

WORSHIP WHEN IT DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE SENSE Part 2

OK... I left you with these words of Abraham in Sunday's message, they are from the Bible,
"Here I am, Lord... I'm listening Lord"

Here I am Lord, to worship You.

Here I am Lord to be used by You.

Here I am to acknowledge Your greatness.

Here I am to have some QUIET TIME and listen to the still small voice of God.

That's a life of worship.

Worship is an ENCOUNTER WITH GOD.

"Here I am, Lord... I'm listening Lord" How on earth do we do that?

First step, we need to AVOID what's NATURAL.

So what's natural? Me! That's what's natural. It's all about what I want. My desires. That's typically our default and more often than not it's what comes first in our life.

Here's the thing, when you follow GOD'S PLAN, that's an act of worship. When you OBEY GOD in some way and you do what the Bible teaches, instead of doing what's natural, you've just worshipped God! Think about that this week.

When you do it GOD'S WAY you've worshipped Him. Quiet time and listening to the still small voice of God, reading His word, trusting Him in all things... is God's way.

In John 14:24, Jesus says, *"He who does not love Me will not obey My teaching."* Jesus is saying... if you love me... then OBEY ME. Because if you don't obey Me, you don't love Me.

Second step obey what God says, obey what's biblical. Obedience is not mysterious. You were created to obey and worship God. There are some elements of worship that are mysterious. But obedience isn't one of them. Obedience is straightforward. You do the right thing. You do what God wants you to do. That's obedience.

Most pain in our life comes from disobedient decisions that either we made or somebody else made. We don't make bad decisions because we're confused. "Should I have an affair... I'm so confused. Should I cheat and steal... I'm confused" "Should I buy 10,000 rolls of toilet paper... I'm confused" Should I go on spring break... I'm confused" No, we are not confused. We just make dumb decisions. We do what's natural. We do what's easiest. We do what we want. Obedience is not mysterious.

If we first *avoid the natural*, and then *obey what's biblical*, we set ourselves up for a third step... we *prioritize the importance of God*. That's the essence of worship. Worshipping doesn't mean you don't love other things. God created other things to love. Worshipping is loving God more. You want God's blessing? Obedience and worship and blessing go together.

Somebody says, I want God's blessing but you're not doing the right thing. And you want God to bless that? Why would God bless disobedience? God's blessings are connected to obedience.

When you live a life of obedience, when you're living a life of worship, here's what happens.

You'll MARVEL at the things of God. You've all marveled before whether you've thought about it or not. You marvel over creation. You stand at the edge of Lake Superior with waves crashing. That's marveling. You're wowed by a sunset. You hold a baby, brand new, right out of the chute! That's marveling. (42 years ago today Sue and I had baby number one, Katie (Kate) was born on Good Friday 1978... you can text her *happy birthday Katie* at 838-3988...)

When you marvel at the things of God, that's an act of worship. You marvel because you know who God is. God is so big and I'm so small. He's so *supernatural* and I'm so *natural*. You marvel when you recognize who God is. You worship!

Hebrews 12:28 *"Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be destroyed let us be thankful and please God by worshipping Him with holy fear and awe."* Holy FEAR. That's not being afraid. That's not what the word "fear" means. It's AWE. It's REVERENCE. It's MARVELING. And when you marvel at the goodness of God, you're rejoicing. The Message Bible: *"Do you see what we've got? An UNSHAKABLE KINGDOM! And do you see how thankful we must be? Not only thankful, but brimming with worship, deeply reverent before God."*

When people worship God, not just that hour a week, when they actually live their life as a spiritual act of worship, you can see it in their eyes and you can hear it in their voice. It transforms them because they understand who God is. They aren't freaking out over the woes of this world.

Here's what I know about you. You want to be closer to God. You want to be connected to God so you can sense His leading and His prompting. You want God's blessings in your life. You want to be able to live a life where you can marvel at the things of God. You want to rejoice. You want an encounter with God. You want to hear that still small voice. You want that. God made us with these wants. That's the way he wired us to be.

So here's my question. What's that thing you love more than anything else? What's the thing that's getting in the way of you living a life of worship? What's more important to you than worshipping God and living a life of worship. Write it down, place it in your Bible. Busyness, laziness, fear, pride, work, money, stuff. Stuff that's getting in the way of worshipping God. Some of you might be saying, "Scott, I don't know if I can do that? I don't know if I can give that up. It's a good thing I'm holding on to." Here's how... here's the key. Don't focus on the stuff, focus on God.

That's worship. It's not focusing on your stuff. It's focusing on your God. It's having an encounter with God.

Some of you might be thinking, I don't think I have the power to do this. Here's the secret... *you don't!* That's why we need God's power. I can't live a day without God's power. I don't have the power to obey Him. I want to do what I want to do. I need God's power to overcome myself.

For anyone reading this who's never asked Jesus to be the Lord and Savior of your life, would you consider that today? If you don't have that relationship you'll be separated from God for all of eternity and you'll have no power. That's what the Bible teaches. God made the ultimate sacrifice so that you and I could live a life of worship. That's the good news.

Take care my friends, be safe and enjoy your encounter with God.