

Life Shaped by Worship

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[0 : 0 0] Please join me in Psalm chapter number 97. We skipped over Psalm 97 to be in Psalm 98 during Christmas. That's the chapter that we get joy to the world from.

Tonight as we were singing together, an expression caught my attention that we've sung before and that I hadn't quite noticed before. It says, And we will stand amazed in His presence forever that He has made us His own.

Am I saying this correctly? Here we go. I wrote it down. We will forever be amazed you have made us your own. And that's a pretty strong statement, isn't it? That we will forever be amazed and stand in worship of God.

Because forever is a long time. There's things that you can be amazed by, but after a while we get used to it. There's some silly things my kids do that used to amaze me. I'm like, no, that makes sense now. That is an adequate amount of ketchup for your chicken nuggets.

I get it. No longer amazed anymore. But the God of heaven, that we could stand amazed in His presence forever.

[1 : 1 1] And that should tell us something about Him, right? About how incredible that the Lord is. And I know a song is not a Bible verse, but that song most certainly comes from the truth of God's Word, that we will spend eternity worshipping the Lord.

And we need to. If you've never been down to Atlanta with Greg, you should do that. You'll see the city differently. You'll ride in a car differently. You'll eat good, all right? He knows where all the eating places are down there.

But you'll also see brokenness, as that's how he goes down there with an eyes for a love for the city. And as we went down there this week, and I recently read a quote, made me think about what many of you experienced.

But it says, That's what somebody said working in the inner city, is that they're exposed to brokenness so much that they have to expose their hearts and minds to beauty.

I think you could fill in the blank with your life and say, Because I'm exposed to so much brokenness in, and you could say maybe in my extended family, I'm exposed to so much brokenness at the job I have, or whatever I'm doing, that you see brokenness, and you need to be exposed to our hearts and mind need to expose the beauty of Christ.

[2 : 3 5] And that's where worship comes in. I love that. I love our WANTA program. I also always love it when our kids are in here. It makes it for a challenge. We have kids with all this energy and creativity, and all the great advantages of youth.

And then we have some older theologians in here that just really love talking about the Bible. And so try to speak to both of them. So I'm going to try to talk to you, Kyle, tonight, because you're just riding that perfect crossroads. All right?

If I can keep Kyle's attention, I'm going to get both groups of those people there, the theologian that loves life as we all should. But worship is something for the youngest in here to the oldest, that it's nothing you're going to outgrow, not even in eternity.

At no point you're going to say, I know so much about God that I'm now bored with Him. Most certainly not. And so let's look at how worship can shape your life. That could be the title of many psalms, but it's the title for the night psalm, A Life Shaped by Worship.

They don't normally put the things on the screen so I can say what I want. Now I've got to read my notes here. All right? I'll say it like that. A Life Shaped by Worship. So a life of worship requires growing and reflecting in our knowledge of God.

[3 : 45] Simply, our greatest need in worship is to know God better. Our greatest need in worship is to know God. If you struggle in a life of worship, it's because you're not exposing yourself to greater information about God.

I'm going to read to you now Psalm 97. As I do, listen to it to behold the glory of God, to know Him better, to expose your heart and mind to the greatness of God.

After doing that, later on, Holy Spirit may work in your life. You may bring out your Stephen Covey Day Planner actionable steps. You may do all those things that you want to do.

But right now, it's not about doing something, but it's about beholding our God. Let me read to you Psalm 97. The Lord reigneth. Let the earth rejoice. Let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

Clouds and darkness are round about Him. Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne. A fire goeth before Him. Burneth up His enemies round about.

[4 : 47] His lightnings enlightened the world. The earth saw and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory.

Confound to be all they that serve graven images, and that boast themselves of idols. Worship Him, all ye gods. Zion heard and was glad. And the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord.

For Thou, Lord, art high above all the earth. Thou art exalted above all gods. Yea, that love the Lord hate evil. He preserveth the souls of His saints. He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, yea, righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness. Heavenly Father, I thank You for an opportunity to own the Word of God, to be able to read it, to know that it's perfect and sufficient, and to know, Lord, that through it, I can know and behold Your wonderful glory, and Your majesty, and to know more about You.

Lord, I thank You that You have made Yourself known to us. Lord, I pray that our hearts would respond and worship to You, and that our life of worship would truly shape our lives.

[6 : 06] In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. So worship is foundational to our Christian lives. Many of you in here that have disciples for many years, and certainly our missionaries that have served on the field, the more time that you spend in God's Word studying it, and the more time that you spend with people and dealing with some of the problems that they have, the more you see that it's worth your time to just speak about the greatness and the wonder of God.

Because the Bible gives so much attention to it. Large portions of our Bible, you will read it and you'll say, that didn't seem to have anything to do about me, right? That didn't seem to have anything about what's going on.

And it was just simply telling you that we worship an incredible God. And that is very relevant to your life. And then you talk with people, and their lives are hurting, and it's so broken, and their lives are so focused in, you know, bitterness will be so focused in on one area of life, or hurting somebody's living in something in the past, and their lives are just so focused on the ugliest parts of their life and in this world, and it's just destroying them because they can't take their eyes off of it, right?

And they need to behold something. And so talking about the greatness of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31, whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.

So kids in here, if you'll look at this verse right here, and you say, where does worship, where does thinking about God, and being amazed about God, where is this supposed to fit into my calendar?

[7 : 43] Not Sunday morning at 10:30, not just the one on Thursday, but in every aspect of your life. Tonight we will behold God's glory, and we'll talk about Him, but on Tuesday at 1 o'clock, when Kyle takes me to eat chicken wings, we can talk about the things of the Lord.

He was already scheduled to do that, all right, people? I didn't force him into that, all right? And so whatever it is that we are doing, we have the opportunity to do it as unto the Lord, as in a Christian way.

And so what we do for God's glory and how we respond to what we learn about God, it is worship. Learning about His glory and then properly responding to it.

It's acknowledging God's presence, expressing our love and devotion to Him, and submitting our lives to His Word. Expressing our love, acknowledging His presence, being devoted to Him, and then submitting our lives to His Word.

Even when it can be difficult, you know, making a decision to do something that you know is right, even though it's difficult for you, that's worship. Because it is saying, I recognize that you and your values and your priorities in my life are greater than mine.

[8 : 55] So the question would be, why would we ever struggle with that? Like, how could we even ever struggle with worship? And then the answer to that is we don't struggle with worship. It's not a problem for us to worship.

We only struggle with direction when it comes to worship. You don't really have to tell yourself the worship. That's how you are built. You're constantly worshipping. You're just going around. I love spending time with my niece, Emily, here, all right?

Because she just really enjoys stuff. We're having once today, and about five or six times, she said, my dad would really like this. Then she said, so-and-so would really like this.

And she just kept saying, I bet, like, she wanted to go and get everybody that she ever knew to try the thing that she was eating because she enjoyed it, right? And it's very obvious with Emily, but we're always looking for something to amaze us.

We're always looking for something to stand in front of and say, well, that's amazing. And so some of us will do it. Hopefully, in here, we would be directed towards God and stand amazed. Some of us may stand in a mirror and look at ourselves and be self-centered and say, man, you are just one good-looking dude, all right?

[10 : 01] I know this is something Sam Wilson must struggle with, all right? I don't know how he ever comes to church, all right? And he just looks there and people that could do that, but we're always doing that.

But what's essential to our worship and knowing is knowing his character and his attributes, his acts, his powers, his promises, his plan of redemption and rescue, his commandments, and his will.

And where would you find all those wonderful things? We have a book right here full of that. And then you have a friend that is full of that book, you know, that they could talk to you about it and they could remind you of it.

Romans 12:1 says, because they, that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened.

So they, when they, they knew God, but they glorified him. And then it says, neither were thankful. Remember that because that's going to be a major theme at the end of the psalm, this area of thankfulness, but they became vain in their imaginations.

[11 : 03] They perverted what should have been the worship of God. You know, there in Romans 1 that they're going to take the worship of what should have been towards the creator and they're going to take it down to its creation.

But it's saying that we're worshiping, but it's where's it going to be directed? And they weren't thankful and they didn't glorify God and they perverted their worship. When truth is rejected, in time, the ability to recognize and receive truth is impaired.

When somebody gives you the truth about God and you don't receive it and graft it into your life, and recognize the greatness of God, over time, your ability to receive truth is going to be impaired.

I wish parents that I could just really get that just written upon my heart. Because what we're having here is that if we have kids that are introduced and exposed to the truth of God's word, but they don't worship the God of His word, they're getting exposed to truth, and then when they get older and they're not in church and they're not worshiping God and they're not interested in all that, and we go and knock on their door, we meet them and they're a co-worker and you see them and you say something to them and you say, let me tell you an incredible truth about God's word.

Their heart now can't receive it because it's been hardened by truth because they heard it, but they didn't receive it as worship. So we must teach our kids, yes, the word of God, but we've got to make sure that they receive it and they worship God, that when they hear about God that they're responding to it, that they're not just hearing it, but they're also responding.

[12 : 38] So this psalm is divided up in the two parts. One is a wonderful description of God as it's revealed Himself to us in His word. I say that it's a wonderful description because I know that it is, it's written from God, but I will just admit to you as a person who would love to be a better student of the Bible that sometimes when I hear these descriptions of God, they just don't connect with me because His descriptions are just so much more grand than the way that I would describe anything else.

And so when hearing them, we really have to slow down and think, what is this? Because there's no comparison to it. Things are more easily understood for us when I say, oh, that's like this.

But remember with God there is no, and there is like this. He is God. He's high above all things. So the first six verses are just a description about who God is or His power.

And the last seven through 12 are the ramifications of this knowledge upon our lives as believers and unbelievers. So verses four through six start off with, the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice.

This here is a response to what we were told to do in Psalm 96:10 that we looked at earlier that says, say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth, the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved.

[13 : 54] He shall judge the people righteously. And here three Psalms very quick together start off with, the Lord reigneth, which is what we were told to do, to say that he reigns.

So where is it that he reigns? Verse one says, let the multitude of isles be glad. I don't see where Thatcher is at in here, but Thatcher would often, we kind of have a joke with him, where's my son in here, right?

Help me out. That's Noah, not my son, kind of looks like him. Back there, okay. Thatcher, well we joke with Thatcher here lately about how he'll often, you'll be telling him something, he'll say, well actually, all right, he loves to add a well actually, okay.

And so if, I don't know if this is a well actually moment, Thatcher, you can help me later. But when you think about the isles or the islands of the world, you could say, well actually, everything's an island, if you think about it, right?

Everything's an island. We have little islands and we have big islands but we all have islands because that's the only option on a planet that is two-thirds water. And so when it says that the Lord reigneth, let the multitude of isles be glad, it is his drawing a vivid picture to saying everywhere, everywhere they're at, from sea to shining sea, from coastline to here, wherever you land, it is on an island in this world, it's an isle of this world, that all the people of the Lord recognize that he reigns.

[15 : 16] I could have told Cason the day before he got on the plane, I could have said, Cason, go to Ecuador and let them know that he reigns. Let them know. They need to know that. That would be an appropriate way to say the commission that he is living out.

Psalms 146.10 says, The Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations, praise ye the Lord. So all isles of the sea, all of the world, and there is no timeline upon it.

Every generation, the one before us and the one coming after us, that he reigns. And then not only that, but we are going to be rejoicing about this for all eternity. Revelation 19.6, And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and the voice of many waters and the voice of mighty thundering saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

If you are a kid taking notes tonight on a colored piece of paper, I want you to know that Alleluia means God be praised. It's a good thing to say. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. It's how we mostly say it now, but we're saying, God be praised. Then we get to a description of our God. Clouds of darkness round about him, righteous judgment are the habitation of his throne.

[16 : 25] A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. As we read this, we could consider what the original readers would have read when they would have sung these psalms.

Israel gathered before the God at the foot of Mount Sinai, where God gave the people the Ten Commandments. It's the same picture of thunder and lightning and a thick cloud upon the mount and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud.

Or Luke chapter number 9, early in the chapter, as we saw when on the Mount of Transfiguration, the cloud that would come over them and say, this is my son, hear him and obey.

And so this is the description of God that is being given. That he is above all. And when we see the glory of God, how should we respond? Verse 6, Psalm 97, the heavens declare his righteousness and all the people see his glory.

It's declaring of his righteousness as we will behold his glory. So some people will respond in worship, but others are going to respond in worship to ourselves. Trusting in idols, setting our hopes on something other than God, and that will bring shame.

[17 : 34] So some people will be exposed to the glory of God, and verse number 7 says, confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols. Worship him, all ye gods.

In all of history, and all of right now, and among all of us in the world today, some people are going to behold the glory of God as revealed to them in creation, as revealed to them in what they hear, but they're not going to worship the God of heaven.

They're going to pervert the worship, and they're going to direct it to something else, and that something else is ultimately going to be the worship of themselves. And I'm very grateful to have gone to India on a few occasions.

I would love to go to Israel because you get to see the Bible laid out. I would love to go to the Caribbean because it's the Caribbean, right? All right. But I love going to India because in India, you get to see the heart of man turned inside out.

The things that we have hidden in our idolatry in America and commercialized that may look differently, they say, no, if you really want to have money more than anything, go over there and worship in that building, and that will get you what you want.

[18 : 46] So you decide what you want and what you deserve in this world. Then you go pick the God to pray to. So it's just ultimately a reflection of the desires that you would have. And that's what some people will do.

Kids, you have a question in here. What do you like better, cats or dogs? All right. Please circle dog at this time on your little coloring handout. That's the appropriate answer. Sherry P., I hope you're watching online.

That is for you. But I've talked about the book before, Cat and Dog Theology, where it says, a dog says, you pet me, you feed me, you shelter me, you love me, you must be God. And a cat says, you pet me, you feed me, you shelter me, you love me, I must be God.

Some people will receive the glory of God and all the goodness upon their lives and they'll say, I don't need to be worshipping God who's been so good to me. I must really be something. Because if I really wasn't something, how would I have accumulated all the things that I have?

How would I live in the house that I do and drive the car that I do? I must really be something in this place. A more sophisticated way of saying this is, the essence of sin is that man seeks his own in everything, even God.

[19 : 50] And in religion and everything, man seeks his own in everything, even in God and religion. We are just self-centered in our worship and so we'll be holding his glory, we don't worship him. And the Bible tells us that nothing should be equal to or close to God in our affections of our hearts.

No graven images, no other gods like him. We must be careful to guard our own hearts from idols and worship him. Psalm 95, 3, for the Lord is a great God and a great king above all gods.

And so here's our response in verse 6, O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our maker. There's a great value in learning and teaching our kids the Romans road and showing them you could turn to this verse and from that verse you could go to another one.

You know what would be another great verse that you could take to somebody? Psalm 95, verse 6, which is, O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our maker.

That is a great way to explain the gospel to somebody and to tell them because someday every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. Why? Because he is the Lord and he reigns and he will always reign and you could tell them that.

[20 : 57] A demonstration of a proper response here. Three different ways. So I've shown you how the unbeliever responds but now we get to see how we respond. The true worshippers, we worship him in spirit and truth, worship him the true God of heaven.

Verse 8 and 9, Zion heard and was glad and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O Lord. We will be glad and rejoice.

Our lives should be shaped into people that are glad and rejoicing because we are exposing our heart and mind to the God of heaven and we're worshipping him and that is changing us from day to day.

Verse 9 says, For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth, thou art exalted far above all gods. And so we rejoice at his judgments.

We rejoice at what he says is true. We rejoice in that we know them and we trust those things. He says he's coming back. We rejoice at that. He says this is right and this is wrong. We rejoice at that.

[21 : 58] He says no man can know the Father unless he knows him by me. We rejoice in that. He says do this and do that. We rejoice in his judgments in our lives. We rejoice in the precepts of his word and we are glad about these things.

And hearing this we rejoice because he reigns and let the earth rejoice. And so not only do we rejoice but we have a message of good news where we can let other people know that they should rejoice as well.

And so not all Psalms start off with rejoicing do they? We have many that we've looked at. Psalm 13, Psalms of Lament. Psalm 13 tells us, How long wilt thou forget me O Lord forever?

How long wilt thou hide my face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul? Have sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall my enemy be exalted? Consider and hear me.

O Lord my God lighten mine eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death. Lest my enemy say I have prevailed against him. Then it goes and says and those that trouble me will me rejoice when I am moved.

[22 : 59] Many Psalms talk about other people rejoicing in evil things but there's often times most times in a Psalm of Lament a shift that will happen like in this Psalm verse 13 chapter 13 verse 5 it says But I have trusted in thy mercy my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation I will sing unto the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me.

And so there can be this shift where we trust the Lord that my enemy may be rejoicing in some wicked thing but I can rejoice in the midst of this problem even though my enemy thinks that he's winning because I can trust in him.

If our desire is to have our worship that honors God and riches and encourages and nourishes our soul our greatest need is to stop focusing on ourselves and to remember God and to trust him.

Living miserable living just caught up in stuff not rejoicing and not being glad it's just because you've been looking at life and too small of an area not focused upon the greatness of him.

So first rejoice and be glad that I'll shape our lives. A second thing that I'll be true of people worshiping the Lord is that we would hate evil. Yea that love the Lord we hate evil he preserves the soul.

[24 : 16] Unfortunately many of us parents don't hear maybe on a long road trip what it's like for our kids to have too much medium to enjoy something too much. You know they're riding along and they don't want to stop.

One time we were at Sand Mountain Camp where Cooper gave a great go there no internet no phones and kids have fun. That was camp one summary right for Sand Mountain.

Well one time Thatcher and I were there and we were listening to a book together and I listened to a book and I fell asleep like immediately alright and so I put the earbud in I gave him the other earbud and we were listening to it.

Well I wake up like three in the morning and Thatcher sitting straight up in bed alright he's got the earbud in and he hasn't fallen asleep at all and he would never fall asleep to that and that's a funny story about that but so many times and parents you can relate in here is that what happens is the kid gets exposed to something the device and then when you you go over there with a stick and knock them off of it because they're like held on to it like it's 220 electricity right because that's going into their minds too quickly is they don't now have the ability to enjoy any of the other things in life that they were supposed to right that they were like don't want to ride that bicycle anymore or use that skateboard anymore or play on the chalk on the sidewalk anymore because they've been beholding something that is so strong and it caused them to lose an interest in the other things well we should have a hatred for the things of this world because it doesn't help because it hurts us in our desire to taste and see that the Lord is good it hurts our relationship with beholding Him it hurts us when we go to the Word and now we have to spend the time that we could have spent just connecting and learning we're so far removed from it so when we understand truly who God is we love God and we hate evil a true knowledge of God will stir us up to pursue holiness if we are very much involved in worship then we will hate evil we will love the Lord and that's one of the most frustrating things with a very maybe contemporary modern day form of worship is that there seems to be people that say they're all about leading worship but many times they don't have a love for holiness and they should be very much connected right that we should be if you're going to say that you love worship and leading people in worship then you ought to love the things of God and that's why we enjoy music here so much at our churches because we just know people they don't just love music but they love the Lord which causes them to hate evil one of the ways we are preserved from evil is by our affections being given to God ye that love the Lord hate evil and gladness for the upright in your heart that's just the gladness that is brought in your heart and then lastly here and briefly giving thanks rejoice in the Lord verse 12 you're righteous and give thanks to the remembrance of his holiness

I wanted to race to this point and spend the majority of time here because I think it's the point where I know I have the greatest need it's the clearest indicator of a life of worship it's also the clearest indicator that my worship is not where it should be is this area of thankfulness when we understand truly who God is we will rejoice and we will give thanks at every remembrance of his name thankfulness is very powerful met with the deacons this week we looked at Genesis 39 just very briefly but I showed them as we were talking about how thankfulness is not just a nice Christian character trait but it is a sin conquering force a lust is a form of coveting coveting is a form of lack of gratitude so when Joseph is tempted by Potiphar's wife what does he say he says I refuse because my master what if not what in me in the house and he committed all this before me there is none greater in this house than I neither has he kept me back anything from me but them because thou art his wife how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God thankfulness protected

[28 : 13] Joseph and it protected his family because he had a gratitude he says God no I can't covet and lust and act upon my lustful desires because I'm so filled with gratitude for what this man has done to let me be in his home I don't deserve to be in here and why would I take more from him thankfulness will protect you which means that to live a life that isn't protected is a life that's going to cause you to go worship other things and to introduce sin into your life when Paul describes what it means to be governed by the peace of God in his life he doesn't talk about an absence of problems he doesn't talk about an amount of hours served down at the church he doesn't talk about a list of theological classes that are completed nor does he talk about the amount of money that's given but he points to thankfulness Colossians 3 15 what does living in the will of God look like that isn't language that is as common among our teenagers as it was among me when I was a teenager

I believe we've helped our young people see that living in the will of God is living according to God's will as outlined in God's word but if you want to know what the will of God is he tells us in everything give thanks why for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you you can't say you want to know what the will of God is if you won't just read it right here you couldn't put it any more clearly for you and then lastly what does a life of purity look like I mean what is the opposite of purity if you or the what's the opposite of impurity if you're saying I want to live a clean life and a pure life but fornication and all uncleanness or uncovetousness let it be once name let it not be once named among you as become a saint neither foolishness nor foolish talking nor jesting which are not convenient which is not appropriate for you but rather giving of thanks that thankfulness is shown as the contrast to an impure life thankfulness is shown as the contrast to living out your lust thankfulness is shown as the will of God so is worship of the God of heaven shaping your life well here's an indicator are you very thankful to the God of heaven and if you are being worshipful then you're going to be thankful so our worship will be characterized by joy and humble thanksgiving the New Testament teaches the same response to God in worship which is we will be glad and rejoice we will hate evil we will give thanks

I'm going to read Philippians chapter 4 as brother Chris will make his way up here and we will sing a song together to leave the night could we sing that song that I quoted earlier that said man I can't remember song lyrics I know about 10 words to every song that's ever been written alright but it says that we will stand amazed and worship him forever we will end the night singing that song that isn't it is it do you know what I'm talking about Chris Kristen alright good enough alright that's what we'll end with singing the night but before we do I want to read to you from the New Testament Philippians chapter number 4 and I want us to be looking at how our lives ought to be shaped from worship and so it says this rejoice in the Lord always that is strong always alright always alright so when at any time you should be rejoicing in the Lord because as a worshiper you can do that and again I say rejoice as if the other one wasn't strong enough alright let me say it one more time and then let your moderation that would be the gentleness that would be the character of your life that would be your manner of life let all men know the Lord is at hand and so let your life have this

Christ like characteristic about it which is only possible if you hate evil and love the things of God be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God so we see it our rejoicing the manner of our life and this supplication this thanksgiving that is happening and then look at the great reward that is allowing your life to be shaped by worship and the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus this has probably always been true but I've not lived in any other era so I only know this one but I need something to keep my heart and mind in peace because this world doesn't do a very good job at it it seems to want to pull all those things apart but living a life shaped by worship that's giving thanks to the Lord hating evil and being thankful there's a great reward to it because it allows me in this craziness and brokenness to behold something wonderful and find a wonderful place to live and so I ask you tonight are you allowing worship to shape your life and if you're not you need to allow worship to be a more central part of your life where you spend time beholding his glory let's stand together time to break ■■■ Jones