship with God, to meet with... We worship.

It's very important, isn't it? What about the ways that we worship? Some churches say, let's do worship in ways that make us feel good. Now, worship does make us feel good.

That's not the focus. What is the focus is that we please God. That's what matters. With our whole lives, with how we live our lives in every dimension, do we please God?

That's what counts. Because really, who designed worship and what is worship really for? These are the questions that should dictate how we worship, ways that we worship.

[10:00] It's God's plan that we worship. He's planned us that way. He's wired us that way that we want to worship. He's made us to worship Him. He's created us for this.

It's His ultimate purpose for us to find how we worship Him. As a human being, design you and me, we've been chosen to worship God. As we read here in this one that we started with, ye are, ye, plural, are a chosen generation.

Of course, it's talking to Israel, but we can apply it likewise to us today. We are of that same seed, of Abraham's seed, by faith, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.

1 Peter 2, verse 9. God does this way, that we worship Him, that we be a God-praising people, people constantly, constantly engaged in worship into eternity.

Worship, ways of worship. Let me consider some along with you and some biblical dimensions to worship. So what is worship? What should it be?

[11:16] Worship should be God-centred. God-centred. Now we started off with immortal, invisible, only wise God. Scripture. Many Christian songs are very man-centred, sadly.

And God is not the great need-meter and my hero if He solves all my problems. This is not the exaltation of God but the enjoyment of man.

One of the problems in the modern church. Now, I know it's just a kid's song but I heard one church singing, Jesus is my superhero. Comparing Him to Superman and Batman and Robin or you name it.

Jesus isn't my superhero. He's the almighty God. The almighty God. The holy one. The holy, holy, holy, holy Lord God almighty. We don't demean Him to the level of a superhero.

That's not the one, the holy one that He calls us to worship with holiness and awe.

[12:22] Psalm 118 verse 14 it says, The Lord is my strength and song and has become my salvation. That's the one we worship. He's our saviour. He's become my salvation.

Worship is to the Lord. The Bible says we are to sing and to make melody in our hearts to the Lord. It's unto Him. Unto Him. Unto Him. He's the one worthy of our praise, of our worship, of our adoration.

Worship is totally God-centered. God-centered. Not man-centered. When it gets man-centered it's skew-whiffed. It's out of kilter. It's not a man-centered thing.

It's God-centered. And worship, biblical worship, focuses on who God is, who He is, what He has done. So prayerfully, let's make it our aim, whether we worship individually or in gatherings, that worship is God-centered.

It's unto Him. Glory to God. Christ-centered. He is the hub. He is the focal point. He is the center. Christ in the center. Our worship revolves and focuses on Him, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[13:45] For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things blessed be God.

We acknowledge His greatness, His majesty. So worship is God-centered. Worship is essentially for God. God is the subject and object in our worship.

And in the life of the church, the believer, He's at the very center. In Ephesians 3, 21, it says, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

Amen. Ephesians 3, 21, unto Him be glory in the church, in that assembly. Be glory unto Him. We see Revelation 4 as we catch a little, it's almost like they open the door a little bit ajar here in Revelation 4 and you get a kind of glimpse into the heavenly portals.

It says, the four and twenty out of the church that fall down before Him that sat on the throne and worship Him that liveth forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for Thou hast created all things and for Thy

pleasure they are and were created.

[15:17] Thou art worthy, O Lord, if we could just catch a little whisper of worship of heaven, if we could just have a little chink in that doorway as it was glory of God and see them casting their crowns before the throne, if we could just picture that, that the Lord is the focus, worship is the business of heaven, is the occupation of heaven, is the obsession of heaven and so should it be for you and me as God's people, as citizens of heaven, that is to be our focus, to give Him all of the glory, so God is the focus, God is the center of our worship and God's desire is that we worship.

In John 4, as He met the woman at the well, the Lord Jesus, He says that God seeks our worship, He says the Father seeks worshipers. John 4, the Father is seeking worshipers, those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth, twofold.

Worship to be genuine is from the heart, worship in spirit and it's in accord with God's word, in truth, in truth. They go hand in hand, this is the worship the Father seeks and these are the kinds of worshipers the Father wants us to be.

He seeks worshipers, He's made us, He's wired us, He's sought us, He's redeemed us to worship that we might glorify Him and enjoy Him forever in worship.

So what is worship? Just some more thoughts about what is worship? You know, it sounds like we could leave it there and not really define it or tease it out a little bit more.

[17:10] Let's have a look what the Bible tells us what worship is. Worship is living in the presence of God. How much time do we live in the presence of God?

All the time, isn't it? Isn't it so? We don't always tune in to it. It's not like you kind of step into a building and you're suddenly a worshipper and then you go out and you're not a worshipper anymore.

You know, worship is living in the presence of God. It's 24 by 7 as we seek Him, as we seek to talk to Him, to do everything, even everyday things for Him. In Colossians 3, 17, where it talks about do all things to the glory of God.

Glorify Him in everything that you do. You know, in your vocation, in your day by day living, have your mind on Him. Be aware that His presence is with you as a daily experience.

You know, when the Christian scientist looks through the microscope, they see that the pictures of microscopic things, they respond in worship because God has made it.

[18:17] Worship, it should be that we're living in the presence of God. So, Monday morning, you're still living in the presence of God. You may not feel like it, but you are. And let's make that make a difference.

Worship is a lifestyle so that God has an effect on our lives. When the rubber hits the road, we're in worship. We're living sacrifices, Romans 12, 1. We've got a lifestyle of praise and worship.

Our worship shows in that life that we live and the life that we don't live because we care about the one that we worship. It's a lifestyle. Worship is lifting up Jesus.

We worship because of who He is. We thank Him for what He's done. He's the only God, the highest, the Lord God, the Heavenly King, the Almighty God, the Father, the Holy One.

We want to lift up His name, that name which is above every name. Worship is about letting God speak to us. It speaks to us in worship. We minister to worship.

[19:17] We minister worship to God. We adore Him. And God ministers to us by His Word and we minister to each other. That's worship. All those dimensions.

To God, God to us and to each other as we worship. Colossians 3.16 says, Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Colossians 3.16. Good 3.16 to hide in your heart. Colossians 3.16. Let the Word dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another.

You know, that's why there's doctrine here as we worship. Worship is loving God. It's saying, I love you passionately to the One who's made you, who's designed you, who's created you, who loves you with a love beyond compare, with a love unconditional.

No greater love than to lay down His life for us. He's loved you into being and He's redeemed you. He's made you His own precious possession.

[20:33] A man called Toscanini finished a brilliant performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and the audience went wild. They rose to their feet and they began to cheer and shout and maybe they whistled a bit or they just went mad and they're waving and then Toscanini began to wave his arms violently for them to stop and when the silence kicked in he pointed to the orchestra and said, you are nothing and then he pointed to himself and said, I am nothing and then at the top of his voice he screamed out, Beethoven is everything, everything, everything.

Of course, he gave the glory to Beethoven but we give the glory to God, don't we? that Jesus is everything, Jesus is everything, Jesus is everything, absolutely everything.

Why worship? Why should we worship? Why should we bother? Because we love him, because we seek to please and honour him, to obey him. It's an obligation.

It says, Ephesians 5, 19, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

You know, don't you love to hum and whistle when no one's around or maybe you sing in the shower, whatever it be, you can make melody, can't you? In your hearts unto the Lord, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord, to please God, to sing scripture, to sing with your spirit, with your understanding, to worship God.

[22:05] We want our worship to glorify him, to glorify him. If we come to church on a Sunday to be entertained, we're missing what worship is all about.

A lot of church folk come to church to be entertained. You know, who's preaching this meeting? Or, you know, what's on, what's the latest thing that I'm going to get out of this, you know, what's in it for me?

We all feel like that. You know, they expect the preacher to have some stand-up comedy routine or be a storyteller rather than a preacher and just make us, give us a little buzz here and there and a few goosebumps and make us feel good so that we walk a bit taller when we go out because he's tickled our ear or whatever it be.

And that can be the same for the preacher of the word, the worship leader. It's a consumer-oriented culture. Everything's gearing us that way. So we're almost like that's how we think about everything these days.

Me, me, me. Isn't it so? But worship is really all about me, right? Fix me.

[23:20] Entertain me. Make me feel good. Charge my batteries. Make me feel better. And if you don't, I'll go to the church down the street. That does. Or I'll find another God who will revolve around me.

That's how people think, isn't it? Can be a trap. Who should get the glory?

There was a King, Louis XIV, France's greatest king perhaps, passed away. There was a funeral and the cathedral was packed with many mourners.

The funeral was held at night time and the only light in this vast cathedral was one lone candle right on the casket containing the mortal remains of this much-loved monarch.

And at the appointed time, the court preacher got up to address the assembled clergy and all the dignitaries of France and he ascended the pulpit and then he reached out from the pulpit and snuffed out that lone candle which symbolised the greatness of the king.

[24:31] And then in total darkness he uttered four words, only God is great. Only God is great. And when we come to worship, it's not about who's leading or preaching, it's not about what the program is, it's about God's greatness.

We're here for him, we're here for the Lord Jesus. We're here because of the sovereignty of God.

Only God is great. Only God is worthy of our worship. We can't engineer it and make the, you know, we've been in churches where everything was kind of pre-planned.

So, excuse me, it was all kind of geared deliberately to kind of reach a crescendo, you know, to, to, such that the song choice led to a kind of, a kind of condition that made people more receptive.

The skilled musicians, the skilled professional people who do, do their level best. But it's not about that, is it? We're not here to manipulate, you know, to play the, the altar call song and to make people feel that they have to get up and respond.

We're not here to manipulate or to gear it in a fleshly way. Because only God is worthy of our worship and it's about him.

[26:01] It's about the reverent, holy presence of God and each of us knowing that, personally, we talked about a funeral just then. Think about atheism.

Atheism is songless. There's no songs in atheism other than mockery songs which they do use. But at the funeral of a noted agnostic, Robert Ingersoll, he was an agnostic, one who was a skeptic, a very strong skeptic about the things of God.

And Robert Ingersoll passed away. And they put out a funeral notice for this man, this renowned atheist, and the funeral notice said this explicitly, there will be, there will be no singing at this man's funeral.

Because atheists don't have anyone to sing about. But heaven, in contrast, we'll be vibrant with song. And so must our worship be here and now. Authentic worship.

Worship that is God-centered and God-pleasing. Does our worship please God? That's the point. And another reason for worship is to celebrate victory.

[27:19] Our response to the victory that we have in Christ. As a believer here today, as much as you don't always feel like it, do you? You are a victor.

You are more than a conqueror. And you've got complete, utter, total victory over sin, over death, over the devil. And when we worship, there's that dimension too, that we're victorious.

We're a victorious army. And the victory is all due to him, due to our Lord, what God has done. And we remember that. Psalm 145, it says, in verse 3, great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

And his greatness is unsearchable. It says, I will sing of, sorry, I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty and of thy wondrous works. I will declare thy greatness.

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. In Revelation 15, verses 3 to 4, it says again, a little glimpse of heaven again.

[28:27] And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints, who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy, for all nations shall come and worship before thee.

Consider the adjectives in this song. It describes who God is. Almighty, King of the ages, holy. It describes what he has done for us.

His ways are just and true, marvellous and great, righteous. It's all about him. It's all about Jesus. It's all about his presence. It's all about the loving, gracious, holy, magnificent presence of God.

And when we see that, all of the desires to be entertained and fixed and coddled and to be in control fade away because it's all about him. It's all unto him that we worship.

And when we worship, when we gather week by week, we celebrate that victory that we have, that certain, assured victory that we have. And one day we'll gather again with all the saints of the ages and the martyrs around the glassy sea and sing praises to the Lamb into eternity.

[29:46] How should we worship? In 1 Corinthians 14.33, it says that God is not the author of confusion.

And it says, 1 Corinthians 14.40, let all things be done decently and in order. So there's a sense where worship should be in order. Now it doesn't mean that we're stilted and stale and stale and that we're, you know, that we're stagnant and rigid and in a rut.

But there is that sense of order. That's a rightful order. Worship should be in order. So it's not like it's some sideshow or entertainment or a way to attract crowds where you've got to have some preacher ride up to the platform on a Harley or you've got to have some stunts or, you know, you've got to have some, what do they call those, those supermen that break things and blow hot water bottles or tear books apart to gather a crowd.

I mean, maybe there's some fun things you can do but we're not here to do fun things so much as we're here to worship. We're here to honour him, to glorify him and we don't have to put on a show

to bring people here.

We don't have to attract crowds by some gimmicks and such things. But there's an order to our worship. Our God is awesome.

[31:19] Do you know that reverent worship? And we should worship him's truth as we read in John 4. We should worship the Father, the Father seeketh such to worship him.

Those that worship the Father in spirit and in truth. New worship accords with the truth as well as the spirit.

The authority of Bible truth. So our worship must be in harmony with God's holy word. The basis for all that we do is the word of God and it should impact our lives, our whole thinking, our whole mindset should be in accordance with the word of God.

And we see back in Leviticus 10 there was Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons. They were in the priestly line and they just took a censer each and put fire on it and incense on it and offered profane fire before the Lord which he had not commanded them.

You know, it seemed like a harmless thing to do. They may be giving God a hand but it wasn't how God had ordained that the fire should be made. They were just doing their own kind of innovative thing.

[32:31] And there's nothing wrong with innovation but when innovation is in contradiction to God's plan, God's pattern, if it's unholy, it's wrong. Because there's a sacredness to our worship.

There's a holiness. There's a reverence. We're at the altar of God and God has instructed us how to worship. And the word, particularly in this case, it forbid them from using other fire.

So it was forbidden for them but they just went against God's truth. Worship. It's sort of a wide-ranging topic and you see today where there's large corporations that operate the Christian music industry of today for commercial purposes.

And sometimes that can be dangerous, I'll put to you, where it's operating to make a profit. So it's about what sells the most records, what sells the most music.

And yet in times past, it was men of God, women of God, with musical talents that created solid songs of the faith that were doctrinally straight and true and it wasn't for a profit motive.

[33:53] It was for a glory to God motive. And yet nowadays it's like music celebrities sell their music and then they drift. Some of them, as you might be aware, Amy Grant has kind of slid right off track into just quite sleazy kind of stuff.

And it's a bit of a trap. This happens, I believe it happens quite a bit in that scene. And where it seems there's less focus on music which instructs and admonishes us with the great truths of the faith to more about entertaining and exciting people's emotions.

I'm not saying don't be creative. I'm not saying that we can't sing some different songs. But it has to be in order and it has to be in truth.

In truth. And so biblical standards and biblical teaching must direct how we worship. How is it to be? Admonishing one another.

We should be talking to one another. They should be trusting what we sing. That it's glorifying God. Not some weak watered down mantra. Our worship should be in reverence.

[35:12] It says in Psalm 89.7 God is to be greatly feared in the assembly of all the saints and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. It should be in reverence.

In awe in worship of our almighty God. We stand in awe of him in his holy presence. It should be in reverence. It should be in gladness as we assemble.

This is a rejoicing time. We talk about the joy of the Lord this morning. There's a gladness when we worship. As David said in Psalm 122, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

It's a joyful time. There's a time of joy, of gladness, of looking forward to being together and worshipping God. In fellowship, Hebrews 2.12, it says, I will declare thy name unto me, my brethren, in the midst of the church while I sing praise unto thee.

There's a sense where in the midst of the assembly, we sing praise unto him. We sing praises together. The verse that we stand with said that we are to declare God's praises.

[36:20] 1 Peter 2, verse 9. Now, when we assemble, something special happens. Something special. You know, sure enough, we could stay at home, you could watch some TV picture.

Probably preachers better than I do. You could tune into a Christian radio station or get some iPod with a sermon on it or whatever it be.

But there's just something better when we get together. We can encourage one another. You can be encouraged, you can encourage someone else. And that's the biblical model. There's a community here as much as we saw in number tonight.

We're speaking to one another in songs and hymns and spiritual songs. And it's meant to be edifying. In other words, building up one another. It's not pomp or gimmickry. It's an edifying, a building up of the body.

As we assemble, we provoke unto love and to good works. And it says, let all things be done unto edifying. So that that motive of building one another up is about all things that we do by our worship.

[37:33] So worship is not for entertainment. It can be entertaining, but that's not what it's for. It's not for self-glorification. Who is the one who's going to get the glory?

Our Lord. That's what it's about. And as we worship, however we worship, in our homes as we worship, in our families, in our gathering times, our worship is to glorify God.

And especially when we gather together, it's to provoke one another to good works. I need provoking. You know, some Christians are more provocative than others, but we all need a bit of provoking, godly provoking.

And as we worship, there's a witness there too. You know, we've got signs on the streets here saying we're worshipping right now. Whether people come or not is up to them. But there's a witness here.

There's a gospel witness here. There's a meeting here. There's a gathering of God's community here at 6pm on a Sunday night. And God's presence is why we're here. And who knows whether unbelievers will be drawn, whether others, struggling ones might come and be encouraged and built up.

[38:48] You know, we could just cancel the stuff. Oh, there's not enough people to bother. That's what some churches do. But there's a witness here as we gather. There's something good when people get together.

And there's a witness in that spirit of worship. It tells us in Romans 12, 11, fervent in spirit. There's a sense of a fervency, of a zeal, of a worship from the heart.

In Psalm 111, verse 1, it says, I will praise the Lord with my whole heart. You know, as we worship, there's a sense where we enter in with all that we are.

Worship him from the heart. You know, there's a quote that says, atheism has arguments but no songs. Atheism has arguments but no songs.

Heathen religions have rituals and minor chants but no vibrant melodies. And the quote goes on. This is Wesley, actually.

[39:47] John Wesley. He says this, Sing lustily. In other words, sing with gusto and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead or half asleep. But lift up your voice with strength.

Be no more afraid of your voice, no more ashamed of being heard than when you sung the songs of Satan. They sing the songs of Satan down in different places, don't they?

I'm not bagging footy but, you know, whatever it be, you know, the people get pretty excited about some game, kicking some ball around or whatever it be or they sing the national anthem when their country wins or whatever it be.

And yet, when we get to church, sometimes we, sometimes people say, oh, I don't really feel like singing or, you know, I mean, maybe it's not something you're used to.

But, like Wesley says, don't be afraid of your voice. No more ashamed of it being heard than when you sung the songs of Satan. Rather, let's sing the songs of God.

[40:50] Amen? Let's sing the glory of God. Let's sing from the heart. How is your heart? That's what we could consider now. God told Israel to stop their songs.

There was a time in Amos 5 and 6, he said, stop singing. I'm sick of your sacred assemblies, he said, your holy assemblies. Why?

Because their heart wasn't right. Their heart wasn't right. And that's what matters, isn't it? Now, we can come to church week by week and midweek and still not have our heart right with God.

We can worship and say all the words and put on the performance, put on the show, and yet, if our heart is not right, that's what needs to get sorted, isn't it?

Worship. It's from the heart. It's in the spirit. There was a pastor that said, I've heard many complaints about worship services. The singing was too slow or too fast.

[41:57] We sang too many choruses or too many hymns. The preaching was weak or bad or boring or dry or whatever. The service was too long. Now, you might be thinking, oh, it's gone over time now.

It was too hot in the room. Too cold. I don't like the worship leader or that pastor or that song or the seats are uncomfortable. Blah, blah, blah.

And this quote goes on, whenever I hear this stuff, I immediately, I know immediately one thing. The person with the gripe was not prepared to worship. Believe it or not, you can train yourself to worship God no matter what the deficiencies of the worship service.

Isn't that true? You might go into a, that's really, you know, a bit lacking and still receive something from God because it's about your heart, isn't it?

And this quote goes, it's been years I've been able to, it's been years since I've been to a worship service and not been able to worship God and feel the thrill of knowing Him.

[43:06] Although I admit I've had a few close moments. The secret is to be prepared to worship, not dependent on an unrealistic expectation that everything at a worship service will be perfect and completely suited to you and your preferences.

You know, it's getting the focus right, isn't it? That it's worship in spirit. Where did the early Christians worship? They worship in Rome at one time in catacombs which are underground graveyards.

Imagine that in some cold, dank, dark, potentially smelly place where there's dead bodies. They worship there. Paul and Silas, where did they worship?

In the prison cell with their hands and feet in the stocks locked up in this jail cell. And what had happened just before was that they had laid many stripes on their backs.

They'd been slashed with these whips and their backs were cut to ribbons. And then they were cast into prison and at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them.

[44:21] There was a witness there of their worship. Will you worship in the midnight hour? You know, you might get to that point where you say, Preacher, I really don't feel like worshipping tonight. I've had a bad day.

It's been tough going and it's been a hard week and I'm flat out and feeling really whacked out. And it's how it is sometimes, isn't it?

But we can still worship no matter what we feel like. We can worship in the midnight hour like Paul and Silas did. And it's Job in 35.10.

He tells of God my maker who give us songs in the night. Job in all his affliction with the boils scraping them with a piece of pottery and he's lost everything he has and his own wife has the misery guts and here's Job He's saying praises.

God gives songs in the night. What kind of attitude and spirit do we have? Do we sometimes let the worries and cares and how we feel stop us from worshipping?

[45:27] Let's not let self get in the way. Let's rather take time to worship corporately with your family individually.

Monday morning tune in as it were and let Him be that centre point of your devotion of your focus.

Psalms 95.6 in closing it says O come let us worship and bow down let us kneel before the Lord our maker. Let us worship and bow down let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

Friends tonight worship we've only scratched the surface why how what is worship it's hard to put it into human language isn't it?

As we catch that glimpse of the door ajar as it were in heaven and we maybe hear a little a little sound as it were through the scriptures we see how they worship and we get a foretaste of what glory what eternity will be and for the meantime we can worship here and now in lots of ways with that melody in our heart and all to His glory all to His praise and honour that is my prayer for us tonight let us pray Lord we thank you that we can worship you in spirit and in truth Lord those that know you can worship you and each one here tonight can come to know you personally as Lord as Saviour to know the creator who's made us such that our absolute fulfilment is found in knowing you and following you and serving you and honouring you and pleasing you and worshipping you and Lord help us to be such a people that we won't miss that opportunity to worship at each time we can in each day in each moment let us have a heart that seeks after you as you seek for worshippers you seek for those who seek after you and Lord we pray that we'll be such a people in Jesus name [47:42] Amen