

Prayer Book Worship -Worship of the Heart

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- [0 : 00] It's good to be together again, and good to be studying the things that abide and really matter, which it's our privilege to attempt once more this morning.
- Worship from the heart, with reference to the Bible and to the prayer book, is, I think, and I hope you will agree, a subject well worth giving our minds to at the first meeting of a new year, and that then is what I ask you to do for the next three quarters of an hour or so.
- Let's begin with a word of prayer. Holy Father, send your Holy Spirit now, we pray.
- And grant us an understanding of the mind of our Holy Savior, and draw our hearts out in adoration and devotion, trust and obedience towards him.
- For his glory and for yours. Amen. Amen. Worship from the heart.
- [1 : 28] I have a sense that the word worship has become somewhat threadbare amongst certainly evangelical people in my time.
- Roman Catholics and the Anglo-Catholics of my youth used to get excited about worship. I don't see much of that today.
- I'm not sure that evangelicals in my time have ever been very excited about worship. I think that if a conference was announced on evangelism, it would draw far more people than a conference on worship.
- And I think that has been the story for the last 60 years in which I've been sitting up and taking notice spiritually. But certainly, I think that that's the story today.
- And that was the thought that led me to the topic as the first matter on which I address you in a new year.
- [2 : 36] We all know, I suppose, that worship is a Christian duty. We would all nod our heads virtuously if we heard that said.
- We all know, I suppose, that the English word worship has in it the English word worth. And apparently, it was originally pronounced as worth-ship.
- It's a celebration of the worth of God. Probably that too is something very familiar at which you would cheerfully nod your head. But it doesn't alter the fact that here, at the beginning of the 21st century, even, I think, in St. John's Shaughnessy, worship often seems to us a relatively dull matter, as compared with some of the other things that occupy our minds.
- And I want to challenge that right at the outset, because that isn't the way that our God and our Saviour see it at all. Let me read from John's Gospel, chapter 4, central verses in Jesus' conversation with the lady from Samaria, whom he met at the well, and whom, you remember, he began talking to in a way that amazed her, because not only was he a man, and men regularly in that culture ignored women until women spoke to them, which he wasn't intending to do, but he was a Jew, and she was a Samaritan.
- And Jews, as John tells us, telling the story, ordinarily treated Samaritans as if they didn't exist. But Jesus has got into conversation with this lady, and he has talked to her, you'll remember, about living water as a gift that he has to give.

[4 : 43] Now, living water was a phrase which did not need in that culture to mean more the running water, that is, the water of a stream or a spring.

And that probably was all that at first she realized, all that at first she was thinking about. But she said she would like some. And so Jesus said, quite abruptly, not really changing the subject spiritually, but it must have seemed to her an abrupt change of subject, go and fetch your husband, bring him here.

And that brings out the whole sad story that she's been a kept woman with a number of men in her life. And as Jesus says, he whom you're living with now is not your husband.

You were very right to say, I don't have a husband. This isn't Jesus being brutal. This is Jesus seeking to bring the lady to a realization of sin and need that surely is very obvious to us, even if at first it wasn't to her.

But like so many people confronted with the reality of their own sin and need, her first reaction is to try and evade the thrust of what's being said, and people do that by changing the subject.

[6 : 08] What did she do? She did what so many people do so often. She switched from conversation that had to do with her and her spiritual state to general religious discussion.

As the late, great Martin Lloyd-Jones, from whom I received so much in my youth, it used to say, people love discussing religion.

And they do, you know. Because you can discuss religion without any sort of commitment, and you can get quite animated about it, and it doesn't touch you where it hurts at all.

She gets to talking about religion. And she raises the question of what's the proper place to go to in order to worship God.

Samaria or Jerusalem? And now I pick up with the reading, John chapter 4 and verse 21. Here we are.

[7 : 13] Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you don't know. We worship what we know. For salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now, now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit. And those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

What's going on there? Something enormously important, something which should convince us straight away that worship matters very much. You've heard me say, probably all of you, that I find great wisdom in that little tag from Rudyard Kipling.

Remember? I have six honest serving men. They taught me all I knew. Their names are what and where and when and why and how and who. These are the good questions to ask if you want to understand.

[8 : 36] Let's ask four of them. Who? Oh, no, let's be grammatical. Whom should we worship? The Father, says Jesus. Real Christian worship begins when you come to know the Creator as your Father, which Christians do through faith in Jesus, the Son.

He is Son of God by nature. We become sons of God, children of God, heirs of God, by adoption. And now we know God as Father and we can pray to him the way Jesus taught, our Father.

We are to worship the Father whom we know, God our Savior, and whose children we are. Ask another question.

Where should we worship? And Jesus' answer to that question is, in space-time terms, one may worship anywhere at any time.

It isn't a matter of some areas distinct from Jerusalem or any other place. It's a matter, rather, and here the preposition changes its trajectory in a way so smooth is not to make you realize that this is a total reorienting of the mind.

[9 : 59] It isn't a matter of in Samaria, in Jerusalem, it's a matter of in spirit and in truth. Call it a location, if you like, but that's how we are to worship.

Actually, it's one of those phrases, there are a number, in John's Gospel, where John sees in Jesus' words more than one level of meaning, and he delights to bring that out by his use of the Greek language to express Jesus' words.

In spirit is a phrase that can mean both. In one's own spirit, that is, in one's own heart, which is today's proper subject, or in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit who is given to those who are children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

And then, truth can mean reality as distinct from formality, which has got a hollow heart, or, or rather, and, it can mean in response to the truth that you have come to know through receiving the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

True worship, then, is worship in the Holy Spirit in response to gospel truth, and true worship is worship from the heart in the deepest reality of which in our hearts we're capable.

[11 : 39] In other words, worship is total response to God at our own deepest level. And the last question, why?

Because, and this is the breathtaking thing, of all these breathtaking things, this is the most breathtaking, God is looking for, seeking, actively seeking to find people who will worship him in this way.

Yes, that's what Jesus says. God, the Father, is seeking to find people who will worship him in this way. True worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth, the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

And that's Jesus telling us, first of all, that it is the Father's joy to be worshipped by his grateful creatures. Just as it is our joy, Jesus doesn't go into this, but the rest of the Bible does, it's our joy and fulfillment to be worshipping him.

That's what we were made for. It's a two-way street, you see. It isn't God, the Father, screwing out of us worship, which it's a burden to give.

[13 : 04] It's God, the Father, drawing us into the activity which for us is supreme joy, because that's what we were made for, just as for him it's the joy which comes when your purpose, your purpose in creating a state of affairs is fulfilled.

God made us to worship him. That's the simple Christian truth on which Jesus is building here. and that shows us without any further comment from me, just how important worship really is.

Okay, now that's introductory. I will now give you the headings to which I'm going to speak, the concept of worship, the components of worship, and the condition of worship, conditions of worship.

Three C's, well you know Pecker well enough to know that his mind does these alliterations without, really, without any hard work, they're just there.

And these are the three topics that I want to explore a bit with you. Okay, the concept of worship, already I trust it's becoming plain from what we've said.

[14 : 28] worship is our relational response to what God has shown us and given us of himself.

And if you want a Bible based illustration for that, think of a couple on their wedding day making their vows. it has been said that religion is a matter of personal pronouns.

You say to God, my God, and God says to you, my child. You say to God, I am yours, God says to you and me, I am yours.

I said, God, we can flesh that out actually by thinking it through again in terms of the Lord Jesus and his personal ministry to us and our personal response to him.

He is ours, we are his. That's what our Christianity is all about. Well, a whole souled response is what's called for, no half measures, a whole life response is what's called for, no compartmental living, you know, we have a religious hour on Sunday morning and then the rest of our time is ours and we handle it in a different way from that worship hour on Sunday morning.

[16 : 09] No, no, no. The worship of God is to be all-embracing, it's life involving, all behavior must express the spirit of worship and in scripture worship also is whole group worship, if you'll allow me to put it that way.

That is to say, God reveals that he wants his people together on a regular basis worshipping him, just as he wants each of us individually wherever we are and whatever we're doing to be worshipping him.

And if you ask why, well, the only answer we can give is that God likes it that way, he appreciates this togetherness, and he is in fact bringing us to it in the final glory that's pictured in the book of Revelation, where you remember it's the saints together worshipping God, and in the visionary chapters, all the horrors are punctuated with songs of praise from the saints in glory, and they're all together praising God in words of adoration, which all of them join in.

And the book's visionary chapters end, you remember, with a picture of a city, New Jerusalem, and a city is a place of togetherness. So this is part of the biblical thought, the relational response to God, which all of us are called to make, involves getting together with others so that we may worship God together, as well as it involving the heart.

Yes, I haven't forgotten that I'm supposed to be talking about the heart. I am. But the heart, you see, takes all of this that I've mentioned so far on board, and the heart isn't right until all this has been taken on board.

[18 : 20] And yes, worship from the heart, then, is going to be whole person, whole life, whole group worship. And that's the concept.

All right. On then to heading number two, the components of worship. There are three, when you boil it down.

Three, I mean, which constitute the offering of worship to God, the living of our lives in God's presence, in obedience to his word.

That's worship also, as I've already, I think, indicated clearly enough. but, oh, think in terms of a circle which has a center.

The whole circle pictures the Christian life of relational response to God, Father, Son, and Spirit in the worship of our lives.

[19 : 22] At the center of the circle is the worshipping that we do together when we are intentional, when we are God focused in a direct way, when we have come together to worship, and that's what we are resolved to do.

And it's in the activity that is right at the center of that circle, intentional worship, such as we share in every Sunday at church, that these three elements that I'm now going to separate out come together.

Here they are. Listen, look, and learn. Learning is element number one. Learning by taking into our hearts what God has said.

remembering, rejoicing, and giving thanks is the second element. The remembering actually is part of the reality of worship.

You remember how good God has been to you and how much he's given you. You remember his grace and salvation, you remember his mercy and providence, you remember many particular blessings that have come to you in the course of your pilgrimage.

- [20 : 53] And with some of these, as many of these as possible, really, in your mind, you give thanks. That's the second ingredient in worship. And the third ingredient you can express by these three words.

Review, look at your life, realize, realize your need and the needs of others around you as well, and request.

So, there you've got it. Learn, give thanks, and request. Those are the three ingredients in the worshipping that we do together. And I think it's fair to say that going on with God is a matter lifelong of being educated through learning and being grateful, increasingly grateful, as thanksgiving becomes a habit, and acknowledging our dependence on God more and more deeply, because this isn't something that we naturally take to.

We have to learn the reality of our dependence and the depth of it. But yes, realizing that and growing in that all through our lives, that's the third element in our life agenda, and that means that God's way of educating us, training us, shaping us, and so preparing us for the glory that's coming, can be compared with the way that we educate children in our own families.

We teach children to say thank you when good gifts have been given them. We teach children to say please when they need something, want something, and we teach children to say yes when they are told to do something.

- [23 : 07] There you see, you've got the three dimensions of real worship, real nurture, real growth in grace, real discipleship, and real preparation for glory.

Get it? Learning better and better, more and more, or rather at a deeper and deeper level to say to God, thank you, please, and yes, Lord, yes, I accept what you say, I accept what you send, I accept your call, yes, yes, yes.

Well, having said that much, I now want to run very quickly over the history of worship to give us a bit of perspective on our own prayer book.

What I've said so far is biblical foundations, I suppose. What I'm going to say now is what actually has happened down the centuries.

This is very much bird's eye view. Let's begin at the beginning. even before the legislation of the book Exodus, long before Israel was brought out of Egypt, back in the days that are recorded for us in the book of Genesis, we find that the spiritual leaders, the men of God, Abram and his sons, they worship, they make altars, and they worship God there.

- [24 : 55] There's a number of references. What are they doing? Well, the thing they're certainly doing is making thank offerings on the altars. There are, however, hints, Genesis hints at so many things on so many subjects, and this is one of them, there are hints that the reality that we call atonement is part of the story as well.

That isn't highlighted in Genesis, but it's hinted at. When Israel is brought out of Egypt, and God legislates for the people's future life, legislates at Sinai, well, then, as you know, a great deal is said about the specifics of sacrifice and the reality of atonement as part of the rationale of sacrifice.

What is the significance of that? Well, it's clear, actually, from the way in which these elaborate sacrificial rituals are set out. The purpose is to keep the channels of fellowship between Israel's God and his people clear, so that there's no blockage due to unforgiven sin.

Unforgiven sin is like a roadblock, a landslide, so that fellowship is disrupted. Atonement clears away the landslide, so that the road to communion and fellowship is open again.

Again, I said I'm doing this bird's-eye view style. I'm not going to go through a string of specific texts to show you this. If you have ever trawled your way, some I'm sure have, and some I'll bet haven't, if you've ever trawled your way through the sacrificial rubrics, very elaborate and very full as they are in Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers, you will know that making atonement is actually a phrase that pops up from time to time in significant ways.

[27 : 20] When animals are sacrificed, well, the first thought is that I give back to God the good gifts that he's given me. Israel is a rural community, was so in Egypt, remains so in the wilderness, is going to continue so in Palestine, and in this rural community, livestock is vital, central.

Well, God gave the livestock and in sacrifice, the first born of litters, first born of the animals, is to be given back to God.

But there's more to it than that. The blood is to be poured out on or beside the altar, because, says God, it's the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

All right, there you have the two thoughts. Sacrifice is a way of saying thank you to God, and sacrifice is a way of keeping the channel of communication clear by making atonement where there's been sin and shortcoming.

And then, in a number of the rituals, the burnt offering particularly, you may remember, it all ends up with a meal in the sanctuary or near the sanctuary where some of the animal that has been sacrificed to God is given back to the worshippers, and they share in a feast before the Lord, and that in itself is meant to be understood as a picture and an assurance of fellowship.

[29 : 07] We are in fellowship with this God because he is in fellowship with us. We have said thank you to him for the gift of the animal which we've given to him, and its blood has been shed to make atonement, and now we share it as a token of the reality of our fellowship.

It's all said at very great length in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. That shouldn't worry us, it's simply a sign that what's at the heart of all this is very important from God's standpoint.

And as in ordinary life, repetition is for emphasis, one says things twice in order to rub them in, so in the rituals, things are said over and over again.

We shouldn't get impatient, we should recognize simply, this is a sign that for God, these are important matters. Okay, that's then how Israel was instructed to proceed in the matter of togetherness in worship as they came into the promised land.

As they lived out their life in the promised land, as the centuries went by, a problem emerged and became increasingly obtrusive.

[30 : 38] Nations, tribes, roundabout, worshipped idols of their own, religion, and the idea got into Israelite hearts that it would be a better religion if we were worshipping these pagan gods alongside Jehovah, than it can be if we are only worshipping Jehovah or Yahweh as the scholars nowadays call him, and setting ourselves apart from the pagan gods.

In other words, the Israelites wanted to be polytheists because they thought they'd be richer that way. It's the Irish stew principle of religion. You put in all the forms of religion you know, and you're sure that what comes out is richer than any of the single items that went in.

You age people do it today. You must have met it. Well, that became a problem because Israel's God called from the start for exclusive worship.

He is the only God, God of creation, God of providence, the idols aren't real. What are you doing then worshipping the idols? And the prophets at great length, matching the length with which God had given the original worship rituals, they over and over again denounced Israel for doing this.

Time's getting on, so I'm not going to read you some of the passages that I had here. If you need proof, well, I'll read some of them when it comes to question time, but I don't you do.

- [32 : 15] I would imagine all of you know that idolatrous ritual is not acceptable to God any more than faithful observance of ritual worship, with immorality in your life is acceptable to God.

The prophets hammer away at that also. Here, perhaps, I will read just one of the passages that I have. Here we are with Isaiah, and in the first chapter of Isaiah, where you expect to find all the key themes of what's going to follow through the rest of the book.

Well, listen to this. Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom. Jerusalem is being compared to Sodom. Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah.

This is how God sees Israel, on the same footing as Sodom and Gomorrah, which back in the days of Genesis, you remember he destroyed. What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices, says the Lord?

I've had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts. I don't delight in the blood of bulls or lambs or goats.

- [33 : 35] When you come to appear before me, who is required of you, this trampling of my courts? Well, that's rather startling, of course, because God himself had given them the rubrics for precisely these sacrifices back in the days of the Exodus.

But see how it goes on. Bring no more vain offerings. Incense is an abomination to me, new moon Sabbath, calling of convocations. I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly, faithful ritual and immoral living.

That's the point. I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They become a burden to me.

I'm weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you. even though you make many prayers, I will not listen.

Why not? Your hands are full of blood. And so it goes on. Well, there was a great deal of that in Israel, and that's why there's a great deal of that sort of thing in the prophets.

- [34 : 51] Ritual without righteousness won't do. All right, we jump forward. Israel is sent into exile for immorality and idolatry.

Israel is brought out of exile, and in the period between the writing, completing of the Old Testament and the coming of the Lord Jesus, worship in the synagogue becomes a standard pattern.

Synagogues are set up all over Palestine. And in the synagogues, you have regular Sabbath worship consisting of readings from Scripture, from which people are supposed to learn, singing and saying of psalms as an expression of thanksgiving to God, and prayers, an expression of petition and requests.

the three realities of worship that I spoke of before. And when you get to Christianity, well, moving right through to the period straight after the apostolic age, you find that the Christian church has taken over basically the synagogue pattern, but has used it in order to surround the thing that the Lord Jesus told his people to do regularly in remembrance of him, namely the routine which we call the Holy Communion, that is now being surrounded with learning from Scripture and giving thanks and bringing petitions.

And that's the basic shape of Christian liturgy through the succeeding centuries, and so on, right up to the present day when you have it in our Anglican form in the prayer book.

- [36 : 59] When you take our communion service apart, that's what's in it. The Lord's Supper being celebrated with learning from the Word and thanksgiving in many forms and petitionary prayers.

down the centuries, the church year was crystallized out on a pattern suggested, I suppose, by the fact that a lot of the old, or three of the main Old Testament festivals were agricultural festivals celebrating key points in the round of the year, sowing and harvesting.

the church year was shaped in order to ensure that every year there would be at least one Sunday when every key point in the creed, the Apostles' creed, was highlighted, celebrated.

And we think about this to some extent every Advent when a new church year starts. Well, this was standard stuff from the early centuries onwards.

and the idea also emerged and established itself in the Middle Ages.

[38 : 26] You could find it, of course, in earlier centuries, actually. That ideally, every Christian will be worshipping God every day. and in the monasteries, the daily worship will take the form of a set liturgy.

It won't have the Holy Communion in it, but it will have the reading of the words so that you learn, the saying of Psalms whereby you express thanks, and the making of requests through prayers.

came the 16th century, and Thomas Cranmer, that liturgical genius, as everyone acknowledges he was, picked up this whole heritage and crystallized it out for Anglicans in his services given us in the Book of Common Prayer.

You have Sunday services in the Book of Common Prayer. You have daily services for those who can manage them, and you have occasional services for special, non-recurring occasions, and in all of them you have scripture read, and you have Psalms said, and you have prayers of petition being made.

And the understanding of the call, the Christian version of God's call to worship, is spelt out for us explicitly in the introduction to morning prayer, which is pretty full, but it's all said here to make quite sure that Anglicans will never forget it or lose touch with it.

[40 : 10] Although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God, yet ought we most chiefly so to do when we assemble and meet together prayer, to render thanks for the great benefits that we've received at his hands, thanksgiving, to set forth his most worthy praise, praise and thanksgiving go together, to hear his most holy word, there's the learning element, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul, there's petition.

so we are reminded right at the beginning of morning prayer laboriously, but then we forget so soon, so it's really not improper for us to be laboriously instructed every Sunday when worship begins, when morning prayer begins anyway, it's good for us to be reminded of what it is that we're doing, and you see it's the same three elements at heart that constitute our worship, and this is what we're going to do together, and it's important that we do it right.

That leads us straight away to the conditions of Christian worship. I suppose I ought to say before I go on that on other occasions I have talked to you, or some of you anyway, about the brilliant way in which Thomas Cranmer put the gospel into his prayer book services simply by arranging the material in such a way that a sequence of three themes stands out.

Sin, detected, confessed, recognized, acknowledged, grace, the grace of the God who pardons and restores sinners, celebrated in some shape or form, and faith, faith the third theme, faith which is our thankful response to the grace that saves us sinners.

I'm not going over that this morning, but I ought to mention it, I think, before I continue and get to my last section. that is the way that Cranmer built his key services in the prayer book, and that is one of the reasons why they are so nourishing to the worshippers' souls, because they express the gospel so clearly.

[42 : 55] But now, final section, a word about the conditions of worship, real worship, and this is where, at last, the heart comes in.

Clean hands and a pure heart are the required conditions. Otherwise, God doesn't count it as worship and rejects it in the way in which he rejected the formal worship of Israel in that passage that I read a moment ago from Isaiah.

As far as I'm concerned, says, God, it isn't worship, because your hands aren't clean and your heart isn't in it the way it should be. Again, the introduction to morning prayer says it all for us.

We've got to start with the frank acknowledgement of our sins. Dearly beloved, the scripture moves us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness.

We are not to dissemble, that is, to pretend they're not there, nor are we to cloak them, not to try and conceal them, before the face of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father.

[44 : 15] We are to confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart. Ah, yes, heart. What are we talking about there?

the heart, according to scripture, is the core, the very center of our personal being, in the way in which the physical heart, beating away and pumping blood around the body, is the very core and center of our bodily life.

if the heart gives up, that's it. Bodily life is through. And spiritually, if the core of our person isn't in what we're doing, well, as far as God's concerned, it is not real worship, it's only the form of worship without the substance.

This prayer book really is a recurring emphasis in the prayer book, where the word heart is a key word in all sorts of places.

Let me illustrate that a little. Take the communion service, which by any standards is the most important of all the services that the prayer book contains, well, the communion service begins with what we call the collect for purity, and this is the thought at the center of the collect.

[46 : 02] Almighty God, we pray, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, desires come out of the heart, the real core and center of you and me.

God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts. See, hearts aren't just a matter of feeling.

Hearts are the source of our thoughts as well as of our feelings. When today we talk about the heart and speak of doing things with all our heart and talk about heartfelt emotion and that kind of thing, we are regularly using the word in a shallower sense than the prayer book does.

Because the prayer book begins its account, its understanding of the heart with the thoughts. The thoughts of the mind. The thoughts of the soul.

The heart, as I said, is the very center of the person. The end product. we trust of our worship at communion time and it's the quality that all our actual sharing and the communion service is meant to have.

[47 : 31] It's to be an expression of cleansed thoughts from a heart which can be described now as pure just because the thoughts of the heart are being cleansed.

And so on it goes. When the summary of the commandments anyway is used, we are reminded that commandment number one according to the Lord Jesus is to love the Lord your God with all your heart.

So mind and strength as aspects of what it means to love the Lord with all your heart. And we respond by praying together Lord have mercy on us and write both these thy laws in our hearts.

There it is, sharply focused. Not just in our heads but in our hearts. So that these two great commands become the dynamic or the driving force of our whole lives.

On we go in the communion service, in the confession, we acknowledge that we are heartily sorry. When you meet the word heartily in the prayer book it means coming from the heart.

[48 : 47] Nothing superficial here. We are sorry from the depths of our being. We are heartily sorry. That's what it means. And when the bread and the wine are administered to us, well, you know what the words of administration admonish us to do, feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

Let there be real worship in your heart as you take this bread, the token of Christ's love for you and me at Calvin. And it isn't just in the communion service that you have this.

a whole string of collects set before us the same focus on the heart.

Advent collect number three. May we pray for the ministers and stewards of God's mysteries. May they likewise so prepare and make ready the Lord's way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.

It's an echo from the book of Malachi, but it's about the heart, turning the hearts. That's real repentance, and if there isn't a turning of the heart, well it's something less than real repentance.

[50 : 18] Jump ahead. Here we are, I'm doing this more or less at random, here we are on Ascension Day, and the collect here is praise.

Ascension Day is a big day in the prayer book, even though it isn't so big a day in most of our lives. Grant we beseech the Almighty God that like as we believe that thy only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend and with him continually dwell.

Abide in him, in other words, just to pick up the thought that was being stressed in the message at the Hapa 7 communion service, which some of us represented, that we may in heart and mind ascend to where our Lord Jesus is and abide in him.

Compentecost, which again is a service, a day of great importance in the church's year as the prayer book celebrates it, and the colic begins, God who as at this time did teach the hearts of thy faithful people by sending them the light of the Holy Spirit, grant the same blessing to us.

Teach our hearts. And when it's what they call ordinary times, Sundays after Trinity, well, you have phrases like this, Trinity 3, which, where are we?

[51 : 56] Here we are. Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to grant that we to whom thou hast given a hearty desire to pray may be defended and comforted.

A hearty desire to pray, a desire to commune with God through prayer, which goes deeper than the most of the desires of our life.

It goes right down to the core of our being, a hearty desire to pray. This is one of the marks of the truly born-again believer. Trinity 6, pour into our hearts, we pray, such love toward thee that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire.

pour into our hearts love toward thee. Trinity 18 gives us this. Lord, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee, the only God.

And Trinity 19 hammers the point in, really. Mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts.

[53 : 30] Well, you see the point that Cranmer is making, and that I am making, as I follow in his footsteps. Prayer book religion is religion which starts in the heart.

And that's biblical religion. Biblical religion starts in the heart with desire that goes down to the root of our being. We want to know God, please God, love God, thank him adequately, and serve him faithfully.

The born again do desire that. God. So, we seek total involvement, total focus, total concentration, in living all our lives to the glory of God, just as we seek to honor him when we come together on Sundays for worship.

That's Bible religion. And as we seek to live biblically in this way, living in depth, you see, spiritually, so again and again we are made aware that we are sadly disintegrated persons because of what sin has done in our system.

And so we have to pray, as the psalmist prays very strikingly in Psalm 86 and verse 11, teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth.

[55 : 06] Unite my heart to fear your name. Now, there's a prayer for all of us. If we haven't yet woken up to the fact that we need constantly to pray, unite my heart, because my desires are running all over the place, this is the moment to realize it, and to resolve that we'll never forget it again.

And when the child of God is praying on a regular basis, unite my heart to fear your name, then we may hope to get on from verse 11 to verse 12, I give thanks to you, O Lord, my God, with my whole heart.

I'm telling you, friends, this is the supreme joy, the supreme reality of the work of God in sanctification, as we call it.

You measure it, not by the externals of our behavior, but by the state of one's heart. When God is enabling one, as sometimes he does, to praise him with our whole heart, well, that's supernatural, that's more than we could ever have managed by nature.

And that is the assurance, the gratifying assurance to us, that we really are being changed by his grace. And that's the one aspect of the godliness into which the prayer book seeks to lead us.

[56 : 47] Said Richard Baxter, and I close here, heart work, and then he added, and heaven work, is the heart of true religion.

Heart work, seeking and finding the touch of God, uniting our heart, and enabling us to worship our Lord from our heart, in the way that the prayer book is constantly directing us that we must learn to do.

So that's what I had to share with you friends under the topic, the topical heading of worship from the heart. And I think you will agree there's plenty there for us to be learning as we live together, walk together, share in worship in church, share in learners' exchange during this coming year.

this is the secret of the truly happy new year, which I wish you again now as I close. God bless us all in this way.

And now let's move from monologue into dialogue. I expect I've thrown out a lot of things which you want to comment on and perhaps even challenge, I don't know.

[58 : 12] please react to what I've said. Well, I simply said that in the synagogues you have learning because the scriptures were read, you have thanksgiving which was the emphasis in their psalm saying or psalm singing, and you have petition because there were prayers asking specifically for things that were needed.

I said this following through my line of thought about the thank you and the please and the yes Lord, I'm sorry, I'm doing it in the reverse order, being the three basic attitudes which are always the essence of true worship from the Lord's people.

Okay? Yeah? The Latin word is *collectio*, and when the scholars are honest, nobody has the foggiest idea why that term came to be applied to these prayers for particular services and prayers for the week that we have in our prayer book.

So the definition's arbitrary, the definition is, here's a short prayer with a standard form that will last a week as a basis for personal meditation and expansion in our own prayers.

In it, you have an invocation of God that refers to some aspect of his work and his glory. In it, you have an expression of need and prayer for some particular benefit.

[60 : 06] And it closes with an invocation of Christ. We pray through Christ our Saviour and our Lord, which is an invitation to meditate on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and bring that into our praying on a regular basis.

That's the most you can say about colleagues. They are there and that's the way that they're all put together. And if you and I set ourselves to write collects, well, that's how we put them together.

Invoke God in terms of what he is, focus our request in terms of what we need, and remind ourselves as we close that we live by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we pray and who presents our prayers to the Father.

Which is an answer, you see, that's no answer because I still don't know and nobody knows why these things are called cults. But I do the best I can.

Somebody write at the back. Well, the short answer is this, that in the Middle Ages, the rosary emerged as part of the worship, one has to call it worship, worship of a degree that was given to the mother of our Lord Jesus.

[61 : 28] prayers, and you know how the rosary works, there are so many beads on a string, and they remind you of the, that's 15 prayers, isn't it?

Five for sorrow, five for joy, and five for something else. At the Reformation, the prayer book was put together without the rosary being included, and without any thought or implication of it being right to pray to Mary or through Mary in the 16th century, that was a very striking omission.

It isn't that the prayer book ignored Mary. You know the Magnificat, Mary's song, is put into one of the standard Sunday services, evening prayer. It's our problem that we don't use it as much as Cranmer hoped we would, because we don't do evening prayer in most cases today.

But the Magnificat expresses the mind of Mary as all the Reformers, not just the English ones, understood it. Mary sets herself in the line of saved sinners.

She is a model, to be sure, of responsive, worshipful obedience to God. she accepted the, from one standpoint, invidious vocation that the angel gave her of being the mother of our Lord Jesus.

[62 : 58] But her word, her thought is, my soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior. And I am bold enough to guess, of course, there's nothing canonical about my guesses or anybody else's, but I'm bold enough to guess that in heaven, Mary is embarrassed and bewildered at the way that down the centuries people have insisted on worshipping her as if she was a minor deity alongside her son, rather than acknowledging her as the, call it if you like, the model saved sinner who lives to, lives in obedience to the Lord through his grace.

But be that as it may, mainstream Anglicanism has never had any place for the rosary. Now, you're quite right in saying that in recent years, quite a lot of folk, some of them Anglican, have taken up with the rosary, and Roman Catholics, of course, continue to use the rosary and to invoke Mary as if she is, I'll say it again, a minor deity.

But, frankly, that seems to me to be a mistake. And so, I leave the matter there. George?

In what extent, was grammar influenced by the Christian going to have the criticism when he wrote the parable, and then the second other question is, were the sentences that parable subsequently influenced the English?

I can answer the second question very easily. It hasn't influenced Roman Catholic liturgies in the slightest, as far as I know. The idea of putting the mass into English, of course, is catching up 400 years after, something that Cranmer pioneered, but the wording that's used doesn't seem to have any relation to the wording of Cranmer's book.

[65 : 14] The first question is more difficult to answer. I think the correct answer in formula terms is that Cranmer was liturgically an expert, and he knew all the pre- Reformation liturgies that were known at that time.

he certainly knew all the contemporary liturgical forms that were being used in England, and there were quite a number. And he seems to have known his early centuries liturgy very well also.

I'm not going to say any more than that. When you get into the details of where he got his forms of words from, it becomes quite an elaborate inquiry, because he was an eclectic, and he picked up a good phrase from here and another good phrase from there, and he welded it all together in verbal forms which have just got tremendous weight and resonance and spiritual power.

They still have. And so here we are, nearly 500 years after Cranmer, rejoicing in the heritage that we received from him. Yeah, right? How does she know?

How does she know? Well, she thinks that that may be a dangerous thing. Okay, she's looking at the situation from the outside, right? Now, I'm sorry, I'm not trying to put you or her on the spot, because when I was very young, before I became a real Christian, I used to think that the constant use of the prayer book was distinctly, how can I say, dull boring to the mind and the heart.

[67 : 05] That was because I didn't understand what was going on. When you're alive to God, I think this has been the testimony of all sorts of Anglicans down this four and a half centuries more, you find again and again that the prayer book forms of words are crystallizing before the mind just what your heart wants to say to God.

And the more you use the prayer book, the more you appreciate it. This is as a help now to private prayer. And if you're using the prayer book that way, well, you don't find that on Sunday when you're in the congregation.

It's just a dull routine. Even if some clergy are goof enough, and I'm afraid some are, to read it as if it was the fat stock prices or the weather forecast or something, you know, not something to get excited about.

Actually, it's as exciting as anything in Shakespeare, and when we read it, when we clergy take services, we ought to try and get that across.

But no, worshippers don't, worshippers who've learned to appreciate the spiritual depth and strength of the prayer book, they don't have this experience of boredom.

[68 : 25] They have the opposite experience, which can be paralleled from what happens in a good marriage. The relationship gets richer, even though again and again you're saying the same thing to each other.

the opposite I know for the freedom of genuinely respect access to the metre where don't anything m fall to the honors have been m Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.