

TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

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The Power and Purpose of Worship

01
Pastor Tim Dilena

"Worship is the overflow of the heart that asks nothing of God."
—Carl Armerding

Some time ago, a group of missionaries spent 25 years in southeastern Mexico, translating the New Testament into the language of the Chol Indians. Today the Chol Church is thriving with more than 12,000 believers. Amazingly when the missionaries first arrived, the Chol Indians did not even know how to sing. Yet when the Gospel entered their culture, they became known as "the singers." How did that happen? The same way a song ends up inside of you. Your song did not come from a studio, a stage, sheet music, or Spotify. The moment you were saved, God put a song within you, and you became a worshipper. The psalmist David said it this way:

"He has put a new song in my mouth—
Praise to our God;
Many will see it and fear,
And will trust in the LORD."
—Psalm 40:3 NKJV

God's supernatural work in the soul results in worship and praise in the mouth. Because David was lifted out of the pit, he could not help but sing and worship.

Has God rescued you? Then you must worship. Has he put you on solid ground? Then you must praise Him. Have you witnessed His faithfulness in your life? Then lift your voice and thank Him! You can

praise and worship God right now and it **will** continue throughout all eternity! What's the difference between praise and worship? We praise God for what He has done; we worship God for who He is.

In Romans 6, Paul challenges us that just as we once got crazy for the world—in the clubs or at sporting events—we now need that same exuberance and enthusiasm for God! This applies not just to Sundays. If you are trying to worship God on Monday the same way you did on Sunday, perhaps you are not worshiping Him at all. Worship does not happen when a guy, a choir, or a band gets on a stage. It happens when we focus on Christ.

**“ The purpose of praise
is that God would be
glorified, the saints
fortified, and
the devil horrified. ”**

Praise is declared; praise is not praise until it is vocalized. You cannot praise with a closed mouth. You can pray or meditate with a closed mouth, but not praise. And no matter how many people praise God beside you and around you, they cannot praise God for you. You

must praise God for yourself. When you have a good relationship with God, you cannot help but proclaim, “God, You are good. I love You. Thank You for who You are!”

You must be careful, though, of living off of cheat sheets. The song lyrics on the screen are your cheat sheet. Don’t limit what you say to God to what you see on the screen. Just because you sang does not necessarily mean you praised. Your praise to God must come from your heart and soul.



Praise and worship have gone awry when we focus on the wrong things. I am thankful for the tool that music can be, but singers, instruments, and songs must not be our focus. We can become concerned about all the peripherals while missing the main attraction. God must be our one focus.

We must recover the **source** of worship and remember the **weapon** of worship. When Jesus is not acknowledged as wonderful, then people become clever by creating gimmicks to draw people in. That’s the 21st-century church! Look at the source of worship according to David: “From You comes my praise in the great assembly” (Psalm 22:25, NASB).



“She is clothed with strength & dignity, she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household & does not eat the bread of idleness.”—Proverbs 31:25–27

I believe people know **how** to worship, they just don’t know **who** to worship. The church must recover who the “You” is. True praise has been lost because the “You” has been replaced with other things. We have somehow determined that the “You” is not big enough to keep people in awe during a Sunday service. And when the “You” is wrong, worship becomes limited. When we sit in the presence of God and are not enthralled by Him, we have lost who the “You” is. You cannot be in the presence of God—the One who has put a new song in your heart—and be silent!

The circumstances of our days do not determine our worship. Our days **call** for worship but are not the **cause** for worship. We do not need a good day or a good song to worship God. If God is great, then our worship must be great. Our worship must match His character. Who He is, not how we feel, determines how we worship. If the Bible says to shout to the Lord, then we must shout to the Lord! It is not a Pentecostal or Charismatic thing; it is a Bible thing.

In Psalm 22, David shows us that when we have the source right, it does not matter what we are going through—God is always worthy of worship.

“My God, my God, why have You abandoned me? ... Every night I lift my voice, but I find no relief” (Psalm 22:1–2, NLT)

David was at his lowest moment. But then comes the transition in verse 3, beginning with the powerful conjunction “yet.”

“Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel” (Psalm 22:3, NLT).

Yet means “regardless of what is going on.” It was David’s pronouncement of who God is, despite what he was facing. Our changing circumstances do not change God. Despite how we feel, God remains the same—ever worthy of praise.

When we praise in tough times, God draws close. God recognizes the songs sung by the saints on earth more than the songs sung to Him in heaven because the songs of the redeemed sound different than the chorus of the cherubim and seraphim in heaven. While the angels of heaven sing in the presence of the glory of God, the redeemed sing through pain on earth. The redeemed sing songs with cancer in their body; with unsaved spouses next to them in their bed; with fear of job security; and with wayward children living a life of addiction. As these songs are sung, they are declaring, “My life is in trouble, but You are still the same!”

Once we get the source of worship right, we equip ourselves with fighting words because our worship has power. Someone once said, “When we lift our voices to worship Jesus, the devil loses his.” This verse helps explain why: “Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand” (Psalm 149:6, NASB).

The psalmist likens high praises in our mouth to a weapon in our hand. As the enemy starts closing in on you, keep talking about God. It will change the environment. The purpose of praise is that God would be glorified, the saints fortified, and the devil horrified. Because our praise has power, the enemy works hard to convince us to relegate it to just Sundays in a building. He is distracting us from using this

THE POWER AND PURPOSE OF WORSHIP (CONTINUED)

weapon all the time, everywhere. But David knew the secret: "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psalm 34:1, AMP).

At all times! Praise and worship should be a part of your life, every day.

The longest teaching on worship in the New Testament was from Jesus Himself, and it occurred in the most unexpected place, at a well—with an audience of one—no worship leaders, no musicians!

"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people, the Father seeks to be His worshipers" (John 4:23–24 NASB).

These words are significant because Jesus was addressing a woman who had to draw water during a certain time of day to avoid the shame and chatter of the town ladies regarding her promiscuous lifestyle. Not only was Jesus speaking to a Samaritan woman but an immoral woman! She already had three strikes against her: She was hated for her ethnicity; disrespected for her gender, and ostracized for her sin. When Jesus spoke to her, He did not talk about moral living but about worship. Why not talk about sexual purity or verses about holiness? Because Jesus wanted to teach her the source and the weapon of worship.

The source of worship is God. To worship Him requires seeing Him as the source, not your horrible lifestyle. The weapon of worship is speaking about God when you are fighting those horrible thoughts of your sin. Talk out loud and make the enemy run. Jesus was saying that if you can worship, you can face anything—your checkered past, your sketchy present, and your troublesome future.

No matter what you have done or what you are going through, I encourage you to worship God. Choose to praise Him at all times, and you will overcome any current or future obstacle in your life.

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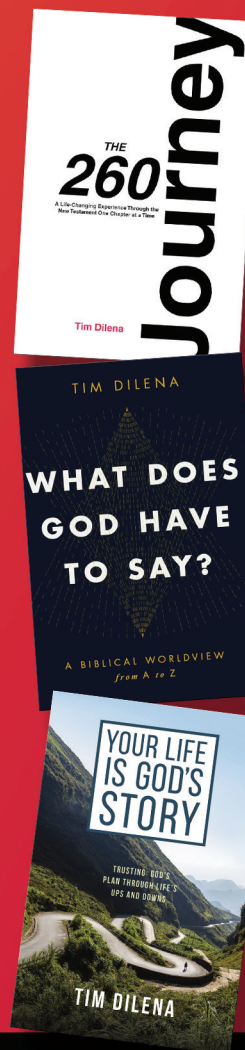
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Responding to the Need at the Mexican Border

02
by ChildCry

Amidst the humanitarian crisis at the US/Mexico border, numerous children are crying out in hunger. We are not siding with any political ideas, but we cannot close our eyes to the needs of so many people, especially children.

Our feeding program partner, ChildCry, in Reynosa, Mexico is responding to these children's plight. Many are without their parents. We are assisting our partner in providing breakfast during the chilly mornings. Hot chocolate and egg tacos with rice and beans on some days; sandwiches, juice, milk, and crackers on other days. Together, we bring joy to their stomachs and gladden their hearts.

Each child and each family at the border have a unique story, but they all share the exhaustion from their long journey. They are hungry from days without food, and their clothes and shoes are worn out. Our heavenly Father hears their cries, and thanks to your generous

support, we can respond to those cries with food and prayers.

We are not merely addressing the immediate need for food to quell hunger, our partners also understand that behind the physical hunger are souls yearning for Jesus. This is more than a food outreach; it's an evangelistic opportunity for children to find a new life in Jesus Christ.

Thank you for supporting those in need.



A Timely Message From R.T. Kendall



Each time our dear friend and resident theologian R.T. Kendall visits Summit, his messages resonate deeply. His words are not a mere sermon but a profound call to action, a challenge, and an invitation to embark on a journey of learning from the ultimate Teacher—Jesus Christ.

In his most recent chapel visit, he reminded students of Jesus' timeless invitation and command to learn from Him. Jesus' invitation goes beyond mimicry—it's a beckoning to come, to take His yoke, and to keep learning from Him. He emphasized the privilege of having Jesus personally extend this invitation to learn directly from Himself through His Word. "The next great awakening," he highlighted, "won't rely on spiritual superstars but on people like you who earnestly seek to learn from Jesus."

He shared some personal stories illustrating the dedication and commitment required to please God, even when it means standing alone or sacrificing personal recognition. He emphasized that true wisdom, authority, and fearlessness comes from the Holy Spirit, not merely from academic pursuits.

As chapel came to a close, he left us with the comforting assurance that God's timing is perfect and that our ultimate joy comes from knowing we've pleased Him. He encouraged us to seek rest in Jesus, find assurance in His authority, and delight in His pleasure above all else.

Let us embrace the challenge to continually learn from Jesus, to

prioritize His Word above all else, and to find our greatest joy in pleasing Him alone. Thank you, R.T. Kendall, for your continued time, your wisdom, and for sharing these profound insights with us.



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