

God Alone is Worthy of Your Worship

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Preacher: Pastor Andrew

[0 : 00] Well, what an incredible privilege it is to worship together, to be able to do that freely, to be able to do that consistently week after week. And it is a special delight to have Pastor! Kenoyer back. I know he would not want me to draw attention to him. His head is still down.

But he has been serving faithfully the Lord in a sister church of ours in Marion, Ohio. So Pastor, it's good to have you back and grateful for your example of service to the Lord.

We have the joy of worshiping today. And one would think that to such an honor and such a privilege as this, it would be something that we would long and yearn to do on a consistent basis. And for some of you, that may and hopefully is the case. But as statistics will show or suggest, we live in an age where we are in a decline as far as worship is concerned. A poll that was put together by Gallup in March 29th of 2021 says the following. It says, American membership in houses of worship continued to decline last year, speaking of 2020, dropping below 50% for the first time in the Gallup's eight decade history. In 2020, 47% of Americans said they belonged to a church, a synagogue, or a mosque, which is down from 50% in 2018 and 70% that was registered in 1999. The decline in church membership is primarily, they say, a function of increasing numbers of Americans who express no religious affiliation.

Over the past two decades, the percentage of Americans who do not identify with any religion has grown from 8% from 8% in 1998 to 13% in 2008. And now almost a quarter of Americans would say they have no religious affiliation. Church membership, they say, is also strongly correlated with age, with 66% of those who are traditionalists, meaning those born before 1946 would go to church.

Baby boomers comprised 58%.

50% of those in Gen X will go to church consistently. 36% of millennials. Currently, 31% of millennials have no religious affiliation. Now those statistics give a sense of the worshiping moral erosion within our culture. But I want to remind you that worship is just as strong today as it ever was. It's just that instead of worship being oriented towards God, now worship is being confined into the person has become self-awareness, self-worship. That's what we're going to find in our passage today. The truth is that worship remains constant. It has never been more or less a reality than it is today because God has created us as people with a worshiping capacity and with a desire to worship. Worship is inherent in our design as creatures. The question, of course, then, is who or what do you worship? Worship is simply defined as as the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity. One might say that worship is to value.

[3 : 55] Worship is to prioritize. Worship is to assign worth to someone or something. Perhaps to a job, to a family, to a friend, to an identity, to money, to comfort, to leisure, to your stuff.

Worship is to allow us to worship. The question that we should ask ourselves this morning as we evaluate our own lives in relation to worship is, what is the person or thing that you could not do without?

Or perhaps, what is the person or thing that occupies the bulk of your time, your energy, your attention, your thinking, and your affection? What do you enjoy the most? What do you talk about the most? Now we're beginning to come and arrive a little closer, perhaps, to that object of worship and adoration, that thing that you value, the thing that is worth everything to you. It might be fair to say that this has become an object of worship in your heart and life. Paul will say in Romans chapter 1, in addressing this issue of worship, that all of us are worshipers inherently. He says, For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made, so they are without excuse. Now just pause there for a moment. What Paul is saying is that everyone has access to the revelation of God in creation. Everyone is able to see that there is a God who is overall, and there are certain qualities

about God that they can perceive because of what they recognize in creation.

But to every individual, the result is now spelled out. For although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks to Him, but became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Meaning, while they knew that there was a God, rather than worshiping Him as He deserved, instead they turned inward and began to make images and gods of their own creation. Essentially, they turned their focus from outward to inward, and they began to worship the creature rather than the creator. Since the beginning of creation, mankind has worshiped and will continue to worship, the question is, what is the object of your affection? Rather than glorifying the God of creation, man tends to create gods of their own making. And it's not until God opens up the eyes of the blind, not until God unlocks the door of the heart, not until God reveals the light of His gospel into the lives of those who will believe in Him, will they become those who see and are awakened spiritually.

[7 : 21] 2 Corinthians says, God has shown the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is in the image of God. It is God's work to shine that light into a heart. And until then, we're going to be those who worship the things that we create rather than worshiping the creator. But we understand that worship throughout the Scripture is not just an external thing, it involves an internal component. That's why Jesus says, love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength. It's meant to involve the entire and total part of an individual. Jesus, when addressing worship with His audience, in Matthew chapter 15, verse 8 and 9, says this, This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. They perform their religious duties, they show up to church on a regular basis, they bring their tithes, they do the things that they're asked to do, but it's only a checklist. It's not because of true affection for God.

And as Piper is responding to this passage, he says this, quote, For Jesus, this worship amounts to zero. That is what vain means. In vain do they worship me.

Zero. It is not worship. This is a zero worship. It is a zero if there's no heart dimension to it. So you can do as many deeds as you want, and go to as many church services as you want, and never be worshiping if it is all external, and nothing is happening in your heart towards God.

End quote. This morning, are you worshiping God as one who is worshiping with your heart? Is the affection of your life that showing up from day to day as one who desires and craves after God?

Is there true worship in your life? Because if not, it is a zero worship. It is a nothing worship. It is vain worship. In Matthew chapter 6 verse 24, we understand that worship cannot be mixed.

[9 : 42] It cannot be blended. It cannot be divided. And so Jesus will say, no one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and money. There are no two ways about it. There must be single-minded devotion to God and to God alone if there is true worship taking place.

That's why the psalmist, in so many places throughout the Psalms, talks about the single-mindedness of his worship. In Psalm 27 verse 4, he says, One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

And then in Psalm 86 11, the psalmist says, Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth. Unite my heart to fear your name.

The NIV translates it this way. I think it's helpful. Give me an undivided heart that I might fear your name. We recognize the significance and the seriousness of worship, and we recognize that God is the only one who can help us worship rightly and truly.

[11 : 03] We need his help to unite our heart so it's not divided, so it's single-minded in devotion to him. Thus, any other worship is an abomination to God.

And thus, anything that competes for your attention or your affection is idolatry. It is not true worship. Not the kind of worship that brings you close to God.

Even good things. This is what our passage, in a nutshell, is trying to communicate. That God alone is worthy of your worship.

God alone is worthy of your worship. And we're going to see that as we make our way through Daniel chapter 3, verses 1 to 18. Just the first part of this story.

And we're going to see the spotlight on worship, true worship of the one sure God. So if you would, turn with me, if you would, to Daniel chapter 3. If you're using the Pew Bible, it's on page 739.

[12:02] Daniel chapter 3, verses 1 to 15. To start. I'm going to read just a few verses here in the first part of this passage to lay the groundwork, to set the context for our study as we jump in.

It begins in verse 1. King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold whose height was 60 cubits and breadth 6 cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent together the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the province to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Now verse 4. And the herald proclaimed aloud, You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that the King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

We begin this part of our service, this part of the message, in drawing attention to Nebuchadnezzar's self-centered demand. Nebuchadnezzar's self-centered demand.

[13:20] And as we make our way through this passage, I want all of us to understand that Nebuchadnezzar is just a magnified, amplified version of every single one of us in this room.

That whatever Nebuchadnezzar does because of the power and the liberty of his position, every single one of us would also do given the same power, the same authority, and the same liberty. Because it's in our heart. Nebuchadnezzar's self-centered demand is no different than the demands that we have made, will continue to make perhaps, and God rescues us, hopefully in the process of sanctification, from making these kinds of demands on a regular basis.

Nebuchadnezzar's self-centered demand. It begins with him establishing an image of gold. His image of gold is what we look at first. This should sound strangely familiar.

This towering structure, this impressive image that has been erected in front of everyone. Mighty and glistening and awe-inspiring. Reminiscent of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

[14:34] In Daniel chapter 2 verse 31, just to back up for a moment, Daniel, in explaining the dream that Nebuchadnezzar has in chapter 2, says, You saw, O king, and behold the great image.

This image, mighty and exceeding brightness, stood before you. And its appearance was frightening. And then the interpretation in verse 37, You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given, the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, you are the head of gold.

And now this head of gold that was once a part of the image in his dream, with different other kinds of metals in descending order as you work your way from head to toe, now Nebuchadnezzar has decided to make the entire statue an image of gold to demonstrate the superiority of his kingdom and perhaps suggesting that his kingdom, in fact, would be the eternal kingdom.

It would be the kingdom that would continue. One can't help but see the correlation with this image. One can't help but wonder if in making this image, Nebuchadnezzar is also suggesting that he will have a kingdom that will stand the test of time.

This image, which is 60 cubits tall and 6 cubits wide, essentially, to put in our own vernacular, would have been 90 feet tall and 9 feet wide.

[16:05] This grotesque, really, image that is standing in this plane, this backdrop of this flat plane, this image standing tall on that plane to draw attention to its towering, mighty figure.

A figure in this plane that was comprised of gold, which would have been glistening in the Middle Eastern sun. And the word for image that is used here in chapter 3 is the same word for image that is used also in chapter 2, also suggesting that whatever image Nebuchadnezzar has created has taken human form.

What is Nebuchadnezzar doing? Well, in this image, we see this massive ego of King Nebuchadnezzar. It does not say specifically, but I think we can assume that this is a representation of Nebuchadnezzar himself.

Likely an image very similar to what we find in Daniel chapter 2. And here, Nebuchadnezzar is inviting all the officials of all the peoples and all the languages who are part of his empire to come and comprise themselves, present themselves, and bow in allegiance to the king.

This image is also distinct from Nebuchadnezzar's gods. Three times we will read in the next several verses, in verse 12 and verse 14 and also in verse 18, the accusation is they do not serve

your gods or worship your golden image, which would indicate the distinction between the gods of Babylon and this image that Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

[17:42] So why does he set up this image? Well, this is a test of loyalty. Elevating himself to a place of supremacy, probably trying to root out all of the opposition within his kingdom, exposing the resistance and making sure that everyone is falling in line.

Now Daniel will describe what's happening next in verses 2 to 7. This image is set up, but it's set up for a purpose. We see Nebuchadnezzar's desire for worship, his desire for worship.

I want to just draw your attention as we make our way through here. I want you to take notice of the number of times Nebuchadnezzar's name is used. In verse 2 it says, Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps.

Back up to verse 1. Sorry, I missed that. King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold. Towards the end it says, He set it up in the plain of Dura. At the end of verse 2 it says, The image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Then in verse 3, towards the end, this dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And they stood before the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

[18:56] Then in verse 4, O peoples, nations, and languages, when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

And then verse 6, Whoever does not fall down in worship shall immediately be cast into the burning fiery furnace. Then at the end of verse 7, The people heard this music.

All the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Daniel is going through great lengths in these first seven verses to draw attention to who is on display, who is really the focal point of this ceremony.

And of course, Nebuchadnezzar is at the center of the ceremony, the events that are taking place. Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned seven times.

We also notice that Daniel mentions this image that is set up six times throughout the course of these seven verses. This word to set up is to stand. It's to rise up.

[20:09] This is all, of course, in contrast to the instructions that were given to the crowd. This image would stand up and the people were to fall down. Fall down in reverence.

Fall down in worship. Fall down in allegiance to the king in his image. This image would stand. The people would fall. In the plain of Dura, as flat as it was, would be the perfect backdrop to this entire event.

Notice also the composition of the group. We see seven different classes of officials that are represented in verse two. Satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, justices, magistrates, officials.

Described here from top to bottom. From the most important to the least important. To those who have the most authority to the least authority in the kingdom.

This descending order, as it were, from head to toe. And that should also sound familiar. This group is also comprised of peoples from every part of the known world.

[21:13] Notice in verse four, the herald proclaims aloud, you are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages. And then in verse seven, therefore, as soon as all the people heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Everybody that was somebody came to this event and everybody that was somebody bowed to this image. The leading representatives from the world assembled to pay homage to King Nebuchadnezzar.

Their attendance was not optional. This test of loyalty to the kingdom was placed on every major government official that existed.

But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they knew, of course, that worship to this image was worship that would be idolatry against the worship of their God.

Allegiance, of course, to them, to the God of heaven was at stake. And we move to verses six, excuse me, verses eight to 12. We find to reinforce this command that Nebuchadnezzar gives, we find his forceful intimidation.

[22 : 37] Nebuchadnezzar is serious about compliance. And so he sets in motion the consequences that will help to communicate the greatest severity. In Daniel chapter three, verse six, we see this.

Whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning, fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar probably chose the fiery furnace as a means of convenience because it would be a kiln like this burning, fiery furnace that would be necessary in order to melt the gold, to plate this statue, and also to kiln the bricks that would have been used in fashioning the pedestal and the guts of the image itself.

temperatures in kilns such as these could reach anywhere between 1200 and 1800 degrees Fahrenheit.

Although it's not recorded, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not bow down to the image. They were present at the ceremony.

They obeyed as far as they could. This has been the standout feature of their time in Babylon. We see this blend of integrity and conviction that is mixed and blended with compliance.

[23 : 58] We see their courage that's mixed with submission. We see their faith that's mixed with adherence. But here they are again. They've been summoned to the plain of Dura.

They come, although I'm sure they recognized it was risky. No doubt they're aware of the king's ego and his intent to single out the dissenters and call attention to worship to him.

But they come to the command in obedience and submission to their authority. But here now they're faced with a decision. Here now they're at a crossroads.

A crossroads of compliance and submission to God versus submission to the king. And we find themselves unable to bow before the image, understanding its implications.

Verse 8 says, Therefore, at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. They declared to the king, Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live forever. You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music shall fall down and worship the golden image.

[25 : 07] And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning, fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

These men, O king, pay no attention to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up. As a side note, I think it's important for us to understand that Daniel is not present in this ceremony.

And all along as we've been reading through the book of Daniel, we've come to see and appreciate that Daniel stood as a figure that was full of conviction and I think helped to carry these young men in doing what was right.

But here, now these men stand alone. The conviction and worship and devotion for their God is coming through in their heart of affection for God and loyalty to Him.

But the Chaldeans take notice. It would have been obvious, of course, an act of disobedience. But you also get the sense that these Chaldeans were on the lookout because if any of you have looked at any pictures of anyone in Middle Eastern culture who is bowing down, you recognize that their face is often right to the ground.

[26 : 27] And so there is zero or very little, if any, view of their surroundings and often eyes closed. But somehow, these Chaldeans are taking notice.

They have a lookout. It's a convenient observation. And of course, they approach the king to maliciously accuse these Jews.

This word literally, or this phrase literally, means to eat the pieces of. They want to devour them piece by piece. They want to tear them to pieces. Of course, that is familiar as well as we understand that Satan is not only called the accuser and these men are maliciously accusing these Jews.

We also understand that Satan is the roaring lion who is seeking whom he may devour. These Chaldeans acting as agents of the enemy. They begin with a formal greeting, O king, live forever. And then they continue by recounting the command that the king has given as if he didn't know. But then comes the hook. There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon.

[27 : 39] They pay no attention to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the image that you have set up. This, of course, is an attempt to emphasize every single point of suspicion that they could identify.

They're Jews, meaning they're not from here, Nebuchadnezzar. They have no allegiance to Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. They're not on the home team, as it were. Watch out.

They pay no attention to you. Also, an attempt to discredit their service that has been consistent and faithful up to this point. They do not serve your gods.

And this will be important as we continue to work our way through the text that service and worship are interchangeable in the scriptures. That when worship is happening, service is also taking place. And we see that here in our text. They do not serve your gods or worship the image. Exclusive worship of God was allowed during Nebuchadnezzar's reign, permitted by him, but here, now it's twisted against these young men.

[28 : 50] They do not worship your image. Now, this gets extremely personal. This is your image, Nebuchadnezzar. They don't recognize you as supreme. They don't acknowledge your authority.

They don't pay any allegiance to your kingdom, Nebuchadnezzar. Watch out for these guys. It is important to notice that worship and service, as I have said, are interchangeable.

We see that in the next several verses. We saw that in verse 12. We'll see it again in verse 14 where Nebuchadnezzar challenges the young men, is it true that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image I've set up?

And then in verse 17, the young men say, our God whom we serve is able to deliver. And then finally, in verse 18, we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up. We will not serve you. We will not worship you. We will not pay our allegiance to you because God alone is worthy. In verses 13 to 15, we find Nebuchadnezzar giving them another opportunity, another chance, as it were.

[30 : 03] He brings Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego before him. He recites the command. He gives them a chance when the music plays to fall down and show their allegiance. And then Nebuchadnezzar adds an important element at the end of verse 15.

Notice, And who is the God who will deliver you out of my hands? This has always been a test of power. Now we're finally getting to the crux of what Nebuchadnezzar is after.

He wants worship as if he were God. He wants to establish himself as the Supreme One. It's a test of allegiance, a test of worship.

And Nebuchadnezzar, by his own mouth, demonstrates what is central to this ceremony. Worship this image. And no God can challenge my power.

These three young men stand their ground. They serve as an example to us of loyalty to Christ and true worship that should be true of every single one of us who claim to be followers of Jesus.

[31 : 14] We come in verses 16 to 18. We see Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's devotion. Nebuchadnezzar has issued a command. Now Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego demonstrate their single-minded devotion to God.

Notice in verse 16. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace.

And he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.

In these few verses, we find this confident, bold, clear, respectful allegiance to the one true God. This is, of course, intensely personal for them as well. Notice in verse 17. If this be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us.

[32 : 26] He's not just the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He's not just the God of heaven. He's not just the God of our forefathers. He is our God. He belongs to us. And we will worship him as the only true God.

And this statement, we have no need to answer you in this matter, is not a statement of defiance, but a statement and a testimony to their consistent devotion to God that has been true from the very beginning.

You have known us, Nebuchadnezzar, from the beginning. We have never compromised the things that we believed in. We have remained true to our God who has never abandoned us.

Our lives have remained a faithful witness to our true devotion to him. Nothing's going to change that. Not being stripped away from our country.

Not becoming slaves in this new empire. Not losing our family and friends. Not for the sake of privilege and position. Not for fear of reputation.

[33 : 32] and not in the face of death. We will remain true to the one true God. He is not distant. He's not abandoned us.

He's not diminished in power or failed to answer us when we pray. He is present. He is active. And he is able to save. Our hope is in him.

Even if he doesn't save, we will still not serve your God or worship this image. We must draw the line. We must remain true to our allegiance to our God.

They do this because they know the word of God. They do this because they know the power of God. They do this because they are settled in the results that God will bring. Next week, we're going to finish the story.

And we're going to see how their commitment to worship to God, the God who could save them from the fire, does save in his presence.

[34 : 38] He sends his presence to carry them through the fire. But each one of us in this room are confronted with the kind of struggle, the kind of decision that we see happening in our passage.

We're confronted with this nearly every day. I'm reminded of Joshua at the end of his life who says in Joshua 24, 15, he says, choose this day whom you will serve.

That's our word again. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. There is a decision that we need to make. Who is the object of your affection?

Who is the center of your worship? And you may fill in the blank with who is the one that you serve? Like Nebuchadnezzar, I find my own heart demanding worship.

Not the kind of worship that I set up an image of myself and ask people to bow down, but the kind of worship where I want to be at the center of attention.

[35 : 43] You find the pole, that same pole on your own heart? You want to be the center of attention? You want to be the object of praise? You want the commendation, the recognition?

You want the attaboy? You want the pat on the back? You want people to say, wow, what a great job you're doing? What a great person you are? We want the kind of worship that Nebuchadnezzar craved.

We want loyalty to us. We want the world to revolve around our desires and our interests. While we may not be as bold as Nebuchadnezzar to demand that people worship us, remember that worship and service go hand in hand and service is inherent in us.

That's why Jesus in confronting the disciples, remember the argument that they're having about who is first? Jesus has to confront them in Mark chapter 9 verse 35. He says, He sat down, called His twelve and said to them, If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last and of all and servant of all.

Like Nebuchadnezzar, we put ourselves in the center. Like Nebuchadnezzar, we want the world to serve us.

[37 : 02] Jesus, of course, came to change all of that. In Mark 10, 45, He came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.

He came to unlock the door of true service and worship to God that gets me out of the way and puts Him at the center.

We are all like Nebuchadnezzar in our heart. We do whatever is in our power to force the issue, to get our way, to demand our rights, to make ourselves known.

We want to intimidate. We want to manipulate. We want everyone to bow down and serve us. We would never put it in those terms, but that's exactly what's happening.

Of course, none of this was the way of Christ who sets the example for us. And I would encourage you just in our closing moments to open up to Philippians chapter 2. I want to read through this with a new lens and I want you to be able to see how self-service is in us.

[38 : 08] It must be rooted out of us and that will only happen as we make Jesus the center of our affection. Philippians chapter 2. Let me just read this for us.

It says, So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, have the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Now why does Paul have to say that?

Because it is in us. We want what we want and we want everyone to want the same things that we want. But the instruction goes on, let each of you look out not only to his own interest but also to the interest of others.

Why? Because of Christ. In verse 5, have this mind found among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[39 : 33] Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, said the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Allow your heart to follow the lead of your Savior. Allow your heart to bend and flex and lay down and abandon self-interest for the sake of love to Christ.

Stop serving yourself and start serving him. And trust that in that process that God will allow you to see the fruit of that kind of life.

The kind of fruit where God himself is the one who is meeting needs and strengthening your life and leading you to fruitfulness. At the end of the day, at the end of the age, because of Christ's example of humility, we're going to enjoy and remember what Christ has accomplished for us through his death, his body, his blood.

He's made a way for us to enjoy this kind of life. self-abandonment for the sake of love and worship to God. As I pray, I want to encourage the men to come forward and we'll remember the body and blood of Christ through the elements.

[41 : 12] Father, thank you for the example that you've set in your son, Jesus. And Lord, thank you that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that you're Lord, that you will get the praise that you deserve.

but it will come in the time that's been ordained by the Father. So Lord, I pray that you'd help us to follow in your steps. And Lord, as we take the elements this morning that we would remember that you are faithful and dependable, that as Christ submitted his will to the Father and got to enjoy the benefits of that obedience, we too can enjoy the benefits of trust in you and service of you.

May you be pleased through our time together. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.