

Made to Worship – Your Purpose in Life

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MAIN VERSES

[Ecclesiastes 12:13](#) · [Matthew 6:21](#) · [Exodus 34:20](#) · [Deuteronomy 16:16](#) · [Matthew 25:1-13](#)

Breaking from Our Plans

I admit it—last week was a fast-paced week, and this week was a little fast-paced as well. I was struggling because I hadn't planned a message. You know, as people, we love to plan. Anybody like to plan, to have an idea? We like to know what's coming ahead of time, know how things are going to go, the workflow, logistics. And here we are Tuesday of this week, and I'm sitting here not knowing what I'm going to—I mean, I don't have a clue. I start reading the Torah portion. "Hey, Father, reveal something, give us something that would be edifying for the fellowship. If there's something you would want presented, if there's something that needs to be met, maybe just one individual, a willing vessel." I started reading this week's Torah portion—it starts out with Aaron raising his hands up to bless the people. And raising our hands, we do it for a blessing when we bless the children or when we pray over everybody. But do you know when we also raise our hands? In the biblical narrative, when Israel raised their hands in worship?

The Father revealed several things to me in my own heart about our purpose in life, about what we're supposed to be doing, about what the vocation of Adam was in the garden. I mean, what was he supposed to be doing?

We know what it says: "Fear God and keep the commandments." That's the whole duty of a man. That's what we're supposed to be doing. That's the expectation. Morally, when you get a job, you have the big chart that they usually stick in the bathroom because they have to put it up—just the ethics and everything that you're supposed to do. You can do this. You can't do that. You're supposed to follow these laws, and so forth. These are the commandments. These are not the goal. The goal is not to keep God's commandments. That's like the minimum. That's the bar. Especially as followers of Yeshua, we're supposed to be going above and beyond that.

Beyond the Minimum

Anyone ever done a pull-up before? Do a pull-up, and then if you can do it, the goal is to actually keep going. You build up real strong and keep going. That's a commandment. It's not your goal. You don't just hang on. You're supposed to pull up and go over it. You're supposed to be pursuing the will of the Father and the vocation that He put on mankind in the garden. And I'm going to assert today that we were made to worship. That was our vocation. When the Father was designing mankind, that's what He had in mind. I'm going to make these—Adam, worship. "Adam, it's not good for you to be alone. Eve"—what's her name? Chava. What's that mean, Chava? It has to do with life—bringing to life, right? She was the mother of life, but that's not enough. "I want you to be fruitful and multiply." More worshipers. Fill the earth. Worshipers. You were made to worship. And I hope that this message is not taken in vain. I hope that the Father is able to reach someone like He has me with this message.

And so when we talk about the idea of worship, and we understand praise and worship, we all come in here and sit down, and Gideon says "Shabbat Shalom," and then we stand up, and then Christy will start singing, or Gideon will start singing, or Selma will start playing the piano and singing. Worship was beautiful today, wasn't it? And we understand that this is a reverent time, and this is a time where we enter into corporate fellowship, meaning together, oneness. As a people, as a community, we're going to go as one before the Father and bring worship to Him.

The Depth of Worship as a Lifestyle

But unfortunately, in 2017, here in the U.S., we lose sight of the depth of what worship is as a lifestyle, as an expectation. And so the word "worship" is fascinating because it actually stems from the Anglo-Saxon word—to be of worth, or worth-ship, right? And it means to give worth. Along with its counterpart "value," it gives the impression of wealth, sustenance, rarity, something special. Give worth to. And so when we take this concept and we go before the Father and we give worth—how much is the Father worth? How special is your relationship with the King? Can you just go around and get another God as good as the God that we have? It's a rarity. It's special.

And so in corporate worship, how do you respond to that when it's time? This is the time that we come together to worship. How do you respond in giving worth to God? I would hope it would be with passion and a very real sense of what is happening. It's not about the lights being turned on or off. It's not about the stage being high enough so you can see the leaders leading worship. It's not about the instruments, the singers. It's not about the building. It's about an

opportunity to come together with other believers and say we are going to give worth to something that is undefinably priceless.

How do we do that? In Exodus chapter 12, we have the Passover account and all the plagues are happening. And right before the last plague happens, Israel is acknowledging God, that He's working in their midst. I mean, they're not out yet, but He's working in their midst. And [Exodus 12:27](#) says, "And the people bowed their heads and worshipped." You guys know the root of the Hebrew word for worship is "chava." It means to bring to life—or to give life to, just like Eve. And I found that fascinating because that's the foundation of the heart of worship: to rise up and become alive to what you were made to be, what you were made to do as an image of God.

What Are You Most Fearful of Losing?

Do you guys know Martin Luther? Maybe we're not fans of him. Maybe we are. I don't know how you guys feel about church history. He had a quote, his definition of worship. And what he says about worship, he talks about the God that you serve. He says this: "Your God is that which you most fear to lose. Your God is that which you most fear to lose." And so when you give worth to something—worship—you're esteeming, venerating the item that is most precious to you in your life.

What is the item that you are most fearful of losing in your life today? It's a hard question. It's a very difficult question because the first thing we think of as parents is our kids, maybe our spouse, maybe our family. Then you get kind of into the secular securities of life, maybe your job. I don't know—your friends, your house, your car. I don't know. At what point, if someone asked you this question, "What are you most fearful of losing?" how far down would God be on the list? How long would it take you to get to that? "Oh, and God, yeah." Hey, what things do you love in life? "I love my cat, my dog, my family." What about God? "Oh, yeah, of course I love God." How far down on the list is the one thing that you should be most fearful of losing in your life?

When we talk about giving life and worship being founded in that, where did the life of man begin? Not a trick question. Where did the life of mankind begin? Christi was talking about it up here—the garden, exactly. In the temple series, remember we discussed how the garden seemed to be like a prototype of the temple? Of the temple, exactly. Man's origins are found in scripture. To be in the presence of God. That's where the origins of mankind began—in the garden.

In the Image of God

In the presence of God. And man was created in the image of who? God, of course. And as God's image, his vocation was to reflect God's glory into all the world. Into all the what? All the world? Everybody, where? All the world.

So the job that mankind had was to be fruitful and multiply, to subdue the earth and fill it? No, no, no, no, no, no. That would mean they'd have to leave the garden, right? They'd have to leave the garden to go fill the earth? Was that God's plan? That man would leave the garden? No, I wouldn't think so. Then how are they going to subdue the earth and fill it with more images without leaving Eden? By expanding Eden. That was the call of mankind. You take the atmosphere of worship in the garden and you expand the borders.

We see that done several times in Scripture. Wherever the front gate is, if you expand it, Samson grabbed the front gate and pulled it forward and expanded the borders of the city. That's why they couldn't kill him. The job that you were made to have was expand Eden. The place where God's presence is worshipped. Eden was the place of God's presence, and God's presence is a place of worship. The expansion of Eden is therefore an expansion of worship.

Multiplying Worshipers

Our job is to go out and worship God before all the world. Duplicate ourselves. Make other worshipers. And multiply and fill the earth. We always think, "Oh, sex." It's not completely the context. Multiply. Fill the earth. JK Beale is a fantastic author on this very topic. He states that worship fuels the mission of Eden. Bearers of the image of God reflect His presence in worship and are propelled forward in their mission to fill the earth with the reflections of God's glory.

Now I have a question. As believers, does the presence of God surround you, or is the presence of God with you? I know it sounds like a bold question. Is the presence of God with you? The presence of God. Some people would say no, we approach the presence of God in a sense.

God's Presence Within You

[John 14](#) has a very fascinating verse. It states, and I will ask the Father—this is Yeshua speaking—and he's speaking about a comforter that's coming, a helper that's coming, the ruach that's coming. And he will give you another helper to be with you forever, even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he dwells with you and he will be with you. And I'm not going to go into the depths of

digging through this verse and chopping it apart. I just have a simple question: If God's spirit is within you, is God's presence with you? The spirit of God dwells within you as a believer. God's presence is within you. You're his image. That's what images do.

If we go back to the ancient Near East, carve out an image, right? Just like [Jeremiah 10](#) talks about. And then you'd have a ceremony, maybe a mouth-opening ceremony like in Egypt. And the pagan priest would invoke the idea of a spirit coming down from the heavenly throne of the pagan god and it would enter through the nostrils and the mouth of this little pagan idol. And the pagan idol would come alive. And of course they'd rush it into the temple after this inauguration and worship it and do all that pagan stuff. The original image of God was not some idol, was not some piece of wood overlaid with gold or silver. It was a heart of flesh. And so you're that image.

Your purpose through Christ has brought you far from God and placed you near to Him. That's the purpose. That's what's happened to you, your journey. That's what [Ephesians 2:13](#) speaks about. You've been restored to God's presence. You're a new creation, just like Adam was. You're the image of God. And so what does that mean? It means you are made to worship. I hope to impress on you today, and we're going to talk a little bit about some history here. When I say that, I hope you leave and remember one thing: not all the stuff we're fixing to talk about with history or Israelites or anything else matters. I want you to realize one simple fact from Scripture, and that is what you're supposed to be doing out there.

A Reflection of the King

You're supposed to be a reflection of the King of the Universe. Don't remember anything else. You can go to sleep at this point, I don't care. Remember that point. That's what an image is. Reflection. How do people notice the shine? Through worship. You don't just worship for thirty-five minutes when you come to fellowship, although it's nice. You worship in the way that you carry yourself in the world. You worship by seeing someone who needs prayer and not hesitating to reach out and say, "Hey, it's okay. I'm an ambassador of the King. Let me pray for you."

It's your purpose to not allow your own emotions or feelings to get in the way of God's work. How many of you guys really like praying for folks sometimes? Me, with complete strangers. We got a couple guys. Is it ever awkward? Sure. Is it kind of fun when it's awkward? I mean, sometimes, yeah. It's like a game. I know what I'm doing. Sometimes it's a little awkward because a person is a little hesitant. You don't know what's going on in their life. Maybe they're

going to be offended. Maybe your heart isn't in it, but you've got to pray for them anyway. Well, how are you going to pray if your heart's not in it, if you're not passionate about it? What words am I going to say? I might stumble around and not be excited.

That's not your job—to carry your emotions into work. It's nice if you're passionate about your job. It definitely helps. But as we're going to discuss in a few minutes, emotions follow motion. When you stick your hand out and pray for someone and they feel a connection, they feel love, they feel kindness—even if you don't love them and you don't want to be kind to them, it's irrelevant. They're still feeling those feelings. If they're not coming from you, who do you think they're coming from? God. Why? Because you're a vessel. And your only task is to be willing to be used by God as a conduit for his love, his mercy, his justice, his grace. Be the image. Be the mediator. Be the conduit for God's love. That's all that's required.

And so this has to do with worship. That is worship—living it out. Everything you do should show God's worth to you. So what is God's value? It should be seen in every single thing that we do.

When Israel Forgot God

Judges 3:7—this is a fascinating verse. It states that the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. They forgot the Lord their God, and they served Baals, Belim, and Asheroth. Now we read these names often in Scripture, quite a lot during the time of Elijah. Asherah—that's the Hebrew term for a major goddess in Canaanite mythology. After the discovery of the Ugarit tablets in 1929, we know a lot more about her than we did previously. But she was a consort to a deity we call El in Canaanite myth. Now, El was the top dog in this pagan religion, right?

And you guys know where Canaan is? The land of Canaan. We call it Israel today. It used to be Canaan. Abraham walked in there. It was Canaan. The Israelites took it over. Same land. That's why it's relevant. That's why I'm talking about Canaanite paganism right now. And so Asherah was the consort to El. She was pretty high up. She was like a queen, if you will. At least in the older Canaanite pantheon. And she's not to be confused with Ishtarte. Ishtarte is another term for Ishtar. Everybody's heard of Ishtar, right? Floats around the internet. Asherah is not Ishtar. Asherah was a mother deity, right? Bare-breasted, big hips, mother deity. She was the supreme mother, gave wealth, gave blessing, right? Pray to her if you want favor, if you will. Ishtar was more of a violent, feminine warrior spirit. Not related. Ishtar really wasn't even that big of a

fertility deity. But Asherah was highly worshiped. We see it all through Scripture. Israelites loved Asherah. They'd get drawn to her, forget God, and they began to worship Asherah.

What Fertility Really Means

Now, when I say fertility goddess, what do you guys think? I know what you're thinking because we're in America in 2017. What do you think? Having children. Okay, that is the correct definition of fertility most people think of. Lust—for some reason, I don't know. A lot of people associate fertility with sex, and that is simply not true. It wasn't in Canaanite mythology. It's still not true today. We limit that terminology because it's all we know in our society.

What if fertility was more than just having children? What if fertility was having wealth? My wife and I were sitting at the breakfast table yesterday morning. And Jenny smiled real big and she was looking into our backyard and she said, "Oh, baby birds. I love animals. Where are the baby birds?" I'm looking around. What are you talking about? She said, "The mama just landed beside that bush and the little baby birds are pecking on the ground." And I looked closer and I could see these little heads bobbing—itty-bitty robins just pecking the ground—and there's a mama walking around. And guys, I've seen baby birds in nests, but I've never seen them with their mother on the ground like this, pecking food. It was one of those beautiful things I've seen.

Does anyone ever feel butterflies when they see little baby animals? And I realized, wow, it has been a year since I've seen little baby birds. I wonder why it's been so long since I've seen little baby animals. Oh wait, it's spring! Winter's over. Birds laying eggs. They're hatching offspring. Life is coming out in springtime. It's a fertility season. It is what it is.

Agricultural Deities and Abundance

That's why a lot of major deities, like Asherah and Baal, if you will, were based on agricultural aspects. Fertility had nothing to do with offspring. And so imagine viewing fertility as your crops being bountiful this year. Imagine seeing fertility as your bank account being pretty big. Imagine seeing fertility as having all the new iOS devices in 2017 and the Watch 2, baby. Imagine that being fertility. And I want you to slide that over to the worship of a fertility deity such as Asherah. But before we go any further, I want to talk about something. What do you guys think of this?

You Become What You Behold

This is a woman and her dog, right? They kind of look alike, don't they? Yeah, everyone says they kind of look alike. But look at these two—the way their heads kind of look alike. You guys see it? Is it in your mind right now? Am I seeing things?

Scientific fact: people tend to resemble their pets. Matt, I know—you just drove off a bridge there. We were talking about Asherah and now I'm talking about dogs. Bear with me. Scientific fact: people tend to resemble their pets. Why? Personality, maybe. Spouses tend to resemble each other after a while. It's not weird. We start mimicking each other's facial expressions, the way they look. So when I look at these pictures, I'm like, "Who is resembling whom? Is the dog changing to resemble the human, or is the human changing to resemble the dog?" I don't know. I mean, scientific fact: why? Because we look like what we look at.

Guys, when you start resembling and mimicking the little things—your wife's facial expressions—you're golden. It means you're committed, right? I've heard stories, I don't know if they're true, about heartbeats syncing up. Now, our vocation was not meant for us to resemble our spouses or our pets, turtles, or whatever. But spiritually, to represent and resemble the God of creation on a spiritual level.

I don't know. Matt, you keep saying that. Well, I'm going to keep saying it. We're created in His image. It's fascinating because we have a Psalm that talks about this: [Psalm 115:4-8](#). It says this, speaking about, of course, Israel: "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak. Eyes, but they do not see. They have ears, but they do not hear. Noses, they don't smell. They have hands, but they don't feel. Feet, but they can't walk. And they do not make a sound in their throat. Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them."

We become what we worship. We become what we worship.

The Asherah Problem

The worshipers of Asherah—do you know how they portrayed their worship, how they acted it out there? I mean, of course, I'm sure they could go to the temple and put on some good music and lower the lights a little bit, put on a fog machine and they can go to town. I'm sure that's corporate worship. But when they left their pagan temple and went on with their life, how would they acknowledge the worthiness of this pagan god that they believed in?

The goddess was a fertility goddess—a big goddess, an older Canaanite myth. And so a worshiper of Asherah would become what they worship in order to give back worship, to reflect it back. A worshiper of Asherah would seek to buy the latest and greatest gadgets and show

them off to their friends and family. "Look, I gotta have this new iPhone right now. I'm gonna stand in line for seven hours." Why? Because I can't wait to show it to my friends and show everybody that new double camera feature on that new iPhone 7. I'd like an iPhone 7—I'm just saying, I'm picking it as an older model. That would be a characteristic of a worshiper of Asherah.

But not just there. They wouldn't just stop there. They'd be the first one to buy that Mercedes, regardless of if they can afford it or not. Why? They want that image. They want to show how great their goddess is. Why? Because that's an attribute of the goddess. They want to be the ones living in that bigger and better home, even if they don't need it. "What are you going to do with all that space?" "Whatever I want. Praise be to Asherah. She got it for me." Wealth, fertility. You set yourself up to reflect where your wealth came from, the fertility deity that you worship.

You know about keeping up with the Joneses? Anyone ever felt like they're trying to keep up with the Joneses? "Man, they got this. Can we just get this too? I want a new car, man. They got a faster computer with a GTX 1080 in it. Why can't I have one?" The Joneses in our age, in Canaanite myth, would have been the worshipers of Asherah. Why? Because you become what you worship. You reflect what you worship.

Yeshua said it best. This is always a provoking verse because every single one of us knows that our treasure, our finances, the things that we value in our life are not where they're supposed to be. Every single one of us. And so this verse is always condemning. Every time I read it, I could do better with showing God where my heart truly is.

Baal and the Hunger for Power

God also hated it when Israel worshipped a deity that became known as Baal, or Baal, if you will. It means master. That's not the deity. We know that the name of the deity was Hadad, and it became Baal-Hadad later in Canaanite myth. Regardless.

Now, Hadad—I didn't put a picture up there. Hadad was represented. If you type in Hadad or Baal, B-A-A-L, Google or whatnot, you typically see a relief of him standing, and he's portrayed as standing with a little funny-looking hat, and he's usually holding a rod that connects to the ground, and there's greenery growing up it because he's giving life to the ground. But he also has his right hand up—the might of your right hand—his right hand held up, and sometimes it's holding a spear, a sword, a knife, usually it's holding a club or a fist, and this is for domination, glory, overtaking enemies.

He was a storm god. And if he had a club, he'd bang it around, and that's thunder. He was kind of a god of war, but also kind of in charge of giving rain for the crops, so kind of fertility.

How would the worshipers of Baal appear to walk around in life? Well, as we know. Have you ever met someone who's totally and 100% focused on overtaking everybody in their path? Someone who comes against them, someone who disagrees with them—they condemn that person as an enemy. "I need to be right. I need to overtake them." Someone who is way too overzealous about stuff that should not be a thing. Someone who's not focused on pursuing God's kingdom and humility, but someone who's focused on building their own kingdom with power and violence. Glory.

That would be the attitude of someone who considers battle their priority, the god they run after. Why? Because you become what you worship. You reflect the God that you worship.

You Become What You Worship

Think about that. Because all of us here today say that we worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—Yahweh, Hashem, the God of creation. All of us say that we do with our mouths, but our hearts are far from Him. And Yeshua says where your treasure is, that's where your heart will be. So where's your treasure? And that's where your heart is. Most likely, if it's far from God, then where is it? What is your God? What are you giving worth to? What are you building up and changing your character to reflect? You should be able to spot it pretty easily.

What are your priorities? You were made to worship and reflect.

Passover in Jerusalem

When the disciples were going through, right, and they were going to have this upper room—they were going to have supper with their rabbi, if you will, Yeshua—and they got all excited. You guys ever been to Jerusalem? Have you ever walked down the street? I mean, the modern day Jerusalem. Maybe a couple of us have been there. Does it get crowded? Have you guys ever walked through the Arab market, right? It's crowded. You're bumping into folks during peak tourist season.

Now, I want you to imagine having sandals on, walking through crowds of people in Jerusalem. Just like that, bumping into them, watching your wallet. "Don't touch my iPhone in my back pocket." You keep it close, bumping into people. Now, everybody has an animal—everybody has

sheep or goats walking around. Why? Because it's Pesach, right? You have the Pesach, the Haggadai. We have all the offerings going up to the temple mount.

So now, all these people you're bumping into have animals walking through the streets of Jerusalem. I'll give you one guess at this question: What do animals do? And you got some Chacos on, right? Little rainbows walking through the street. Do you think there's a chance that, among all the dust and mud being kicked up on your feet, you're going to get a little bit of poo somewhere on your sandal, your shoe, your toes? Maybe. I'd walk around my backyard to get something out of the shed and step in something. I mean, it's ridiculous.

Think about it: hundreds of thousands of people during Passover week in the first century. Do you think there's a chance that your feet would get nasty?

And they went up to the room. And Yeshua already had it all set up if you read the story. He had the water beside the door. He had the cloth beside the door. I mean, it was all set up. And you could just see him smirking. He's like, "I'm so proud of them. I know they're going to pass this test."

The Master Washes Feet

Matthew would probably walk in first, looks down, and he's got a little poo all over his toe, I don't know, and he sees the water there to wash his feet. "Yeah, but if I wash my feet, he's always yakking about this servant stuff. Then I'm going to have to wash John's feet, and I know he'd be dink. I don't want to—Judas and all that. No, I ain't." So he just kind of walks past it.

John walks in behind him, looks. "Matthew walked past it, I'm going to walk past it, right?"

Every single disciple walking up to the door, and you could see Yeshua: "Come on, pick it up. Pick it up, pick it up. Come on, do it. Do what I taught you to do. You can be number one in the kingdom. You can be number one. Have the number one trophy if you pick this rag up right now and start scrubbing."

Judas comes in last, looks down. "Yeshua, really?" Judas goes and sits down.

Yeshua walks over, takes his robe off, puts on a servant's cloth, picks up the water. You can almost see him—rag after rag, foot after foot. You know how it is when your kids run in from the yard, they track through the kitchen, and you're wiping it up as you're walking over to whip them? Carrying the bucket of water over to his disciples, one by one, taking their feet, scrubbing the sweat off, scrubbing the mud off, scrubbing the poo off between their toes.

Yeshua, the master, the son of God, scrubbing crap off your feet. Because you weren't willing enough to take His teaching and implement it.

"No, you're sure? You can't wash my feet?" Yeshua: "You're not part of my kingdom if you don't let me—especially right now, Peter. The first will be last and the last will be first." That is the vocation that God has given to you—to be a servant.

"It's not about winning." "But I want to win." "Of course you do. It's called flesh, and it's of the devil—that motivation of glory and dominating everybody."

The Image of God and Service

Not one time did we sit patiently and make a court of whips. The zeal of His Father's kingdom wasn't for His glory. So when I talk about us being the image of God, I talk about God's will for us to stand in the job and be the employee of the month in the kingdom. How do you be number one in the kingdom? Be the last in the world. Grab the rag. You got some Dawn soap you can wash your hands after. Grab the rag and serve. No matter how dirty it looks. No matter if you want to or not. I don't want to do this. You think Yeshua wanted to do that? It doesn't matter. He had a mission and it was to bring heaven to earth, and He was the vessel to do that. It didn't matter if He wanted to or was happy about it. He did it. Motion precedes emotion.

Would you guys agree that an exchange takes place during services here—a type of exchange? See, we give God in worship. We come in and we're presenting our praises to God, and in exchange, He gives to us in His Spirit. He gives to us during the message when we're reading His Word and seeing something that pops out, the Spirit pricks our heart about something, or the Spirit reveals something to us that is edifying, something that can build us up in His kingdom. Do you agree that this exchange takes place?

Have you guys ever been impacted during services when we've read the scriptures? I sure have. Who is getting shortchanged in this exchange if we are casual in our arrival?

Coming Before the Father with Offerings

In the Torah, God said—it's a very compelling verse and a lot of prosperity ministries use this verse—"Do not come before me empty-handed." It's a commandment. When you come before the Father, you do not come empty-handed. When we come to His throne, we bring an offering of praise. In whatever form that is, we bring it. A gift of our worship. A gift showing Him honor. Is He worthy? Showing Him that we are focused on Him to give us life. You are the one who

gives us life. You are worthy. Knowing He is the only one that can instill true vitality within every breath that you take.

How does it make you feel? Maybe you guys have never met someone like this. I've met many. How does it make you feel when you hear someone say that they intentionally come to their church or fellowship late just to hear the preaching or the sermon or the message and they don't want to sit through all that boring praise and worship stuff? Anybody? I mean, has anyone ever met someone like that? Like, "Oh yeah, boring praise and worship stuff. I just want to come hear the message."

Do we not learn the weight of the parable of the ten maidens? Yet we still come late to a corporate time of worship. Which maidens are we aligning ourselves with when we don't make an attempt to arrive with anticipation of going before the Father as a community, as a people?

See, we can sit at home every morning and turn on worship music and pray to the Father, be on our face to the Father. That's awesome. That's a whole different ball game than when God said, "I want all of My people to come to Me in a community in worship." That's what fellowships are about—their communities, a corporate effort where we become one and declare the greatness of our God. To declare at this moment we will stand as one and enter the throne room of God, presenting our worship and praises.

Seed Time and Harvest

It's fascinating. I have a lot of discussion about this topic. Seed time harvest, right? We see this concept exploited in many progressive or prosperity fellowships. Seed time harvest. You plant a seed, you're going to get a harvest, right? Amen, brother! The reason why it's so exploited in so many churches today, especially mega churches, is the simple fact that it's true. It's a real concept. Even the secular world acknowledges it. They call it karma. It's a fact.

That seed time harvest—whatever you give, you will grow a harvest from and reap back. Churches take this and exploit it. We know better than to simply call it karma. See, Yeshua said in [Luke 6:38](#), if you forgive, you will be forgiven. If you give, it will be given back to you. In fact, He said whatever you give will determine the great measure in what is given back to you. In other words, the more seeds you plant, the bigger harvest you will get back.

Now, in the movement, we're trained to think, "Oh, anytime someone's talking about seed and harvest, he's talking about money." I AM talking about money, but I am NOT limiting that scope to money because money's like this much of the scope. The idea of seed time harvest is about whatever you plant in time, whatever you plant in energy, whatever you plant in prayer,

whatever you plant in education or training others, whatever you plant in giving of yourself, whatever you plant in scrubbing other people's feet—that will determine the measure of what harvest is produced and given back to you. If this principle stands, are we really going to complain when the following week the measure that we gave God in our attentiveness to prepare to go into corporate worship is measured back to us in the measure that we gave?

I don't know what that would look like. I mean, it could be something—something that would just roll and we wouldn't even notice. Going to the doctor, we're supposed to be there on time. The doctor all of a sudden just had a busy day he didn't plan on, and now we have to wait in the waiting room for an extra 35 minutes. To wait till the doctor's ready to see us at our confirmed appointment. I don't know. What will be the harvest when we do not fear losing God as our greatest fear in life?

First Fruits and Community Worship

Last week we discussed the concepts of first fruits, giving our first fruits to God. You guys remember that? That was fun, right? And we know that speaks of finances, but not just finances—first fruits of time and energy. You guys know I learned this from Pete. Actually, I can't wait for Pete to speak again. He says the things you care about most, you give three things to: time, energy, and money. That's what the Good Samaritan gave to the guy who got beat up—loving your neighbor. The things you love most, you give these three things to. These are the three things that we should give our first fruits back to.

Are you giving your best to God? When you arrive 10 to 15 minutes late to enter into His presence at a scheduled time of corporate worship?

If we were worshiping in the temple, would you plan on getting there on time? The temple, right? I mean, let's just pretend. Let's just pretend Solomon's temple. Okay, the excitement and the joy. Let's pretend that you have an opportunity to go and be present there as the priests begin the prayers, the worship, and the music, and you see people so excited with joy. You know what time of season the temple is dedicated? The season of our joy—Sukkot. The joy. The atmosphere. Alright guys, we're going to start at 11 a.m. That's when the services are going to start at the temple. Would you be excited about that? Would you get there like, "You know, I'm going to get there on time. I'll get there around 11 o'clock"? And then casually walk in 20 minutes late? Would that be something you would do? No, you'd be there hours earlier. I would. People hang out all night in front of Best Buy to buy a stupid TV on Black Friday. I'd be sitting out there for a week. "Is it ready yet? I can't wait. I'm praising God out here."

But it's not the same as going in with my community, with my brothers and sisters beside me, as one community. Is it too much to get to services that we are able to attend—the services of worship and praise with our brothers and sisters? To get to the only source we have? We don't have the temple. I mean, there's no main source. We have fellowships. Thank God we have brothers and sisters in the same area that can come together and lean on each other and pray for each other, speak words of encouragement into each other's lives. Isn't it cool to not have to sing the Shema alone on Shabbat? Is it too much to get to services 15 minutes before it starts in anticipation of joining and entering God's throne room with worship and praise?

What are our priorities when it comes to who and what we worship? Maybe it's not God that we're reflecting. That's an audit that we should put on ourselves daily. What is it that I'm reflecting? Sabbath is a relaxing day. It's a day of what? Rest. Are we so relaxed on the Sabbath that we devalue the time of corporate praise and worship to the very God that gave us the Sabbath?

The Power of Hands in Worship

Psalms 134 is a song of ascents: "Praise the Lord, all you servants of the Lord who minister by night in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise God." Hey! Alright, lift up your hands. Not gonna do it? Worship! We're gonna do it now. Yes, this is something like what was done in the biblical narrative with the ancient cult of Israel. This is what worship looked like—raise your hands up. Okay, you guys getting tired? That's fine. Put them down. Praise the Lord.

Oh, many scriptures, as we see in Lamentations and Psalms, speak about raising hands up in worship. Raising hands in blessing and prayer. Hands are important. Why are hands important? Jay, put your hands up. Or Jay, Jay, either one. Someone points a gun to you. Actually, don't even say get your hands up.

Open Hands Show Vulnerability

Someone points a gun to you. What's the first thing you typically would want to do? Why would we want to do this? Show that you're vulnerable. You win. Oh, you win. Open hands show vulnerability. In the ancient world, it exposed vital organs. You got a gun? Please don't kill me. I don't have anything in my hands. I'm not a threat to you. I surrender. And in the ancient world during battle, listen guys, I give up. Vital organs, like a dog rolling over.

You have the opportunity to kill me if you want. Please don't. I'm not a threat. I place myself vulnerable before you right now because you have overpowered me. You are more powerful than me. You are sovereign. I surrender.

Ancient Reliefs and Their Meaning

We see this relief from a tomb in Egypt. And we see the men showing their hands. I mean, this guy's flipped upside down. Showing their hands. It's a type of surrender, but it was also used in worship for the same types of principles. Showing, admitting, and honoring the person whom you're showing your palms to where they are compared to you, right?

And so I was really excited to find this a while back in Persia. We have some reliefs from Persopolis. It's a huge city of Persian reliefs and artifacts, and it was amazing. I have a few reliefs here. So this is a throne with a suzerain on top. You guys remember the suzerain vassal and the terminology? I'm going to do a message soon. So a suzerain is a supreme king. So there's a supreme king on top of this throne. And if you look, these are the legs of the thrones. I mean, who would want a throne like that? That'd be a throne of dignity.

The Suzerain and the Vassal

So we got these legs right here. And you notice all these people. And there's all different types of people underneath the suzerain. So most likely it was either defeated kings or servants, different types of servants. These are vassals. These are servants of the king who are now under the king, serving the king. And look what they're doing. They have their hands up. And what are their hands touching? The bottom of the throne. Now I want you to look at the very bottom. This is interesting. This is what makes everything so special. See their feet at the very bottom? Are their feet underneath the bottoms of the throne? So the feet of the throne, you'll see, are lifted up above their feet. You see that? These men are lifting up the throne they are under.

I lift my hands to you, God. What does that mean? Or at least in some cults in the ancient Near East, it meant, I serve you, God, and you are worthy, and I will lift up your throne, and I will carry you forward because you are worthy, and you are great, and you are awesome, and I will be a part of lifting up your throne to honor you.

I have another relief here at a tomb in Persepolis. Here we go. This one's harder to see. We have the king up here, and of course we have the sun disk and the deity on top and everything, but

it's still a big throne. And you have over on the right side, you can see the bottom of the throne stool and all the people underneath.

Lifting Up the Throne Together

And so I read a commentary—I don't know how they know this—but the way that these people are standing is in unison. They were one people. And it signified, in the way that their arms were slightly slanted, that it was a time of joy. They were collectively, joyfully coming together to stand underneath their king and raise his throne because he is worthy.

How do you raise the throne? How do you lift up the throne? It's so worthy, it shouldn't even touch the ground. How do you do that? What do you got to do? You got to lift your hands. Be willing to say, "Father, it's not about me. It's about you because you are worth everything, my king. I lift the throne up collectively."

You'll see bumper stickers frequently or you've heard about people saying, "Name it and claim it," right? "I claim this blessing from God in the name of Jesus!" Anybody tried to do it? That'd be nice. "I claim it." What are people wanting to claim in their life—claiming the blessings of God?

Favor Comes From Being Noticed

Oh? What does that mean? They want favor. People who claim, "I claim this, I claim that," they're petitioning the Father to give them a blessing. In order to have a blessing, you need to have favor. Would you agree? Would you agree? So essentially, when you see these things, it's a little misguided in the way that it's spoken or even the way that it's presented in a lot of churches because really people are just wanting favor. They're wanting God to notice them.

And it's really not something we ask for. You can't ask for favor. It's something that comes from being noticed. Favor comes from being noticed.

Got any parents in here? Maybe you've got multiple kids. I want you to raise your hand, but you can just nod. Have you ever favored one child over another? Not love. I know we love them equally. Favor. Have you ever favored? Maybe at some time. Have you ever had the impression that you favor one child over another? Maybe it's the child that is more obedient, more respectful. Maybe it's the child that seeks to please you, seeks to honor you, right? Maybe it's the child that seeks not to throw a temper tantrum in public like their siblings and the child gets your attention. Would the child get your attention in a positive way? You would notice the

child. If that child came to you, they'd have your favor, right? Because of their actions, because of how they obey and they follow you.

If that child said, "Hey, I'd really want that new Xbox or I really want this part for my computer. I'd really like this bike. I really want one of those things." Would you be more apt to consider rewarding them for being the favored child because of the way that they are respectful and that they obey? Would you actually be excited? Man, I'm in favor. Anything you want is favor. It comes from being noticed.

The Formula for Blessings

You want blessings in your life. And you know as well as I do that if you want to work something out of your life or work something into your life after you pray, God facilitates opportunities for these things to develop. There's really no Harry Potter wand, no magic trick. It's a formula that occurs. If you make the mistake of praying for patience... God will facilitate waiting. Perseverance comes through suffering and persecution. Faith comes from constantly being in times of need and seeing that God's provision is enough for you.

The formula for blessings, something Torah speaks a whole lot about. God wants to bless people. That's what he says in the Torah. The formula for blessings is giving. Giving of yourself. Period. That's it. That's it. That's what the entire New Testament talks about. God's greatest blessing He gave to you involved giving because you couldn't give enough. It's about first fruits, guys—giving the first of your harvest.

First Fruits and the Harvest

Ancient Israel understood that they had to give their first of their harvest before they could eat of the rest. They understood how to bless the whole crop at the beginning of the year. And not only that—they understood that once that crop was blessed, that first fruits was a standard for the rest of the agricultural season. They would bring their tithes after they harvested, but they couldn't even harvest the barley until they brought the first before God. Can't even eat of it, nothing. They understood how to bless the whole field.

You want a better day? You want a better life? You want a better marriage? You give the first of it to God. You want your dollar to stretch? You give the first of it. Get out. Time, energy, give the first of it. Guys, there's nothing more life-changing than waking up in the morning and choosing to give the first of your breath, of you being awake, to the Father. Maybe you got kids and wife. You gotta wake up a little bit earlier—shows dedication. If you want to feel whole, you

give worship. It's a formula, nothing magic about it. Even the secular world understands it. It's never a need to be in need with God.

Living as Worshipers

Second [Corinthians 9](#), I'm gonna read some Scripture and drive this point home just a little bit. Paul speaking. He says the point is this. Wow. Wow. This is a verse that I read in our gratitude message a while back, but it's still true. And when Paul was speaking to Corinth, a lot of slaves. Most people were slave status in first century Rome, especially Judeans, pagans too. So when he's talking to people about the harvest, most of these people probably never had a harvest. Most of these people probably didn't have a big old salary they could just give from. They understood the principle that Paul was saying. If you are willing to give the first fruits of every aspect of God's blessing in your life in worship back to him, there will be a harvest. That is what Scripture says. I believe Scripture to be the divinely inspired Word of God. I don't know about you. This principle does work. It's a formula. Your time, your energy, your money, whatever.

Understanding this, are you willing to be a worshiper like God created you and made you to be? Are you willing to give praise to Him before the world? At home, at the office, when people see you? Praise be to God. Are you excited to anticipate corporate worship with the other worshipers in your community here? It's a part of giving to God. We should never be reluctant to give our best to God, especially when it comes to worship.

Called to Our Vocation

Scripture talks about [1 Peter 2:9](#). It says, "You are a chosen people of royal priesthood, a holy nation, and people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

Christi was up here speaking about being in Eden. I believe—let me rephrase that—I believe, and maybe this is heresy for some folks, that we found ourselves back in Eden. I think the angels have lifted the swords, and we have access to the intimate presence of God. Not only that, we have access to a Spirit, a Comforter, that gives us all peace from the Father in you. That's a lot better than some fruit.

The exile from the garden ended on the cross. [Jeremiah 23](#)—the greater exodus—took place 2,000 years ago. Exile ended. We're back in the garden.

No Excuse

We don't have an excuse. Being in the intimate presence of God, being a new creation, we don't have an excuse not to take our vocation seriously, to be an image of God, to be the image bearer. I am going to be the image of God. I am going to be the thing that I was made to do.

I was made to worship. And I was made to take the borders of Eden and spread it across all the world. But that can only happen if we're reflecting... the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of creation.

Become What You Worship

Why? Because we become what we worship, and we reflect what we worship. And if we're not reflecting the glory of God in worship, if it walks like a duck, you may want to check: What are you reflecting in your life? What image are you wearing? Because that's not going to produce blessing in your life, and it's going to take away the most fulfilling presence that you could ever experience—the most definitive weight of the word shalom in your soul.

You become what you worship. And I pray that you would double-check yourselves to make sure that you're reflecting God, that you're reflecting the kingdom.

Worship in All Things

We were made to worship. That's included here at fit in our community. It's included at home. It's included at work. Your job doesn't have a nine-to-five limit on it. Your full-time salary—big salary, too, man—you guys are gonna make a ton of rewards, and they're in heaven building up right now. But that's not the focus.

The focus is to give worth to what is worthy through worthship, or worship. And I hope that this message was at least impactful to some extent for those of you who understand the severity of what it means to disregard the vocation that we've been given.

Thank You & Closing

Hey guys, I'm Matthew Vander Els, pastor at Founded in Truth Fellowship, and I really hope you enjoy this message. If you would like to see more messages and teachings like this one, please subscribe to our YouTube channel by clicking [here](#). You can also visit our website to find out more information about our ministry and what we do right here. And if this message has been edifying to you, please consider supporting us and the ministry through our secure online

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I pray that you stay blessed. I pray that you guys stay encouraged. And I pray that you stay fit. Founded in Truth—we'll see you guys next time.

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