

The Anchor of Worship

Romans 12:1-2

INTRODUCTION:

Music Makers

When recording artist Pat Boone was two-and-a-half million dollars in debt, this verse was among those that initiated change in his life:

O sing to the Lord a new, song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth!
Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day (Ps. 96:1–2).

Subsequently, he wrote his book, *A New Song*. There is a sense in which the Bible is a music library; it is filled with poetry, songs of praise, and promise. Aristotle maintained that music was the most moral of all the arts.

Life at times is overwhelming and daunting, and even may feel paralyzing as we face uncertainties and possibly missteps that we have taken in our decision-making. Worship is necessary for these moments because it allows our soul to come into the presence of God which anchors our soul to rest in Him. This was the very invitation of Jesus.

Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Romans 12:1-2 ESV

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

I. Worship anchors our lives into the reality of the Life of Christ (12:1a)

- A. “In view of God’s mercy...” Everything is motivated by the life of Jesus.
- B. Notice Paul urges us in view of God’s mercy i.e., compassion/pity but why? To allow the work of Christ to always be a reminder of why we are doing what we are doing both in the good times and in the bad.
- C. There is a sense of urgency in Paul here coming out of the last three chapters (9-11) which is reflective of the goodness of God which brought forth salvation. That we are chosen and desired, therefore, as a result of this live your life in light of God’s good favor towards you.
- D. All our worship should come from a place of gratitude, and no better way of this than to keep the sacrifice of Christ in our view.

I counted dollars while God counted crosses,
I counted gains while He counted losses,
I counted my worth by the things gained in store
But He sized me up by the scars that I bore.
I coveted honors and sought for degrees,
He wept as He counted the hours on my knees;
I never knew until one day by the grave
How vain are the things that we spend life to save;
I did not yet know until my loved one went above
That richest is he who is rich in God’s love.

—*The Brethren Evangelist*

II. Worship anchors our lives into the Sacrifice of Surrender (12:1b)

A. Worship is a presentation of our lives to God.

B. “Our bodies...” would have been understood as “the whole of us.”
This would involve our personality and all that make us who we are.

Matthew 22:36-40

³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

C. We are to become living sacrifices which is a testimony in the way we live our lives before the Lord.

Galatians 2:20 ESV

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

In a church service one Sunday, the offering plate came to a little girl at the end of a row. She took the plate, put it down on the floor, and stood in it. When the usher asked her what she was doing, she responded, “In Sunday school I learned that I was supposed to give myself to God.”

D. This living sacrifice is a presentation or offering to God that results in our worship/service. Here we see again as we have before the idea of worship and service are one and the same.

λατρεύω. – to serve/worship

- the word is used in an extended, loose and almost figurative or spiritualized sense to include every form of divine worship.

Think of how the idea of a worship service came to be. We even put these two terms together “worship & service” to describe what we have each week at church, but has it really clicked that worship and service are one and the same? Therefore, if you do not serve, you have not worshipped.

E. Is your life a pleasing sacrifice unto God? Have we fallen like the priests in the book of Malachi trying to lame sacrifices, or in our case

live a lame life to God, yet try to receive the benefits? Would God say our lives are not pleasing to Him?

Malachi 1:6-9 ESV

A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, ‘How have we despised your name?’⁷ By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, ‘How have we polluted you?’ By saying that the LORD’s table may be despised.⁸ When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts.⁹ And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts.

III. Worship anchors our lives in Transformation (12:2a)

- A. Do not conform... simply means “do not be like...”
- B. It comes with the idea of not letting the world shape our lives.
- C. How many of us stand guilty because the world continues to shape our lives and the lives of our children after coming to know Jesus?
- D. We are to be shaped by the hands of Christ.

Jeremiah 18:1-6 ESV

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ²“Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” ³So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. ⁴And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.

⁵Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁶“O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the LORD. Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.

IV. Worship anchors our lives into the Will of God (12:2b)

- A. Many of us today are driven by our “**stinking thinking.**”
- B. Many of us struggle with our minds because we have not disciplined our thinking, therefore, our bad thinking leads to our feelings which leads to our choices, often bad.
- C. When we come to know Christ, we are to worship the Lord not through an emotional experience, but in the way we think.
- D. The back half of this verse 2 is focusing on the reality that we need to change our way of thinking, and as Paul would say assume the mind of Christ. This goes back to the greatest commandment as well.

Philippians 2:1-11

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- E. One of the more popular questions I get in ministry is how to discover God’s will. The truth is that God’s will is not often hard to discover, but we have no place for His will in our way of thinking. Therefore, we must change (repent) our way of thinking so that we can discover God’s good, acceptable, and perfect will.

E.C. Baird

You ask: “What is the will of God?”
Well, here’s the answer true;
“The nearest thing, that should be done,
That he can do—through you!”

*Notice God’s will is the state of being available to His service.

Take All But Himself

In his *Journal*, John Wesley relates this incident: “Today I visited one who was ill in bed. She had buried seven of her family in six months, and had just heard that her beloved husband was cast away at sea. I asked, “Don’t you fret at any of these things?”

She answered with a loving smile on her pale cheeks, “Oh, no! How can I fret at anything which is in the will of God? Let Him take all besides; He has given me Himself. I have learned to love and praise Him every moment.” ”

CONCLUSION

Chuck Swindoll

To be used of God. Is there anything more encouraging, more fulfilling? Perhaps not, but there is something more basic: to meet with God. To linger in His presence, to shut out the noise of the city and, in quietness, give Him the praise He deserves. Before we engage ourselves in His work, let's meet Him in His Word... in prayer... in worship.