

Remnant Life Church  
February 16, 2025  
**Fighting Through the Obstacles to Worship**  
Job 31:24-28

Worship – attributing ultimate worth to something

- A person, an object, even an idea
- It is literally “worth-ship”
- When we sing praises to God, we are worshipping because we are proclaiming that He has the greatest possible worth and that His value is greater than anything else possible in our lives.

We can see clearly that the concept of worship was created and then ordained of God as one of two vehicles through which we can approach Him daily – the other being prayer

- Approach Him not physically but in spirit
- And He set it aside or ordained it as the form of adoration from us that He will accept
- The relationship of the creation worshipping the creator is so important that God wove it into the very fabric of our DNA
  - IOW, you were created to worship God
  - And only His worship will satisfy and fulfill the very foundation of your purpose
  - It is what we will do when we are in His presence one day

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that worship is found throughout all of the Scriptures

- From Genesis in the Garden to the final days of this age when He will establish His kingdom on earth and all of creation will worship Him
  - The first commands of the 10 Commandments found in **Ex 20** are a directive to worship God and God alone
- So, if worship is so vital to the walk of the Christian why do we not all worship the same way?
  - And why does worship look so different from church to church?
    - Should we not all be doing the same thing?
  - How do we know how we are to worship?
    - And how do we know what is acceptable?

The answers to those questions can all be found in one place – the Word of God

- The Bible is the standard, the example, and the measuring tool we use to determine not only who to worship but how
- And anything that strays from that is not of God, but of man
  - Just because something is happening in a church building on a Sunday morning does not automatically mean it is of God
    - Worship that is of man relies on the flesh and is not acceptable in the eyes of God
    - **Phil 3:3** – *We are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh*
    - That is why we need God’s Word to guide us

- If we follow the scriptures regarding the focus of our worship, there is room for the current culture to be incorporated
- We can worship in a 21st-century style without compromising the guidelines to worship in spirit and in truth
- So, what is stopping us?
  - There are several areas of life that have invaded the church today and are leading many down a path where their worship has become unacceptable to God
- The first one I want to look at this morning is one that has slowly, over many decades, crept into the heart of the church-goer
  - It is not overt
  - It is not dangerous on the surface
  - As a matter of fact, most people in church are completely oblivious to its presence
  - Yet it is, I believe one of the greatest obstacles preventing churches from not only worshipping in a godly, biblical way but also from having an impact on every aspect of its purpose and function
- Since the advent and growth of television to the place where it has become a cornerstone of society in this country, the very social and cultural foundations of our lives began to change dramatically
  - Invented in the 1930's a television set was, at first due to its cost, a luxury only very few could afford
  - Today, you likely have multiple televisions in your home, quite possibly in nearly every room
- Now, the full measure of the influence it has had in our homes, our minds, and are families is a discussion for another time, except for one important factor I want to hone in on today
  - Beginning in the 50's when more and more programming began to be specifically aimed at children, we have gone from having a mindset of producing to one of consuming
  - And two of the generations who have been the most greatly impacted are the ones who are stepping into the positions of leadership and responsibility today
- These two generations, who now make up the largest percentage of those who not only attend but lead our churches are the Gen-Exers and the Millennials
  - Now, for those of you who may be a bit fuzzy on the whole generational-name thing, a quick lesson...
    - The Greatest Generation: 1901 to 1924
    - The Silent Generation: 1928 to 1945
    - Baby Boomers: 1946 to 1964
    - Generation X: 1965 to 1980
    - Millennials: 1981 to 1996 (K and T)
    - Generation Z: 1997 to 2010
    - Generation Alpha: 2010 and 2024 (M and L)

- Back to the Gen-Exers and Millennials - theirs is a life that has been dominated by entertainment
  - Both inside and outside the home
  - They were some of the first to be electronically baby sat
  - With little to no interaction other than to sit, watch, and listen passively – at least their parents were hoping
  - The relevant question then for us this morning is, why would church for them be any different?

How did the church respond to this?

- There was a significant effort initiated to deal specifically with getting these people into church by creating a way that would be attractive and familiar to them
  - It became known as the seeker-sensitive church movement and it gained national prominence in the 1980s and 90's
    - The mission of the seeker-sensitive church was to bring in the unchurched by removing the traditional elements of the service and incorporating a less confrontational presentation of the Bible coupled with a much more flashy, modern, professional style of music.
    - The overriding goal, in fact, was that church would not look like church
      - The organ and upright piano were replaced by guitars, drums, keyboards and finally full bands
      - Suits and ties, dresses, hats and gloves were replaced with a much more casual and comfortable wear. Gone were the days of Sunday Best
      - Hymns were eliminated in favor of popular chorus songs that resembled what was being heard on the radio or even at large arena concerts
      - Even the language and terminology was carefully monitored, manipulated, and tailored to much more sensitive ears
        - Words like sin, hell, damnation, punishment, repentance, and wrath were removed
        - Replaced by uplifting, encouraging, and more conversational language that left everyone feeling good when they left the service
        - And initially it appeared to be exactly what was needed as the focus was almost exclusively centered on God's love
    - And the tangible proof of success was evident
      - Megachurches (those in excess of 2000 regular attendees) were rapidly springing up all over the country
        - Let by Willow Creek Community Church on the outskirts of Chicago led by Bill Hybels
        - Saddleback Church in Orange County, CA founded by Rick Warren
        - Lakeland Church near Houston, led by Joel Osteen

- All were seeing the fruits of their labors explode but it was soon discovered that most of what they were accomplishing appeared 100 miles wide the reality was it was only an inch deep
- And while the goal of making bigger churches was being accomplished, it was discovered that the people were not growing
  - Too much emphasis was being placed on the packaging and presentation rather than on the theological substance of both the preaching and time of corporate worship
  - Those who were willing to potentially sacrifice their growth numbers came to realize that fulfilling their missions of bringing in the lost could not exclude the importance of also seeing them move and grow into spiritual maturity
  - You see, this country does not need bigger churches
    - It needs churches that know how to teach their people to worship every day in spirit and in truth
    - And then see the evidence of that by how people are living their lives from Monday to Saturday
- But make no mistake, to change from being a spectator and consumer to a participant and servant requires a heart adjustment
  - It is not about jamming one more thing into your calendar
  - It is not even about reprioritizing your lives to make church first
    - To change your heart means your priorities will automatically change and come into right alignment
    - To change your heart means your calendar is not what guides your daily life
    - To change your heart means you do all those things in response to your lifestyle of worship and how that determines what you do with your time, your energy, and yes, your money.

**Job 31:24-28** - *If I have put my trust in gold or said to pure gold, 'You are my security,' if I have rejoiced over my great wealth, the fortune my hands had gained, if I have regarded the sun in its radiance or the moon moving in splendor, so that my heart was secretly enticed and my hand offered them a kiss of homage, then these also would be sins to be judged, for I would have been unfaithful to God on high.*