

The Worship of God

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[0:00] Good morning. My name is Jay, for those of you who have never met before. And as James briefly shared, I'm up here today to share some of my reflections from James' sermon last week.

Of course, if you're like me, I only remember like 5%, sorry James, it's not you, it's me, of what he shares. So I'll provide a really quick recap of what he shared on and my reflections on it. So James talked about, he went to the book of Hebrews 10, specifically verses 19 through 25. And the main idea of this passage was, in this walk and this journey towards Christ, we cannot do it alone. We have to walk in community. And of course, he stresses and reiterates his importance that this is not a solitary journey.

We cannot do it ourselves. And the passage, though, it begins with the word therefore. And of course, the word therefore means as a result of, as a consequence of something, right? So what is the reason why we gather together as a community? Does anybody remember?

However, this was the point of the sermon. Okay, I'll save you some effort. So the point of the sermon was, it's actually Jesus and what he did for us and his blood.

[1:07] And therefore, we now gather together to celebrate him, right? So in the Old Testament, it talks about how the people of God, they had to have a priest daily offering sacrifices to be made right with God, right?

That's why they gathered. But he talks about, in Hebrews 10, the author of Hebrews 10 talks about, now there is one man, Jesus, who was the ultimate sacrifice. So we don't need to bring bulls and goats anymore and offer them as sacrifices as a temporary cover of our sins.

Jesus came, and now with his death, we're fully covered. And now, therefore, because he did that, let us gather together. Let us stir up one another in love and in good works.

Encourage one another and not neglect to meet one another. So that is the reason. So the logic flows, right? Jesus did this. Now we gather to do this. And then James drops the question.

But why are you here today? Why have you come to church? Why have you gathered? Are you here because you understand what Jesus did on the cross for you? Or are you here to bring your own bulls and goats and offer them as a sacrifice to God?

[2:09] And, of course, he gave some suggestions. He said, some of us are here for a girl or a boy. Or they're here because it's just a daily habit, a weekly routine.

Just something that we do, right? We don't put much thought to it. And then James asked the next follow-up question, who here is actually here for God? And I asked that question again today. Who here is actually here for God?

Okay. A lot more this time. Last time it was just Chris, actually. It was just Chris. And then James says, because we're Asian and we don't like to be picked on. But as James asked that question, it made me reflect a little bit deeper.

Am I here today because of Christ? Am I here to celebrate him? Am I here because I understand what he did for me on the cross? And as I started reflecting on that a little bit more, my real answers were no.

I don't think I'm always here to worship God. Sometimes I'm here because maybe some of you can relate. I've had a terrible week. I've committed some sins. And, okay, I need to be a good Christian. And I need to go to church.

[3:05] That's what I do. I need to, I'm going to bring my own bulls. I'm going to bring my own goats. I'm going to offer to God at church, at this service. Say, God, I'm sorry. Make me right. But on the flip side, sometimes I'm on fire for God.

I'm like, Lord, I love you. I want to do more for you. And I come to church and I keep, I fall into this lie of if I do more, then God will bless me more. But that's not the point of Hebrews 10. Hebrews 10 is saying, don't gather because of what you can do. We gather because of what Christ did for us on the cross. So those were my two reflections. Okay. Feeling terrible for my sins or when I'm on spiritual high, believing into this lie that if I do more, God will give me more favor. But that's not the gospel. This book, this Bible that we read is not a list of things that we need to do to be made right with God. It is not a list of bulls and goats that we have to sacrifice on a daily basis to be made right with God.

This story is a story of a man, of a God who stepped down from his heavenly throne and he laid his life on the cross for us so that in this love we can be saved. It's about him. It's not about us.

[4:07] And to kind of wrap up this thought, I've been listening to a lot of podcasts recently. And, you know, in John 3, when Jesus talks to Nicodemus, he talks about this idea of being born again. Those who have not been born again cannot see or enter the kingdom of God.

And this concept of being born again is really strange. So I put some, as I continue to listen on, Keller explains it like this. When a baby is born, the baby plays no part or doesn't participate in the birth itself.

It's not like the baby goes, oh, I want to be born today. You know, it's, oh, the mother, the mother bears a responsibility. The mother risks her life, potentially risks her life to bring the baby into the world, right? While the mother potentially risks her life to bring the baby into the world, Jesus actually gives his life so that we can be born again.

And that moved my heart a lot, right? So there is nothing that I can bring to the table. When I come to church, there are no bulls or goats. There's no amount of bulls and goats that I can bring that can make me right with God.

It's what he did. It's not about me. I'm not here for myself. I'm here to worship God. So when we gather together as a community, we gather here because we're understanding and we just want to rejoice in what he did for us.

[5:15] It's not because we want to be made right with him. We're just getting together as a community and we're saying, hey, we all agree what he did for us on the cross. Guys, let's celebrate. Let's worship together. This is the point.

And those are my reflections for this past week. And now I'll pass on the time to Pastor Gabes who will share on worship specifically. Thank you, Jay.

Yeah, thanks, Jay, for sharing how God spoke to you through the word. And yeah, as Jay was saying, the past few weeks we've been talking about the church and specifically last week that the church gathers because of one another, because of what Jesus has done for us.

We want to love one another, encourage one another. And let's say you're bought into that. You say, I need God's people. I need one another. I want to worship God together with one another. And that's why he showed up here this Sunday. Let's say that's true. So what happens? You wake up in the morning. You grab a coffee. And you come here. And then we pray. We sing a few songs.

[6:21] Someone comes up, reads a few announcements. We read the mission statement. We collect offering. We stand and read from a book. And then someone comes up. Today that's me. And speaks for half an hour to an hour.

Today half an hour. Then we pray and we sing some more. And then afterwards we all go off. We scatter. Some people buy lunch. We go up to the 14th floor, eat lunch together. Okay? That's what we do every week.

And if we're honest sometimes, it can feel routine. Repetitive. Rinse and repeat. Some people, tongue in cheek, will describe the modern church like this. As a concert followed by a TED talk. A concert and a TED talk. Is that all there is to church? We gather week after week after week. And so I think it's worth some time to stop and think, Why?

Why do we do what we do? If we're going to keep meeting every Sunday, It's worth spending one week asking, Why? Why are we doing what we're doing? Okay? And if you're new here, Maybe you're already wondering, Why do Christians like their karaoke so much?

[7:25] Why are they singing so many songs? And why do they like listening to a guy speak so long? Why do they like their lectures? We're going to try to answer these questions today. And as Jay mentioned, There's a key thread tying together everything that we do on a Sunday morning.

And that is worship. Celebration of all that God has done for us in Christ. We are here. We're gathered here today to worship. And that's why our gathering is often called a worship service. Because we're here to worship God. That is the main reason. And remember, we need one another. We could worship God anywhere. And actually, we are to worship God with our whole lives.

But the reason that we gather to worship God, The reason that we come here together, Is because we are worshiping, We want to worship God with one another.

There's something about gathering together and doing it with one another, That fuels our worship. And that's the point of why we come here on a Sunday. And to see that, We'll turn to Colossians chapter 3.

[8:28] Open up your Bibles, if you have one with me, To Colossians chapter 3. I'll invite Felicia up to read for us. We're going to read from verse 12, But we'll focus on verses 16 to 17 today.

So let's stand together as an act of worship, As we read the word of God together. Colossians chapter 3, verses 12 to 17. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, Holy and beloved, Compassionate hearts, Kindness, Humility, Meekness, And patience, Bearing with one another, And, if one has a complaint against another, Forgiving each other, As the Lord has forgiven you, So you also must forgive.

And above all these, Put on love, Which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, To which indeed you are called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, Teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, With thankfulness in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, In word or deed, Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, Giving thanks to God the Father through him. This is the word of God.

[9:39] Please take a seat. Thank you, Felicia. So again, When we come together on a Sunday, The reason you're here, The key reason, Is to worship God with one another.

Now what does it mean to worship? Worship is a term that we throw around all the time, At the church. We talk about worship. But even if you're new to church, Even if it's your first time here today at church, I think you know all about worship.

You already know all about worship. Because in the context of, For example, Celebrities and musicians, We say that fans, They worship their idols. Some people, Not me of course, Worship Taylor Swift.

They love her. In Hong Kong, There's grown married women, Who worship Gung To. They love him. Others worship athletes like LeBron, Ronaldo. Some fans collect the sweaty jerseys, That Ronaldo wore in games.

There are actually people, That are willing to pay millions of dollars, For some dude's dirty laundry. That's worship. To worship is to ascribe worth. That's where the term worship comes from.

[10:44] Worth-ship. Worship is to consider someone worthy, As valuable, As precious. And when we worship on the inside in our hearts, When we value something in our hearts, It always shows up outside in action.

Taylor Swift fans memorize all her lyrics, Like scripture. That's worship. Last year, There were thousands of Gung To fans, Gathered in Causeway Bay, To celebrate this guy's birthday.

And get this, Some even flew in from America, Just for this event. And he didn't even show up to it. Everybody knows how to worship. And so how much more, Should we the church worship?

If the spirit really lives enough, If Jesus really did die for us, How much more should we worship?

And that's what Paul writes about, In Colossians chapter 3. He's addressing the church. Verse 14, He says, There are people marked by love for one another.

In verse 15, They're called together in one body. And to that united body, The church, He tells them, Be thankful. Have thankfulness in your hearts to God. We are to overflow with thankfulness, In our hearts to God always.

[11:53] But especially, When we gather together. We gather together in worship. Because we the church, We're God's people. We're God's chosen ones, Holy and beloved. That's what it says in verse 12.

God shows his love for us, In that while we are still sinners, Christ died for us. We've been made alive together with Christ, And his spirit is within us. So when we, God's people, Come together in one body, We worship.

It's the only fitting response. We ought to declare that God is worthy. That God is good. He's more precious and valuable Than anything else in this world. And when that's the deepest cry of our hearts, That love doesn't stay inside.

It has to overflow. It expresses itself in songs, Hymns, Spiritual songs, In preaching, In prayer, In giving, In loving one another. That's our worship.

And so God wants us to worship together. But how do we do that? How does God say we are to worship him? What should our worship look like? Now for some of you, The way that we worship here at the gathering, That's all you know.

[12 : 53] But for others, I recognize that some of you come from many different traditions, With many different styles and forms of worship. There's some people, That come from house churches, With eight people.

Others of you, Come from mega churches, With eight satellite campuses. Some love to sing rich doctrine, In city of light songs, Like, Yet not I, But through Christ in me.

There's others that would rather repeat, Worthy years in your name, Jesus. Ten times. Some of us feel awkward, Raising our hands in worship. Others are used to dancing, Clapping, Cheering.

That's what you're used to. Some prefer consistent, Spirit-filled liturgy, Week after week. Others crave unexpected, Spirit-led spontaneity. Some are used to taking communion weekly.

Others, Just a few times a year. Some people prefer to just listen quietly, When someone's talking, Like in Chinese culture. Others like the dynamic call and response, Of African-American preaching.

[13 : 52] We all have different styles, Traditions, Preferences. And when we come together, With all these different preferences, Naturally, We won't hit everyone's top choices. And on one hand, I want to know what you like.

I want to know your preferences. I want to hear you out, And get your feedback. But on the other hand, If there's something that's not your top choice, That's totally fine too. Because we're not here to worship you.

We're here to worship God. We worship God, Not our own preferences. And ultimately, What matters is not just what we like, But what he likes. What is pleasing to him. Are we worshipping the way, That God wants us to worship?

And actually, When we look in his word, When he tells us, How we are to worship him, In his word, He gives us a lot of flexibility. There's a lot of styles, And forms of worship, That are pleasing to him, And fit according to his word.

And there's also what's described, And what's prescribed. Some things though, Are clear in his word. That God is the center of worship. God is the one who is worthy, Not us.

[14 : 57] And also, He wants us to count one another, Others more significantly than ourselves. To humble ourselves, As Ephesians 5 says, To be filled with the spirit, Addressing one another in psalms, Hymns, Spiritual songs, And submitting to one another, Out of reverence for Christ.

As we do that, That is also our worship. I think there's something beautiful, With people coming together, With lots of different preferences, Cultures, Styles, And worshipping God, In a variety of ways.

That's a picture of, The scene in Revelation, When people from every tribe, Nation and tongue, Gather before God, In worship. So when we think about worship, Let's not just ask, What do I like? What do I prefer? What does the Bible say? And what is best for building up the body? What leads to edifying the church? And now today, Looking at Colossians, We'll focus on two major elements, Of our worship service, On things that God, Instructs us to worship in, Reading the word, Singing in worship, To be worshipping in the word, And also, Worshipping through song, And we'll see, What God says about worship, Recognizing that, He actually gives us, A pretty long leash, He gives us a wide, He gives us a long leash, To worship with different styles, And forms, And, Also note today, I'll leave out two, Very important elements, In worship, We just won't cover that today, They're important, But we'll just leave out, Prayer and communion, And prayer is important, In Colossians 4, Chapter 2, Just a few verses down, Paul tells the church, Continue steadfastly in prayer, Prayer is worship, Please join us at 1030, To pray together, We sometimes call it, Pre-service prayer, But also, I think, Praying together, 1030 is part of our worship,

And actually also, From 11 to 1230, Also, And so, Yeah, But today, We won't focus on prayer, We'll talk a lot about singing, And singing is in a way, Prayer, Just set to music, As Augustine said, He who sings, Prays twice, And there's more to prayer, Than that, But just know that prayer, Is part of our worship, And another way, That we worship, Is through the Lord's Supper, When we partake in

communion, When we drink the cup, Eat the bread, That is a declaration of the gospel, That Christ was broken, And bled for our sins, And that he will come again in glory, But, To do communion justice, We'll need to talk about it another week, Communion though, Is part of our worship, But for today, We'll focus on the word, And on song, The concert, And the TED talk, As some would say, Look with me at Colossians, Chapter 3, Verse 16, God says, Let the word of Christ, [17 : 37] Dwell in you richly, And some people have observed, When reading this, God isn't saying, Let the word of Christ, Visit you occasionally, It's saying, Let the word of Christ, Dwell in you richly, Not sometimes, Let the word of Christ, Dwell in you, That's, So that the word, Lives with us, Makes its home, In our hearts, So that we love, The word of Christ, And overflow, With the word of Christ, And when we worship, It is saturated, With the word of Christ, And there's a few, Ways that we worship, In the word, First, Most simply, But arguably, Most important, Is we read the word, As Felicia, Just did together with us, And James actually, Before he led us, In musical worship, In our worship, We read the scriptures, Because that's what, Timothy chapter 4, Verse 13 says, It says, Devote yourself, To the public reading, Of scripture, That's what Paul tells Timothy, Devote yourself, To the public reading, Of scripture, We saw in Acts 2, Also two weeks ago, The early church, Was devoted to the apostles teaching, And,

Here we see, A clear command, In Timothy, Devote yourself, To the public reading, Of scripture, So as we worship, We devote ourselves, To reading, Reading scripture, And that's fitting, Because Psalm 19 says, The law of the Lord, Is more precious than gold, Sweeter than honey, Isaiah 55, That God's word, Does not return empty, But accomplishes all its purposes, And God doesn't just speak, When a pastor speaks, For example, In our life groups, There's no preaching, But our life groups, Are focused on the word, Because when we read the word, God speaks, And actually, Just this past Thursday, Julian was leading us, Our life group was discussing, Last week's passage, In Hebrews 10, And as Damien, Was reading some of these verses, I was just moved to worship, Every priest stands daily, Offering repeatedly, The same sacrifices, That can never take away sins, But when Christ has all, Offered for all time, A single sacrifice for sins, He sat down, At the right hand of God, Waiting from that time, Until his enemies, Should be made a footstool, For his feet, For by a single sacrifice,

He has perfected for all time, Those who are being sanctified, I just love that truth, I love those verses, Scripture leads us in worship, In simply reading it sometimes, That Jesus offered up, A single sacrifice for sins, That it is finished, He has the victory, I love this truth, In simply reading the Bible, At life group this week, The spirit moved me, To worship, And now also on Sundays, Aside from reading the scriptures, If you've been paying any attention, The past ten minutes, You'll know that we also preach the word, We read and also preach, Open up the word, Exposit it, Encourage one another with it, That's the second way, We worship in the word together, We read the word, And we also preach the word, Now I want to say a bit more, About what preaching is, Because there's a difference, Between preaching, And the TED talk, In 2nd Timothy, Chapter 4 verse 2, Paul addresses, The young pastor Timothy, His protege, And says, I charge you, In the presence of God, And of Christ Jesus, In the presence of God, And of Christ Jesus, Preach the word, Paul doesn't say, Preach life hacks, Preach good ideas, Preach interesting stories, But before God, And Christ Jesus, Your charge, Is to preach the word, And so when we preach, We root our preaching, In scripture, We do our best to, If you're looking to hear, Someone's opinion, On five tips, To boost your confidence, You can find that elsewhere, There's other people, Who can tell you that, We're here to worship God, And that happens, When the word of God, Is preached, Don't just listen to us, When we preach, Grab a Bible, From the bookshelf over there, On your way in, And see for yourself, Whether what we preach, Is really the word of God, And also generally, We like our sermons, To go through a book of the Bible, Sequentially, Week after week, Because when you read, Any other book, You're reading a novel, You don't just flip to chapter three, Read a few verses here, Read a few sentences here, And then go on to chapter 13, Read a few sentences there, You read sentences, And paragraphs, And chapters consecutively, Because that's how most authors, When they write, Intend for you,

To read the book, And we do the same with the Bible, Most recently, We've been preaching, Through the book of Acts, But these past few weeks, We're taking a break, Focusing on the topics of Advent, And now the church, We've been taking a break, From that rhythm, Going through Acts, Anyways, True preaching, Must be rooted, On the word of God, Rather to be more precise, Says here, Preaching must be rooted, On the word of Christ, Remember, Verse 16 says, Let the word of

Christ, Dwell in you richly, All scripture, Ultimately is about him, We read a few weeks ago, In Luke chapter 24, The road to Emmaus, Jesus is the better Adam, The better Joseph, The better Moses, All the promises of God, Find their yes, In Christ, And that's why we're committed, To preaching Christ, Because what else, Would we rather preach, The cross of Christ, Is the greatest revelation, Of the glory of God, On the cross, God's perfections, Are put on full display, The cross shows, That we have sinned, Against a holy, And just God, That we deserve his full wrath,

[22 : 43] But God, Being rich in mercy, Because of the great love, With which he loved us, Made us alive, Together with Christ, Even when we were dead, In our trespasses, By grace, You have been saved, And if you confess, With your mouth, That Jesus is Lord, And believe in your heart, That God raised him, From the dead, You will be saved, There is no greater news, Than this, There is no other word, I would rather preach, And that's our commitment to you, We preach the gospel, We preach that we are all sinners, Christ was crucified for our sins, He rose from the dead, He will come again in glory, And that you are saved by faith alone, Through grace alone, In Christ, And as we see Christ on display, That should lead us to worship, Preaching includes teaching, Information transfer, But the goal of preaching, Isn't just information in our heads, But also worship in our hearts, That's the ultimate goal, Every week, When we open up the word, The goal is for everyone, Is for every one of us to say, Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus,

Career, Comfort, Status, Security, We talking about money, Seriously, Mammon who, They're all just holding up, A candle to the sun, You can have all this world, Give me Jesus, That's what we aim for, Every Sunday, In everything, Word or deed, Do everything in the name, Of the Lord Jesus, Giving thanks to God the Father, Through him, And to do that, We read the word, And we preach the word of Christ, The gospel in worship, And when, The word of Christ, Truly dwells in us, When we fix our eyes, On the weight of our sin, And the grace that God, Richly lavished upon us in Christ, Then, Words aren't enough, There's too many thank yous to say, There's too much praise to speak, We need more than just, To say it, We have to sing, And that's the next way we worship, We worship in song, There's a difference between saying, Happy birthday Rocky, And singing happy birthday, It's Rocky's birthday tomorrow by the way, You can sing to him later, When Aladdin took Jasmine on a magic carpet, She didn't just say, Wow, Nice view, She sings, A whole new world, She sings, And when we open up the Bible, With unveiled faces, Seeing the glory of God, We have to sing, I can't help but declare, It was my cross you bore, And now my shame is gone, Worthy is your name Jesus, You deserve the praise, That's the only right response, We have to sing, And we identify worship so much, In singing, As James and Caleb pointed out to us, That sometimes, We just call musical worship, As worship, As if singing is the only, Part of our worship, That's the only way we worship, That's a little pet peeve of mine, Everything is worship, Everything, Every part of our lives is worship, Not just singing, And language matters, So I prefer to say musical worship, And the music team,

Or worship musicians, Otherwise call the kids well teachers, Call people setting up the chairs, The worship team, But anyways, Colossians tells us a few points, About singing together as a church, First, Our singing must be rooted in the word, Look at verse 16, Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, Teaching and admonishing, In all wisdom, And how do we do all that?

It's by singing, Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual songs, With thankfulness in your hearts to God, We teach, And admonish one another in wisdom, By singing, That's how the word of Christ dwells in us, Because when we sing, We're teaching each other the word of God, This means that we must be thoughtful, In what we sing, We don't sing songs just because they're good and catchy, They make us feel good, We could meet at Red Mister, And sing Backstreet Boys, If that's the case, But verse 16 says, We teach and instruct one another, As we sing, And you might remember, More of what we sing than what we teach, If Jay didn't come up and share with us earlier, How many people would remember what James said yesterday?

[26 : 50] But, In a month, Many of you will be able to sing from memory, Give me Jesus, Or other songs that you listen to, Because music teaches us, Music catechizes us, We did an exercise with the worship musicians, Several months ago, And also G.U. this Friday, To see where in the Bible, The lyrics that we sing come from, And it gives me confidence to know that I'm singing scripture, Not just a song that someone wrote, But I'm singing the truth of God back to God, Do you recognize these verses?

1 Corinthians 15 verse 10, I worked harder than any of them, Yet not I, But the grace of God that is with me, Galatians 2.20, It is no longer I who live, But Christ who lives in me, In other words, Yet not

I, But through Christ in me, That is the life I live, How can we have confidence to sing with all our hearts?

It's when we're singing the word of Christ, And also a brief point of personal reflection, What music are you listening to all week? What are you filling your minds with? What are the songs that you listen teaching you?

Are they teaching you to worship Christ? Are they teaching you to worship money, Sex, Reckless Abandoned? What songs are shaping your heart? What do we sing? What do we sing when we gather as a church?

We sing the word of Christ. And here's another question, Who do we sing to? Who do we sing to? As a church, Who do we sing to? And obviously, We're singing to God, We're worshipping God, If God is not in the picture, It's karaoke, Not worship.

[28 : 20] Worship is vertical between us and God, But also, Our singing is horizontal. We sing to one another, Look at verse 16 again, As we sing, We're teaching and admonishing who?

Teaching and admonishing one another. When we sing, Absolutely, We sing to God, But we also sing to one another. And if you watch sports, You'll know this, There's a difference between watching basketball on your couch all by yourself, Versus having a bunch of friends over, Or being at the stadium, Cheering all together.

It's a different atmosphere, When we have 10 or 10,000 people, Cheering with us for the same team. It fires us up. When you cheer, I cheer.

Your passion fuels my passion. If you have ever watched a game alone, You'll know that feeling, When you hear, Corey for three, Bang! And then you're like, Come on, But no one's there.

Right? Wishing you had someone to celebrate with, Because you're just so happy. We were made to worship together. And that's why we arranged the chairs like this in a semicircle.

[29 : 23] We could have all the chairs facing forward in rows. That might be a bit more space efficient. But we do this as much as possible, Because we want to be facing one another, And see one another, So that we can spur up one another to love and good works.

When we sing, I don't want just everyone looking at the band or at the lyrics, But at one another. To hear the gathered church worshipping together, So that your worship fuels my worship, Your passion fuels my passion, Your love fuels my love, So that we can teach one another, And admonish one another as we sing.

And I also want us to bring our attention to that word in verse 16, Admonish one another. We admonish one another. What does that mean? To admonish is to warn, To tell off, To rebuke, And maybe even to scold.

That got me thinking, How do we admonish one another in song? How do we warn and rebuke when we sing? That intrigued me. I get how we teach. I get how we encourage. How do we admonish? I was thinking about that until I remembered actually one time, When I was admonished through someone singing.

It was my first year of university. I was at our campus fellowship. I've been going to church my whole life. Yeah, Caleb's saying, Let's go, Because Caleb and I, For the answer, Went to the same Christian fellowship at the university.

[30 : 40] But as usual, We were singing a few songs. And I was there, Just mumbling along to the songs, Half paying attention. I was looking around. I looked over, And I see next to me, There was a girl, With her arms outstretched, Fully praising God, Singing with all her heart.

Well, I can't see her heart, But that's what it looked like from the outside. And when I saw that, Her singing admonished me. I grew up going to church. I grew up singing these songs so many times. But I remember thinking, Never once have I sang like that from the bottom of my heart. I don't sing like that. And that got me thinking, Why? If I say I love God, Why don't I sing like that?

What's going on? If I love God, Why don't I sing? And that led me to admit, I say that I'm a Christian. I love God. But deep down, I know that if I really did love God, Everything would be different.

When you love God, When you follow God, Your whole life changes. My heart and my life would be totally different. And when I saw that, I realized, I need to be honest with myself. I was at Crossroads back in my first year of university.

[31 : 47] And I need to make a choice. I need to truly love God, Or to admit the truth, That I don't actually believe in Him. I say I'm a Christian, Just because I grew up in church, And my parents are Christian.

But I don't really love Him. And that was all because, The Spirit of God, Used one girl singing, To admonish me. When we sing, We admonish one another, By showing this is the beauty, And the joy of loving the Lord.

Unless you repent, And put your faith in Christ, Unless you persist, In that faith and love, You have no part in this joy. And so we teach, And admonish one another in song. So when we sing later, When we sing as we gather, Sing for the good of those around you.

Feel free to lift your hands, Sing louder. Not to perform, And not saying that singing louder, And lifting your hands, Is the only expression of worship. But be free to, Worship God from the bottom of your heart.

Not to show off how holy you are. But out of love, Both for God, And for one another. So that the person next to me, Can be taught, Admonished. So that we can teach, Admonish one another, Encourage one another, Stir up one another, To love and good works.

[32:52] So that we, Together as a church, When we gather, We can give our outmost, To God in worship. We gather, To worship God together. And so whether it's, Singing, Preaching, Praying, Giving, Even maybe announcements, It's all for one purpose.

We worship God, With one another. But now, The sermon is nearly over. And, In 10-15 minutes, We'll be finished our response song. Now what?

Look at verse 17. It says, Whatever you do, In word or deed, Do everything, In the name of the Lord Jesus, Giving thanks to God the Father, Through him.

It says, Whatever we do, Whatever you do, Worship doesn't just end at 1230, When you walk out these doors. And sometimes it's because, We end a few minutes late. But also, Even though our worship service ends, Our worship itself never ends.

Worship never ends. In everything, In what you say, In what you do, In what you think, In everything in your life, Do all to the glory of God, In the name of Jesus Christ.

[34:06] And James mentioned Formula One last week. An analogy. That Sunday morning is like a pit stop. You can't be a lone racer. You can't race without a team. We need a team. We need one another. We need a pit stop, To refuel, Change the tires.

And if we don't stop, If we don't pit, We don't worship together, Eventually, We run out of gas. We need our weekly worship, With one another. But also, You don't just stay in the pit stop.

We also have to go back out. We gather, And scatter back out, Into our homes, Our schools, Our offices, And worship continues there. And the world will try to convince you.

Worship money. Worship sex. Worship power. And every day, Every moment, It will be a fight to say, No, You can have all this world. Give me Jesus. And I hope our worship today, Refreshes our souls.

And gives us a boost, So that we can go back out. Because the race continues, Monday through Sunday. And we need to run the race, Firm to the end. And finally, All this, Our worship gathering, That's just a foretaste, A rehearsal.

[35:15] If our hearts, If our hearts have ever burned, When you were here, And you heard the word of God, Read and preached. If we've ever sang, Praise to Christ from the heart, Together.

If you've ever been lifted up, By the encouragement, By the prayers of one another. Know that our gathering here today, Is just a little taste, Of, When we gather, Around the throne of God, In heaven in worship, With all the saints and angels, All of God's people, Across all time, Across every nation, Tribe, And tongue, Past, Present, Future.

And we sing, Worship to him, Worthy is lamb who was slain, Worthy is the lamb who was slain, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come.

That's what we're looking forward to, When the day Christ returns, And we will worship God forever. Our gatherings now are just a taste, Rehearsal of what's to come.

So let's practice well now. Let's practice well. Prepare for eternity, And encourage one another to get there, To run this race with endurance, Finish it. In everything we do, Word and deed, Give thanks to God, Our Father.

[36:26] Let the word of Christ dwell richly in us, So that we can sing, And enjoy singing his praises for all eternity. Let's worship now. Let's continue worshipping, As we pray and sing together.

God, we simply worship you. Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. You're the one from whom, Through whom, To whom are all things. We praise you.

Because while we are sinners, Christ died for us. And we just don't have the words to say. I don't even have the words, All the words to express, How worthy you are. How glorious you are. But we try. Spirit, Fill us with love. Fill us with a sense of awe and wonder at you. Help us to love you as we ought to.

To say in our hearts, One day with you is better than a thousand elsewhere. Help us to worship, Not just here today, But when we leave with all our lives. And help us worship now as we sing together. [37 : 33] Pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.