

God's Great Purpose in Redemption-Worship

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So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty, for He is thy Lord, worship thou Him. As you can see, there's desire on both sides, the King greatly desires the beauty of his bride. And the bride is exhorted to worship Him who is the Lord. He is thy Lord worship thou Him.

Now, I'd like to say that I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was begotten of Him before all worlds, who is God of God, the Light of Light and the very God of very God and begotten and not made. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, which proceeded from the Father and the Son, in which with the Father and Son together, is worshipped and glorified. And I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. And He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, and was buried. On the third day, He rose again from the dead, and sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

Now, why was this? This we all believe, but why was? It had a purpose. Not to give you peace of mind, though that's part of it. Not to deliver you from bad habits, though, that's part of it. But what was the great central purpose of the Great God who never does anything without a purpose in all this rich, gold and glorious odyssey of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

It was that He might make worshipers out of enemies. It was that He might take those who's backs were to Him, backs to Him and turn their faces to Him. It was that He might persuade those moral beings who had forgotten how to worship, to turn around again and bow in ecstatic adoration before the presence of the Triune God. So, the purpose of Christ in redemption was not to save us from hell primarily, but it was to save us unto worship, that we might become again worshipers of the living God.

Now, I'd like to state that worship is the normal employment of moral beings, that moral beings worship God normally as a bird sings. Normal beings worship God; that's their normal employment. And if you look in your Bible you will find that every glimpse of heaven shows the people there, the persons, the beings there, worshipping God.

Let me take the time to do what I know sometimes bores some people, and that is read a little from the Scriptures. Listen to this. It came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river Kebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, the word of the Lord came expressly

unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Kebar and the hand of the Lord was there upon him. And I looked and behold a whirlwind came out of the North, a great cloud, and the fire unfolding itself. And the brightness was about it. And out of the midst of it thereof is the color of amber. Out of the midst of the fire, also out of the midst thereof there all came the likeness of four living creatures. And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creatures was as the color of the terrible crystal stretched from over their heads above. And under the firmament were their wings straight and one toward the other. Everyone had two which covered on this side and everyone had two which covered on that side their body. And when they went I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech as the noise of an host. When they stood, they let down their wings, and above the firmament that was over their head was the likeness of a throne as the appearance of a sapphire stone. And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness of the appearance of a Man upon it. And I saw as the color of amber as the appearance of fire round about within from the appearance of his loins, even upward. From the appearance of his loins, even downward, I saw as it were, the appearance of fire, and the brightness round about. As the appearance of the bowl that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so is the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of One that spake.

That's the Old Testament, come to the new. After this, I looked, and behold, the door was opened in heaven. And immediately, I was in the Spirit and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardin stone and there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald. And I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices, and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God, and the beasts and those give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne Who liveth forever and ever. The four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. For thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts. And in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God. And He came and took the book, and they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by that blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation. And behold, I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the Beast and the elders. And the number of them was 10,000 times 10,000 and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, blessing and honor and glory and power belong to Him that

sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said, amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped Him that liveth forever and ever.

Now, there my brethren is a picture of heaven, just a little peep into heaven. Just cup our ear and listen and we hear it for it's going on now. It's not something that's prophetic only. It's prophetic in the sense that it will be in the future, but it's present in the sense that it also is now. And my friends, our Lord taught that worship is a moral imperative.

Now, let me read to your brief passage only, from the book of Luke. Listen, and when He was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. It's a moral imperative my brethren, and God will have somebody worshipping him if He has to raise up a talking, shouting, singing stone.

Now, we have a little song we sing some times, and I want you to note it. I just want you to note it. It says, bless, Oh my soul, the living God. Call home thy thoughts that are roam abroad. The old man of God believed as I believe tonight. That when our thoughts are roaming all over the face of the earth, and are not centered on God, that they're away. They're like a stray dog out in the alley. They're roaming away from home. Call home thy thoughts that are roam abroad. Let all the powers within me join to work in worship so divine. What work is there? What worship is there so divine as worshipping God. Bless oh my soul that the God of grace, His favor claims the highest praise? Why should the wonders He hath wrought be lost in silence and forgot. Another one tells us that it is a guilty silence and cries break to his tongue, break my tongue thy guilty silence. That when a man or a woman born to worship God is not worshipping God, the very silence of his tongue denotes guilt in his heart. And the man who did not worship God today has a guilty tongue. For worship is a moral imperative. Worship belongs to heaven and to all beings that are moral beings, not to the beasts. Not to the birds that fly and the worms that crawl, but all beings with moral perception and intelligence. It is the business of our tongues to be worshipping God and when we do not we are guilty.

Now, I would like to tell you this, that worship is the missing jewel in evangelicalism today. The church has decked herself with everything. I read yesterday in the newspaper that the churches have been building all this summer, and that we were running into a whole welter of dedications. Now, God bless them, and I'm glad for every building that went up this Summer. We happen to be in a boom. You've heard about it. Everybody has more money than is good for him. And so the churches are building, and that's all right. We've decked ourselves with every kind of ornament.

We have everything. But there is one shining gem that has been lost to the church. And it has been lost even to the evangelical church.

I got a letter this week, I don't know whether those friends are present tonight or not. And if they are they will understand. I got a letter from a woman. And she said Mr. Tozer, we were out to hear the sermon on worship, and I'd like to tell you this, that my husband who was a Parsi, that is, Zoroaster fire worshiper, had to teach me to worship the Savior, even though I was brought up in a certain denomination. I had to learn from my converted Parsi husband to worship God. Worship, my friends is the missing jewel in evangelicalism. And the awesome and wonderful jewel with its mysterious luster has been all but lost to us. We meet together and we go through rituals and forms, but worshipping God is something else and we've forgotten to worship God.

There was once a noble being and it disturbs me. I don't know too much about this now, and don't press me for a very careful exegesis, because I'm not sure I know who this is. But I read about it in the inspired Word of God. He forgot to worship. Listen, thou hast been in Eden the garden of God. Every precious stone was thy covering. The workmanship of thy tablets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day the tower was created. Why did he have tablets and pipes, which are of course musical instruments? Why did this creature, this anointed cherub that covereth; why did he have in his divine workmanship, these instruments built-in? He was a walking organ, a walking harp. God made him so. I have set thee so, it goes on to say. Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God. Thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. I read quite a little about fire tonight. But don't forget my brethren, that when we come to try to understand what God is like, the best we can do is to talk about spirit and fire. Now, physical fire is not God. And God warned against that and said, when thou gazeth up into the sky and sees the sun, or the stars by night, do not fall down and worship them. For that is an abomination unto Jehovah thy God for so did the nations around thee.

So, we're not fire worshippers, but we recognize that God dwells in fire and these creatures came out of the fire and stood with their six wings. With twain they covered their faces, and with twain they covered their feet, and with twain they did fly. When the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost, He came with fire, and sat upon each one of them. It is as near as God can get to telling us what He's like, that strange, mysterious, lustrous, shining, beautiful thing. And thou wast perfect in thy ways, from the day that thou wast created till iniquity was found in thee. And he who had come beautiful beyond all description, with his worship built-in, and who is permitted to walk up and down amidst in the shining holy stones of fire, now finds iniquity there. God finds iniquity in him, therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God. And I will destroy thee old covering cherub from the midst of the stones of fire. I believe that's Satan if I should be wrong in my exegesis, it's some being, for I read from Ezekiel 28. And if a great being like that, should could be cast out, and would be and was cast out of heaven because he forgot the purpose of his creation. If he forgot that his tongue was made to sing the praises of his Creator. If he could

be cast out, hurled down from heaven, shear over the crystal battlements, then I asked you, is it not possible the church that forgets to worship God is in danger of losing her place among the stones of fire?

Is it not possible that the church that doesn't worship, that only meets and knits or only meets and reads, or only meets and things, or only meets and fellowships, or only meets and eats? Is it not possible that that church may lose her candlestick? Jesus said at one time, you remember, to the Ephesian church, I will pluck out thy candlestick. I'll remove it. I don't know what that means exactly, but I don't want it to happen to me. If God were to wake me tonight at two, or tomorrow morning at two or three o'clock wide, stark awake and say to me, I am removing the Alliance candlestick from the corner of 70th and Union. I wouldn't have to write to Moody Monthly to find out what it meant. I wouldn't have to look up the various commentators to see what it meant. I'd be terrorized. And I'd fall on my face and cry, O God, these are Thy people. These are Thy people. Turn not away, my God from these Thy people, for they belong to Thee. And what will the heathen say if you destroy Thy people? I don't have to know all that means. I only know that it's terrible enough just to read it. I will take thy candlestick out of its place.

So, there's danger that we Christians should simply be utilitarian Christians, using Jesus Christ as an escape hatch from hell. That we should simply use the Lord as we use insurance and social security, and whatever else fits into our scheme of self-promotion. But worship, worship my brethren, God has made us to worship. And the man who doesn't know how to worship, doesn't know, doesn't know the purpose of his creation. I'd like to analyze worship if I could a little bit. It can't be done. It lies beyond. It lies beyond the intellect. But we can we can stand and at least admire, and walk around her holy battlements, and see the Gates of Jerusalem and look a little.

Now, what is it? I think that worship is an attitude. It is a state of mind, a sustained act, if you could allow that, subject to degrees of perfection and intensity certainly. Because, not even the Apostles could worship God always with the same degree of intensity. And all the great mystics and devotional writers that I have heard of during the years, and have read about, and seen their hymns and their devotional works. They all claim that the intensity and degree of worship rises and falls; that it's impossible to sustain it too long. Even on the mountaintop there, they could not stay too long. The Lord said, go on down the hill. So, I do not claim that this is to be a continuous, unbroken, and yet it is to be unbroken in some measure, because it embodies a number of factors; mental, spiritual, and emotional; worship does.

And let me let me point to some of the factors. One is boundless confidence in the character of God, and nobody can worship God unless he has this boundless confidence in the character of God. You see, confidence is necessary to respect. You cannot respect anybody you have no confidence in. And of course, you cannot worship anyone you do not respect. So that we have to have respect raised to the nth degree. We must have respect that believes with absolute confidence in God, in

the character of God, in the being of God. And worship rises or falls, depending upon the idea that the church has of God, whether it's high or low.

Now, it so happens that the evangelical concept of God is very low today. An Englishman by the name of Philips, the man who has made the translations, wrote a little book that somebody put in my hand called, "Your God is Too Small." Well, it's true, the God of the evangelical is too small. We can put Him in our pocket, or put Him up by the way some of our friends do to keep us from having accidents. I threatened to buy brother Ericson a plastic saint put up in front of his car to keep him from having accidents. It doesn't protect you from policemen, because I saw a policeman tagging a car that had a plastic saint on it one time. And I said to the cop, well, I've learned one thing saints don't protect you from cops. He said, no, they don't. I've got so many to tag and I'm out tagging them. And he said they're following me around. If I don't do it, they will get me.

So, this God we have now, this God isn't much bigger than St. Christopher, and the God of popular Christianity can't be worshiped, because He isn't respected. And He isn't respected, because He's not big enough. And the Sovereign God of our fathers that we sing about, the God of Abraham that the Jews sang about, the God of Abraham praise. And that Mighty God, that Mighty God, brought men to their knees with great respect. And so, boundless confidence is first, and the second is admiration.

Now, admiration is the appreciation of the excellency of anything. And man is made capable of appreciating excellency. If you were to bring a canary or a nightingale or a mockingbird in here, and play this piano to it, I suppose it would, I've understood the canaries will sing when you turn the radio on. I guess they do appreciate a little but they certainly wouldn't be able to appreciate as much as an audience like this. They certainly wouldn't be able to understand the beauty of music, and certainly the lower creatures have not in them the ability to appreciate or to admire, as we do. God has made us with ability to admire.

And then, He has given Himself to us as the object of our boundless unlimited admiration. And this can grow, this admiration. It can grow in knowledge and in depth until it fills the heart with wonder and delight, to admire God, just to admire God, not to admire people. I quite agree with the young man's prayer here tonight, "O God save us from people and from big shots." He didn't use that, he won't use slang the way I do, but save us O Lord from people. We're always hearing, the big fellow did this, another big fellow did that, another big fellow did that. And I feel like crying, O God, we have heard man's voice and we're weary.

Speak Thou to us, O Lord, for I want to admire God. I can admire man who was made in the image of God, but my admiration for man is only because he was made in the image of God. God is the object of our admiration, my brethren. And when we admire, did you ever hear music? You know, there are some things that are so wonderful that you can't use them. Matthew Arnold said about

the poetry of Burns. He said that some of the poetry of Burns is so piercingly, piercingly, so penetratingly pathetic, such piercing pathos in it that it hurts you. You can't read it. You can't read it. And have you ever heard a piece of music that hurt you? Hurt you that you bent over with pain when you admired it to a point where it got the better of you. And there are certain great works of literature like that, certain great passages in Milton and Shakespeare are so great that the average rank and file can't rise to take it. It is too grief and wonderful.

So, when we admire enough, it becomes a delightful pain. It becomes an enjoyable agony within the bosom. Agony? Why? Because we're not big enough inside. God is going to make us bigger, He's going to make us. Paul cried, "Be thou enlarged. Thou art constricted," he said within your heart. Be enlarged. And He wants to make us big enough to admire God, and admire Him with wonder and delight.

And then, following in this analysis, is fascination. That is, it's to be filled with a moral excitement. I have never have been able to understand, and I can't to this day, the solemn, sad, long face, composed, poised, self-possessed, temperate, and cold people who sing hymns, and are not affected by them. Who hear the Scripture, but are not affected. Who pray in a monotonous drone. I have not been able to understand them because the fascination of worship is a moral excitement. And it excites us inside. And by excitement, I use the word means when I say excitement. There's an excitement about love, an excitement about adoration. And this fascination, it captivates and it charms, and it entrances. And the Christian who's ever seen God in holy worship, I'd say he's been struck with astonished wonder at the inconceivable elevation, at the magnitude and splendor of the being we call God.

And I pray that God will send to us again. I pray that he will send to us again men out of the fire. Men who've walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Who can come back to the world, not to be great founders or great promoters or great mixers, but whose presence with us, is as the presence of an angel. When they looked upon the face of Stephen, they saw his face as the face of an angel, because he said, I see Jesus lifted up. I see him standing. And his face shone. And the shining of the face of Stephen has done more to illuminate the church of the living God than 10,000 theologians and cold teachers of the Law.

My brethren, we need men out of the fire again. We need bold, terrible men. We need men and women who have fought their way, and prayed their way, and been scorned maybe and called fanatics and scoffed at, and named every name, as the song says, the colored song, when they've called me everything but a Christian. They were Christians, but they called them everything but a Christian. And some of these will have to go through the fire and be called everything but a Christian to push in and beat their way past the flesh and the world and the devil and cold Christians and dead deacons and elders that are cold, and the general level of things. And they'll have to push themselves in until they're fascinated by what they see and find there.

Elijah came down from the mountains of Tishbe girded about the loins with a leather girdle and walked into the presence of the king and said, "you don't know who I am, but I am Elijah. I stand in the presence of God." And that's why he could command fire when the occasion required it. And Ezekiel, before God ever allowed him to be a preacher at all had to have this first chapter experience that I read part of tonight. Isaiah before he could ever write his great book, had to see God high and lifted up with His train filling the temple and had to hear the vibrant voice of the seraphim crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. And so it was with some of the other prophets, Jeremiah. And so it was with some of the apostles. Paul could never, that stiff, cold, hard man of theology and logic. He never would have been the blazing apostle surific in his feet, except he had that experience on Damascus Road when God's light shone round about him, brighter than midday and blinded him for three days.

Oh, that we might raise up some people. I don't care whether they're Baptist, Presbyterians, Reformed, or what they call themselves, I wouldn't ask God to let them come out of this society of ours. If we have lost our worship, then our candlestick will be removed. I would only pray that God would raise them up, that his all. As old brother MacArthur used to say, "I'll follow the man with oil on his forehead." And I'll follow the man with the flame that sits there. And I don't care what denomination he calls himself.

So fascination, the inconceivable brightness, the unbelievable elevation, the magnitude and the splendor of God. When it shines in upon a human heart, it changes things brethren. And we're not what we used to be. He doesn't kill our sense of humor, but it chastens. It doesn't destroy all fun, but it takes levity out of the system. So, we never can again be anything but serious-minded men and women. And I pray God it may be so.

But passing on to adoration, adoration. Adoration of course, is the state of adoring. It is to love with all the power within us. It is to love with fear, and with wonder, and with yearning, and with awe. Our trouble is, dear people, we have hearts as big as the world, and the object of our love is small as little peas in a pod. That's our difficulty. That's what's the matter with the people out on the highways tonight. That's what's the matter with the women who keep the houses down here. That's what the matter with the men who stand and belch over the bar and drink their beer in some saloon tonight. That's what's the matter with the women who go into weird cults up on the Gold Coast because they have too much of their husband's money to know what to do with. That's what's the matter with the people who are out tonight raising hell all over the world. God has given them ability to love, and they can't find anything worthy of their love.

Out in Hollywood, it leaps like a drunk bird from one bow to another. It jumps here and then shuts it off, and jumps there and shuts it off, and jumps there until they're married as much as three and four and eight to ten times because they're trying to find something to love and they can't find

anything worthy of their love. God made them too big inside. Thou hast set eternity in their heart. Even a fallen man. Even the fallen cherub never found again an object worthy of his love. And all the devils that have fallen in the being, the angels that fell out of heaven, have never found an object worthy of their love. Never. Never. That's why I grieve when I see someone made in the image of God off on a little sidetrack doing silly things, foolish things. Little, spending their lives doing little things.

There died some year or so ago, a great woman, the greatest women athlete probably that ever lived, Babe Didrikson. And I was discussing Babe Didrikson with one of the men of the church. Penetrating mind he has and he said, "well, she was a great woman, unquestionably. But it seems too bad that she should have dedicated her greatness to jumping over things and knocking little balls and doing little things that were unworthy of her affection." If you want to do that and keep you in good shape, all right. I stretch a rubber band in order to keep healthy. And so, you'll go ahead and do that if you want to. I don't mind, to dedicate your life to it, my friends, to dedicate your life to it. There are men who start the last of April and end the first week in October, and every day except when they're traveling, they're looking at ballgames.

Well, it seems to me this is an awful, when God has made our heart as big as the world that we should pick out a tiny little object and kneel before it and worship, or at least love it so much. And Jesus when they came to Him and said, what is the great commandment of the Law, He said, this is the greatest commandment, thou shalt love the Lord that God with all thy heart and with all thy mind and strength and with all the power in you, you are to love God. So, adoration is love with fear and wonder and yearning and awe. When Jesus walked among men, He affected them two ways, and sometimes, two ways at once. He affected them with a magnetic drawing, and He affected them with a fear that repulsed. And the same heart that yearned for God with a great yearning, also an awesome fear, might have been repulsed by the greatness and elevation and magnitude of the being we call God.

This is not only to love, but it's to feel a possessiveness, a crying mind. Go through your Bible and see how many times that men say mine to God, my, mine, to God. They tell us the personal pronoun shouldn't be used in religion. That's the difficulty with it. We're using it about ourselves, and about what we've done, and about where we've been, and about who we know, and about what we own. But we're afraid to use it about our relation to God. And one of the great theologians, who was it, Luther that said, the whole heart of religion lies in its personal pronoun.

And when the human heart cries with the Psalmist, or a prophet or an apostle or a mystic, "mine, mine, mine, God is mine." And when the human heart worships God and says, mine. God says, Yes, I'm, I'm yours. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty? For He is thy lord, worship thou Him. And the times all this rises to the place of breathless silence, wrapped in deep adoring, silence, Jesus, Lord, I dare not move, lest I lose the smallest saying meant to catch and hear love.

Now, when all these are present, these mental, emotional, and spiritual factors are present continually; they're present in varying degrees, but when they're present, they're present in song and in praise and in prayer, and in mental prayer, in inward prayer, and the ejaculatory prayer, kept blazing by long seasons of prayer. They condition our thoughts, and our words and our deeds. And they give us a philosophy of life. They give us an outlook, a vantage point. They give us what the moderns like to call a scale of values. That's all right, because the liberals use it, don't throw it away. But they give us a scale of values. We value some things more than others and we learn what is valuable and what isn't. And it hallows every place and every time and every task. And it can do that for all of us. And it gives back the glory which Jesus had with the Father before the world was. It prepares the heart to worship.

When Jesus said come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. He talked about a burden. And what was that burden? It was the burden of the tuneless heart. It was the burden of the voiceless nightingale. It was the burden of the heart that was capable of tremendous, all but infinite love that couldn't find an object. It was the burden of the man whose tongue was made to praise God, but it had been guilty in his mouth for all the years. And what is the rest? The rest is among other things, the rest of adoration.

My brethren, you will learn more in a half hour of adoring silence in the presence of God with your Bible than you will learn in all the schools, and I believe in the schools. I've supported the schools. I've promoted them. I preached to their people. I have done everything possible and I've never talked them down. But you will learn more of God, Wesley said it, Augustine said it, Thomas à Kempis said it, and I've repeated it a thousand times; but a little while spent adoring, a little while spent caught between fear and fascination, between joy and repentance, or the sharp pangs of repentance, adoring God, you will learn more, more of light, more, more of light than you will ever find at any other time.

O Father, we beseech thee for all of these. Take them through the fire and through the flood, but above all things, to the blood. And if they have to sit by the river Kebar as Ezekiel did, or be thrown down into a pit as Jeremiah was. or be surrounded by dancing, fanatical foes as Elijah was, or be on the Isle of Patmos as John was, or to fall flat down in a faint as Daniel did, oh, whatever the cost we pray Thee, make Christian worshipers out of these men and women. This we ask in Jesus' name.