

## **Singing to God. 1 Chronicles 16:23-36**

Disclaimer: Material from this message was adapted in part from messages found on the Sermon Central website.

When we last saw David, he was triumphantly bringing the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. As the parade of 30,000 priests, musicians and nobility entered the city, David – lost in worship – was dancing before the Lord with all his might, while his wife Michal, wrapped in her own sense of self, looked on from a safe distance. Sadly, her disdain for David’s dancing in worship marked the end of their relationship, which is what can happen when one truly worships while another simply watches. But since we are done with that story, today let’s return to the rest of David’s celebration before the Lord to see if we can learn WHY we should also worship God the way David worshipped.

Once in Jerusalem, David placed the Ark in a new tent and appointed priests to make continuous thank offerings to God before it. He also appointed other priests to play music before the Lord, and still others to sing songs of praise to God; songs which he himself had written.

Being a talented musician from his youth, David had probably already composed many songs, 73 of which are included in the book of Psalms, and would do so for the rest of his life. But here in Chronicles is the first written record of a song David had personally composed and today’s scripture portion is actually from the second stanza of that song. Separately these first and second stanzas appear again in our Bible as Psalms 105 and 96.

So Let’s take a closer at David’s praise song to God to see why losing ourselves in worship should matter as much to us as it did to David.

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Why do we come here to worship, Sunday after Sunday, 52 Sundays a year for 5, 10, 30 years or even a whole lifetime? Why get up early Sunday morning, getting ready, getting the children dressed, driving to church in all sorts of weather, sometimes not feeling too well ourselves, angry at the government, worried about our health and financial problems, dressed in our best and on our best behavior, walking into the building, greeting friends, singing hymns, praying prayers, reading Scripture, listening to sermons, bringing our offering, taking the bread and the cup? Because all of this is a part of what we call “worship”. But why do we worship?” Why does worship matter?

In this second stanza of his song, David wrote...

*Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;*

1 Chronicles 16:23-25

There are four basic reasons why we worship and why it matters. **First, because God is worthy of our worship.** Which is exactly what worship is doing: declaring worthiness. Worship, worthiness, worth, they all come from the same root; so whatever we worship we are declaring as having value, having worth to us, and being worthy of our worship.

David further instructs us to ....

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name ...  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice,  
let them say among the nations, 'The LORD is king!' 1  
Chronicles 16:29-31

"Ascribe" is a word we seldom use these days, it means to regard a quality as belonging –in this case – to a person. Hence, our worship belongs to God, Who is certainly worthy of our worship because He is the creator of the Universe, He created the fish in the sea and the birds in the air. He hung the stars of the sky and designed every strand of DNA in your body. He is also the Savior of the World and provider of all your needs. He has committed to love you unconditionally and He gave His only Son to die on the cross for the sake of your sins. Thus He is worthy of all praise.

As king of the nations, God is also worthy of praise and thanksgiving from every tribe, people and tongue for what He has done and continues to do in our lives. Every time we get a glimpse of heaven in the Scriptures, we see the angels and heavenly host worshiping God and offering up praise, "*singing in a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!*" (Revelation 5:12)

**Second, worship helps us fulfill our life purpose,** because we were designed for worship. David opened his song of praise with these words,

*Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him, tell of all his wonderful works. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.*  
(vs. 8-10)

Sometimes we think we become a Christian and then we become a worshiper. But the truth is, every one of us was worshiping long before we placed our faith in Jesus Christ. There is something inside of us that longs for and searches for something of meaning and significance to give ourselves to. You were wired to say with your words and life to someone or something: *"You are worthy to me. You matter to me. You are of ultimate significance to me."* *You and I will determine with our lives how we spend and invest our time, our resources and our attention."*

Everybody is worshiping and everybody is building their life around someone or something that they have deemed worth of their allegiance. As Bob Dylan said, *"You may serve the devil or you may serve the Lord, but you gotta serve somebody."* **Who you serve is who you worship.** Either you worship the God of Creation and the Redeemer of all humanity or you're going to worship money, material possessions, yourself, your family, or something else. But you're going to worship something because that's who you are. That's why worship matters to you.

### **The third reason our worship matters is because we become what we worship.**

The poet Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote,

The gods we worship write their names on our faces ...  
Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship,  
for we are worshipping what we are becoming  
*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

*"The gods we worship write their names on our faces, be sure of that. And a man will worship something - have no doubt about that either. He may think that his tribute is paid in the secret dark recesses of his heart but it will come out. That which dominates will determine his life and his character.*

***Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for we are worshipping what we are becoming."***

Whatever you value most eventually ends up transforming you. It can be a new relationship, a new car, or a new job. It will consume your time, your energy, your thoughts, your passion and ultimately your whole life. We were made in the image of God and like the angels we were intended to focus our worship on God, celebrating His character, His attributes, His heart, His acts of love and salvation. In the process our worship then transforms us, changing our character into His character and our heart into His heart. We begin to see the world through the eyes of God and respond to the

world with the heart of God ... or whatever else it is that you are worshipping. That's why what you worship, matters to you.

**Fourth, worship is fuel for our soul.** Yes, worship is about declaring God's worthiness (remember, worship is not about us!), but worship also does something for us. As one song phrases it, praise and worship is the wind beneath our wings, it lifts us up to stand on mountains. In his song, David tells us to....

<p><b>Seek</b> the LORD and his strength, Seek his presence continually. <b>Remember</b> the wonderful works he has done, His miracles, and the judgments he uttered, 12 Chronicles 16:11-12</p>
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Worship gives us a new perspective; God's perspective. When we really worship God, we see things differently. We move from a worldly perspective to an eternal perspective on life and circumstances.

Worship also helps us to understand God's sovereignty, to see that God is in control. There are times in our life – like the world events of this past year – when we feel everything is spinning out of control and it is in those times when we most need to be reminded that God's in control.

I learned a new word this week. All of this year's tragic events has given me a powerful case of the morbs. Deriving from the word morbid, "**morbs**" means a temporary sense of melancholy. It was a very popular word in the late 1800's which I think is again fitting for our world today. So while I do occasionally struggle with the morbs, I just have to remember that I have read the Book and I know who wins in the end; and then as I turn to God in worship and praise, my world grows brighter.

Worship also increases our desire to obey God. The more we worship God, the better we get to know Him. The more we know Him, the deeper our relationship becomes and the greater our desire to please Him.

Finally worship gives us physical, emotional and spiritual rest. True worship brings peace to our spirit and gives us the rest we need from a world-weary heart. When we really worship, it gives us conviction and direction an eternal perspective on life and a deepening commitment to follow and worship God all the more. It is God who saves our soul, but it is our life of worship that transforms us into God's people.

That's why losing your "self" in worship is so important in your life, because it can transform your life; always for the better.

David concluded his song with,

*O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.  
Say also: 'Save us, O God of our salvation, gather and rescue us from among the  
nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name, and glory in your praise.*

1 Chronicles 16:34-36

Every day, we should be giving thanks to the Lord, for His steadfast love that endures forever and it is because it is God who saves us and not we ourselves. If you daily dwell on that for a while, you can't help but get lost in worship ... and maybe even dance a bit.

At the conclusion of David's song of worship, scripture records, *Then all the people said 'Amen!' and praised the Lord* (vs. 36). Which, as we once again come to this celebratory table, is what we should now be doing.

Amen? (amen.)