

PM Psalm 95:1-7 & Revelation 5:6-14 "Worship Relationships"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 May 2022

Preacher: Rev John Sharp

[0 : 00] Well, let us turn now to the Word of God in the Psalms, first of all, Psalm 95, reading from the beginning of the Psalm.

Psalm 95 at the beginning. Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord. Let us shout aloud to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us bow down in worship. Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

And then in the New Testament, in the last book of the Bible, Revelation, chapter 5, at verse 6.

[1 : 08] Revelation, chapter 5, at verse 6. Then I saw a lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.

He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the lamb. Each one had a harp, and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

And they sang a new song. You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain. And with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God. And they will reign on the earth. Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand.

[2 : 22] And they encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. And in a loud voice they sang, Worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise.

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea and all that is in them singing. To him who sits on the throne and to the lamb, Be praise and honour and glory and power forever and ever.

And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped. Amen. And may God add his blessing to these readings from his word.

Let us pray. Our Father God, we give thanks for this fresh opportunity of worship. Fresh opportunity to reflect upon your word. And by your spirit help us to understand and apply it in our lives.

In Jesus name. Amen. The Westminster Confession of Faith says this. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error.

[3 : 39] And some have so degenerated as to become apparently no churches of Christ. Nevertheless, there shall be always a church on earth to worship God according to his will.

And it's the last part of that that I want to focus on this evening. There shall be always a church on earth to worship God according to his will.

We were made to worship. Created by God to worship. A worship due solely to God. In Revelations 4 and 11 we read, You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power.

For you created all things and by your will they were created and have their being. And as we work into our theme this evening, The words of Jesus in John 4, 24, In his conversation with the woman at the well in Samaria.

And Jesus says, God is spirit and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth. And my theme for this evening is that of worship.

[4 : 53] And I want to look at the various relationships that should define our worship. But before we come to these relationships, How are we to worship God?

How are we to worship God? Well, Habakkuk says, Habakkuk 2 and 20, The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before him.

Or again Isaiah 41 at the beginning, Be silent before me. Be silent before me. In other words, we are to come into God's presence in silent awe and reverence.

To come before the Lord with quiet contemplation. To be quiet before him. In the psalm, Psalm 46, Be still. Be still.

And know that I am God. So that's one way in which we are to come before God. We are to come in silent contemplation. And yet, if we are to be silent before the Lord, We are also to come with shouts of joy and celebration.

[6 : 03] And we read from Psalm 95, Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord. Let us shout aloud to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving, And extol him with music and song.

For the Lord is the great God. The great King above all gods. On one hand, Stillness and silence. On the other hand, Shouts of joy and celebration.

Not as two contradictory elements, But rather as complementary to one another. True worship should have a balance Between that silent contemplation of God And the shout of joy and celebration.

Jesus said, We must worship in spirit and in truth. And note that Jesus does not say that This is a helpful suggestion.

It would be a good idea If you could worship this way. He says must. We must worship in spirit and in truth. If we would worship at all, We must worship according to God's word.

[7 : 19] And remember that King Saul in the Old Testament, The root of his downfall was that he decided to worship God his way. Not the way that God had laid down in his word.

And because of that, The kingdom was removed from him. We need to worship in line with what God says about worship in scripture.

Anything else invalidates our worship. And we need to worship with enthusiasm and obedience. It poses a question for us.

Have there been times when our worship has been invalidated? Because we did not come with real enthusiasm in our hearts. Times when our worship has been invalidated.

Because we did not come with wills ready to go forth and obedience to his commands. Jesus said, God is spirit and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth.

[8 : 23] Now, what I want to do is to develop this in terms of a series of relationships. And relationships define our lives.

We are a child of a parent. We grow up and we are the parent of a child. I am a husband or a wife.

I am a brother or a sister. I am an employer. These all involve relationships. And as we come before God to worship him, That worship is framed by a series of relationships.

And I want to talk about six of these relationships this evening. And I'll tell you what they all are so that you know where we're going. We are the creature before the creator. We are the sinner before the judge.

We are the saint and the saviour. The follower of the Lord. The subject of the king.

[9 : 31] And the children of the heavenly father. And if I had more time and I was going to reword this.

There's a seventh one that I should have had in here. Does anyone note the one that I've missed? No, no offers. The bride and the bridegroom. But let me focus on these first six.

And we need to be clear in each of these relationships. If we're going to worship God properly. And first of all, we are the creature before the creator. How do we come before God?

We need to come with a sense of our creatureliness. And here surely is that realm of that silence. As we stand in awe at the immensity of God's creative work.

The far flung reaches of spinning galaxies. And you're in a reasonably good part of the world. To go out at night. And look up to the starry skies.

[10 : 36] My sister-in-law used to stay at Trinam. And I used to love taking the dog out. For a walk. On these starlit nights. And gazing up at the skies. And the immensity of it all.

And think God made it all. And contemplate also that this God made us. Made us in his image. We are utterly dependent upon him.

And we can easily lose sight of that. So busy living our lives. Making our plans. That we forget that we are absolutely dependent. On the God who is there. And the God who made us. In the beginning of his gospel.

John says through him. That is Jesus. All things were made. Without him. Nothing was made. That has been made. And Paul in Colossians 1 says.

He is before all things. And in him all things hold together. And the idea there is. That we continue to exist.

[11 : 35] Solely because Jesus Christ. Holds everything together. He is before all things. And in him all things hold together.

Continue to exist. And so we worship God. For making us. Providing for us. And sustaining us. We need to come and worship.

As creature. Before the creator. Then secondly. We come as sinner. Before the judge. And as the creature.

Before the creator. Hasn't a lot to say. The sinner before the judge. Has got even less to say. Again mouths are stopped.

How can we possibly. Stand before a God. Who is holy and righteous. Reflect on these verses. Romans 2 and 16.

[12 : 32] Paul says. This will take place. In the day. When God judges people's secrets. Through Jesus Christ. As my gospel declares. Our secrets.

Our innermost secrets. God judges people's secrets. Through Jesus Christ. 2 Timothy 4 and 1. Paul again says.

In the presence of God. And of Christ Jesus. Who will judge. The living. And the dead. Or think of these words. Of Jesus himself. In Matthew 12.

Jesus says. I tell you. That everyone will have to give an account. On the day of judgment. For every empty word. They have spoken. For by your words.

You will be acquitted. And by your words. You will be condemned. You ever. Spoken an empty word.

[13 : 32] It's a thought. Everyone will have to give an account. On the day of judgment. For every empty word. They have spoken. 2 Corinthians 5 and 10.

We must all appear. Before the judgment seat. Of Christ. So that each one. May be recompensed. For his deeds in the body. According to what he has done.

Whether good or bad. Now we might not like to think. About the judgment seat of Christ. But it is clearly there. In scripture.

It's not talking about the judgment. In terms of our salvation. But you remember the picture. That Paul draws. Again. In Corinthians. That in our life.

Each word. Each act. Each thought. Is a building. Of bricks. Or straw. And the judgment.

[14 : 26] Will burn away. All the straw. How much straw. Is there. In our lives. Well as I say. We might not like to think.

Of the judgment seat of Christ. But it's clearly there. In scripture. So we. Need to come before the Lord. With sorrow. And repentance. Confessing our sin. And pleading the saving work.

Of Jesus. On the cross. But if Christ is judged. Then as long as we are trusting him. There is another side. To the judge. Second Timothy 4 and 8.

In the future. There is laid up for me. The crown of righteousness. Which the Lord. The righteous judge. Will award to me. On that day. And not only to me.

But also to all. Who have loved. His appearing. And we remember. That Jesus. Is the judge. Who will one day. Return. To bring about. God's final judgment.

[15 : 23] And usher in. The fullness. Of the kingdom of God. Which is. Why a well known hymn. Has the final verse. Rejoice. In glorious hope. Jesus.

The judge. Shall come. And take his servants. Up to their. Eternal home. Now. The judgment of God. Is a big topic. But we.

Stand. Before. A God. Who is a judge. And so there are many aspects. To the truth. That we are a sinner. Before a holy judge.

But if we are. A sinner. Before a holy judge. Then we need to understand. Also. That we are a saint. And the saviour. For those who have placed. Their trust in Jesus.

As well as judge. Jesus is saviour. And him. We are transformed. From sinner. To saint. How do we come before God.

[16 : 21] We come. Before God. With awareness. That our sin. Is an affront. To him. And so we come. Confessing our sin. And our need of Christ. As our saviour. Realising that Christ.

Alone. Saves us. And brings to us. Forgiveness. And peace. Heratia Bonner. Has a little book. How shall we go to God. And the first.

Two sentences. Of that book. Are how do we come to God. God. With our sin. How do we come to God. With our sin. But having come to Christ.

Then we are no longer. Condemned before God. But justified. No longer sinners. But saints. The judge. Is also saviour. And it's interesting. How consistently.

In the New Testament. The people of God. Are described. As saints. Not because. They're particularly good. Because. Because that is who they are.

[17:16] In Christ. Ephesians 2.19. You are no longer. Strangers. And sojourners. But you are fellow citizens. With the saints. And members. Of the household.

Of God. Ephesians 3.18. Paul prays. That you may have power. To comprehend. With all the saints. The depth. And height.

And breadth. And length. Of the love of Christ. Ephesians 4. Verse 11. His gifts were. That some should be apostles. Some prophets. Some evangelists.

Some pastors. And teachers. To equip. The saints. For the work of ministry. For building up the body of Christ. You can always remember.

A student. I had attached with me. At one point. Asking the congregation. If there were saints. To put up their hands. And everybody was far too. Humble. To put up their hands.

[18:12] And he says. I'm awfully sorry about that. Then he says. Because none of you then. Are Christians. To be a Christian. Is to be a saint. That is who we are. In Christ.

In Christ. We are cleansed. And forgiven. And changed. It's all to do with. Who we are. In Christ. To be blessed. Think again.

Of Ephesians chapter 1. Paul. Says. I'm reading from verse 3. Praise be to the God and Father. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who has blessed us.

In the heavenly realms. With every spiritual blessing. In Christ. We have every possible. Spiritual blessing. In Christ. For he chose us. In him. Before the creation.

Of the world. To be holy. And blameless. In his sight. In love. He predestined us. For adoption. To sonship. Through Jesus Christ. In him. We have redemption. Through his blood.

[19:06] The forgiveness of sins. And we really got to be thick. To read this passage of Paul. And not realize. That Paul is talking about. Who we are. In Christ. It's what.

Christ has done for us. Who we are. Because of his atoning death. Now. We are clothed. With the righteousness. Of Christ.

And we were. Thinking about that. This morning. And so we worship. As creature. Before the creator. And sinner. Before a righteous judge. Saints.

Clothed. With the righteousness. Of Christ. Now. I mean. Each of these. Headings. It could be. A sermon. In itself.

So I'm. Sketching. In broad terms. This evening. So we're creature. Before the creator. Sinner. Before the judge. Saints. Clothed.

[19:59] With the righteousness. Of Christ. And so we come. With confidence. And assurance. Into the presence. Of God. And then. Fourthly. We are the follower. Of the Lord.

In Christ. We are forgiven. And enter into a new relationship. That of follower. Of our Lord. And Master. Christ is our Lord. And we are. To live. To please him.

To carry on his work. In the world. Today. Before God. We are servant. Disciple. Learner. Follower. Ambassador. We sum up.

All of that. By seeing ourselves. As followers. Jesus said. Come. Follow me. Again. Jesus said. It is written. Worship the Lord.

Your God. And serve him. Only. So to worship. Properly. Means to follow Christ. Daily. Daily. It can't be something. Worship. That is just for a Sunday.

- [20 : 56] To worship. Means to follow Christ. Daily. As Lord. And then. Fifthly. The subject. Before the king. How often.
- Do we see ourselves. As subjects. Of the king. In Acts. 17. And 7. We are told. Of a group of Christians. That Jason.
- Has welcomed them. Into his house. And they are all. Defying Caesar's decrees. Saying that there is another king. One called Jesus. Now.
- It is interesting to note here. That. Obviously. To acknowledge Jesus as king. Involved a lifestyle. Because that was upsetting. The folk. Around. This man called Jason.
- A lifestyle. That stands out. From the world. Around. So we worship. Him. As the king. In.
- [21 : 50] Philippians 2. And 9. We read. God exalted him. To the highest place. And gave him the name. That is above every name. That at the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow.
- A subject. Before the king. In heaven. And on earth. And under the earth. And every tongue confess. That Jesus Christ is Lord. To the glory of God the father.
- Father. So we worship him. As the one who is with us. Day by day. Who leads us. And guides us. Who challenges. And comforts us. But he is also the king.
- The king of kings. And lord of lords. One clothed in glory. And majesty. Perhaps. My favorite quotation. Is from.
- A Dutch. Theologian. Slash politician. Slash. Slash many other things. He was a newspaper editor. He edited. Both a daily paper.
- [22 : 46] And a. A weekly paper. For most of his life. And he actually became. Prime minister of Holland. In 1900. I think it was. And he said.
- There is not one square inch. Of human existence. Over which Christ. Does not say. I am king. Nothing. That you can think of.
- Which Christ. Does not claim. A right. Of rule. Over. There is not. One square inch. Of human existence. Over which Christ. Does not say. I am king.
- So we are creature. Before the creator. Speaks to us. Of our dependence. Give us this day. Our daily bread. We are sinner.
- Before the judge. Reminding us. Of our need. For repentance. We are the saint. In Christ. Rejoicing. In what. Jesus has done for us.
- [23 : 43] In the cross. We are the follower. Of the Lord. Ready to obey. And to serve. And we are the subject. Of the king. Which speaks to us.
- Of our loyalty. We are the children. And then. Sixthly. We are children. Before their father. And it seems. To me. That we need all of these pictures.
- To understand our relationship. With the God who is there. And whom we gather to worship. This picture. That of children. Before their heavenly father. That's how Jesus taught us.
- To know God. As father. He died. To birth us in. To the family of God. John 1 and 12. To all who received him. To those who believed in his name.
- He gave the right to become. Children of God. And these wonderful words. In 1 John 3. How great is the love. The father has lavished on us.
- [24 : 40] That we should be called. Children of God. And that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us. Is that it did not know him. Dear friends. Now we are children of God.
- And what we will be. Has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears. We shall be like him. For we shall see him. As he is. And here are wonderful truths.

That in Christ. We are not simply the sinner. Before God. But the saint. Clothed in the righteousness of Christ. We are not simply.

The creature. Of the creator. But the child. Of our heavenly father. How do we worship? Well I would suggest to you.

In our worship. We need to work out. The reality. Of these relationships. With the God who is there. Coming to him. In faith. Working out. These.

[25 : 38] As living relationships. The creature. Before the creator. Acknowledging our dependence. With a sense of awe. At the universe he has made. As the sinner.

Before the judge. Looking only for salvation. From that judgment. In the finished work of Christ. As the saint. In Christ. What we are.

In him. Our saviour. As follower. Before the Lord. Renewing our discipleship. As subject. Before the king. Bringing our obedience.

And our worship. And our loyalty. And his child. Before their father. In wonder. And in trust. And as I said. At the beginning.

We also should not forget. We are also. The bride. Of the bridegroom. In revelations. Four and five. John. Is given a glimpse.

[26 : 32] Of the throne room. Of God. Chapter four. Focuses. On God the father. And his creation. Chapter five. Focuses on. The lamb of God.

And both chapters. Are shot through. With doxologies. Revelation four. Verse 11. You are worthy. Our Lord. To receive glory. And honour.

And power. For you created. All things. And by your will. They were created. And have their being. And then from that passage. We read in. Revelations five.

Then I looked. And heard the voice. Of many angels. Numbering thousands. Upon thousands. And ten thousand. Times ten thousand. I can. Remember.

Coming out. Of the Bible House. In Edinburgh. In. Yeah. Nineteen ninety. Or ninety one. I can't remember. It was when the Billy Graham. Cassade. Was taking place. At Murrayfield. And the choir.

[27 : 29] Were rehearsing. And it was a still. It was a lovely evening. Like this. And the Bible House. Is. I don't know. Half a mile away. From Murrayfield. Where the choir. Were rehearsing. And the sound.

Of this mass choir. Come. Floating over. And it made. The hearing back. Your neck. Stand up. This glorious sound. Came over. That part of Edinburgh.

Well. I wonder what it will be like. For ten thousand times. Ten thousand. Angels. Encircled the throne. And the living creatures. And the elders.

And in a loud voice. They were saying. Worthy is the Lamb. Who was slain. To receive power. And wealth. And wisdom. And strength. And honour. And glory. And praise. Then I heard every creature.

In heaven. And on earth. And under the earth. And on the sea. And all that is in them. Saying. To him who sits on the throne. And to the Lamb. Be praise. And honour. And glory. And power. Forever and ever.

[28 : 28] And the four living creatures. Said amen. And the elders. Fell down. And worshipped. And we can do no better.

Than join them. Let us pray. Father God. We pray. That indeed. Our whole beings. Would be caught up.

In your worship. Singing. Worthy is the Lamb. Who was slain. To receive power. And wealth. And wisdom. And strength. And honour.

And glory. And praise. May we be part. Of that choir. That sings your praise. And your glory. In Jesus name.

Amen. We're going to conclude. With the hymn. On the back. Of the notice sheet.