

**Wired for Worship**  
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**GFC – 4-5-2020**

Today is Palm Sunday and this is the last sermon in our series called 20/20 Vision: Seeing God's Plan for Your Life.

Palm Sunday celebrates the Triumphal Entry of Christ into Jerusalem the week before Christ was crucified. It's called Palm Sunday because people cut palm branches and waved them as they shouted praise to God.

In this series we've been looking at God's purposes for our lives. We are all individually wired by God different ways. We each have a specific God-given purpose – but there are general purposes that God has for all of us.

The sad fact is if you ask people what their purpose is – most of them will say they don't know. Many Christians are going through life clueless – not knowing why they are here or what they're supposed to do. And the sadder fact is – most Christians are not in danger of ruining their lives – they are in danger of doing something much worse – wasting their lives!

But God does not want us to go through life clueless!  
 He wants us to know we are created BY Him FOR Him.  
 He wants us to know how and why He wired us.

The best way to find the purpose of something is to go to the source – the Creator. God is our Creator and He has revealed His purpose in His owner's manual – The Bible. And God says in Colossians 1:16 (Message)

*Everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, everything got started in Him and finds its purpose in Him.*

God makes everything with a purpose. That means that God has a purpose for your life. You were born on purpose to fulfill God's purpose.

Today I'm preaching on the main purpose of God for your life. The title of my message is Wired for Worship. God's first purpose for the church and for individuals is worship!

All throughout the Bible worship is a central theme. Worship is mentioned more than any other subject except Jesus. There is continual worship in heaven. The highest and continual occupation of heaven is praise and worship. Therefore, the highest and continual occupation on earth is praise and worship.

Purpose is defined as original intent.

We find God's original intent in Genesis 2:7-8

*The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Now the Lord God*

*had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there He put the man He had formed.*

The first thing we see when God made man was that He put him in the Garden of Eden. The Hebrew word Eden means pleasure.

That makes me think of Revelation 4:11

*You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created.*

Notice that we were created for God's pleasure and the word Eden means pleasure. The Garden of Eden was a place for God's presence. The Bible says that God walked and talked with Adam and Eve in that garden in the cool of the day. I want you to know that you were created by God for Eden – the place of God's presence.

### **1- God created us to worship**

You are not wired to function outside of the presence of God. Outside of His presence you will malfunction!

Before God created anything – He created their environment first.  
 Before God created fish – He created water.  
 Before God created stars – He created sky.  
 Before God created plants – He created soil.  
 Before God created man – He created Eden.

Fish need water – stars need sky – plants need soil – and you need Eden!  
 You need the presence of God. You were created for His pleasure and His presence.

Fish cannot live long outside of water.  
 Plants cannot live long outside of soil.  
 You cannot live long outside of the presence of God!

If you take a fish out of water – it malfunctions and dies!  
 If you take a plant out of soil – it malfunctions and dies!  
 If you take a star out of the sky – it becomes a meteorite, burns up and dies.  
 If you take a person out of Eden – they malfunction and die spiritually!

That's why the devil hates worship! He fights worship tooth and nail! That's why it's so hard for some of you to worship. What's really happening is the devil is trying to keep you out of the presence of God – just like he did with Adam and Eve in Eden. That's because the devil knows that when a believer gets in God's presence – he begins to understand God's purposes and God's plans and God's principles and God's power and He takes dominion and authority over all the works of the enemy!

That's why Satan wants to keep you out of church. That's why He deceives people into thinking they don't need God when actually God is the first and main thing we do need!

God created you for His presence. You are wired for worship!

Because we were created to worship - everybody worships!  
The question is not: Do you worship? The question is: Who/what do we worship?

Anthropologists have noted that people in every culture instinctively worship something. It's a universal urge, hard-wired by God into the very fiber of our being - an inbuilt need to connect with God. If we fail to worship God, we always find a substitute; even if ends up being ourselves.

How do we know what we worship? Since the essence of praise and worship is giving, you know what you worship by what you value, what you give yourself to - what you pursue with all your heart and strength: that could be a job, money, possessions, time, power, position, pleasure, a person (friend, spouse, child), entertainment, sports, yourself.

We need to get our priorities straight. Gordon Dahl once observed, "Our problem is that we worship our work, work at our play, and play at our worship."

Now, the problem is that worship is misunderstood today. When I say the word "worship," what do you think of? Well, you may think of prayer. You may think of singing. You may think of communion or something you do in church. But worship is far more than the things we do.

You can do those things and not worship. You can worship without doing those specific things. In simple terms, worship is knowing God loves me and loving God back. Worship is love expressed. As Jesus taught us in John 4:23-24

*A time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.*

Worship starts in the heart, but it is expressed outwardly. We see this truth in the life of the early church. Acts 2:42-47 says:

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

This passage shows us God's purposes for the church and for us as individual believers!

We are wired for connection with other people.  
 We are wired to serve and meet other peoples' needs.  
 We are wired to give.  
 We are wired for the supernatural.  
 We are wired for worship.

Unfortunately, Satan has won the worship war with many people by convincing them that how we worship is determined by our personality or our emotions or the traditions of our church rather than the Word. Colossians 2:8 says:

*See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.*

We don't need to follow some tradition in worship; we need to follow Christ!  
 We don't need to follow some person's opinion in worship; we need to follow Christ!  
 We don't determine how we want to worship God; God determines how we should worship.  
 We don't tell God how we will worship; God tells us how He wants to be worshipped.  
 We don't worship based on our personality; we worship based on God's commands in His word.

Not only did not create us to worship, but:

## **2. God calls us to worship –**

1 Peter 2:9 says:

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

We all have different callings and we all have the same calling.  
 We all do different things, but we all do the same thing.  
 Our main calling is to love, serve and worship God. We are called to be worshippers.

You've heard of the call of the wild, the call of the mountains, the call of the sea... we are all called to be worshippers. It is a deep longing inside each of us. That's why God called you to salvation through faith in Christ! He called you out of darkness so that you would be His child, you would be a holy priest, and that you would declare His praise. That's your calling in life!

## **3. God commands us to worship**

Worship is a Biblical command. One of the 10 commandments commands us to worship God, not idols. Jesus said in Matthew 4:10

*For the Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve only Him.'*

Since worship is commanded – that means it is not optional. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says:

*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Worship is the will of God for you!

This week I was thinking about our first Palm Sunday as a church 18 years ago. We were having our first service at the YMCA. We were getting ready to start and noticed a YMCA employee and some friends were in the weight room working out. We asked them to stop since we were getting ready to start church. They got an attitude and called the manager. He got on the phone very angry and said he did not want us to meet there anymore.

This was huge because we were getting ready to have our first big outreach for the next Sunday, which was Easter. We had spent thousands of dollars getting ready. We paid for new equipment and a mailing to the community. We were all excited about moving from the Krause house to the Y. And now we were faced with the possibility of the first service at the Y also being the last service at the Y.

All this happened right before the service began. We felt like we had been kicked in the stomach. Only Deb and I and a couple of others knew about it. We were faced with a choice. Either get down and let it affect our attitudes and our worship or press through and offer up a sacrifice of praise.

So we made the choice to rejoice always and in everything give thanks. We pressed through and worshipped not knowing whether or not we would have a place to meet the next week. We worshipped the God who is worthy of praise no matter where we meet.

And you know what happened? In the middle of praise and worship I got a supernatural peace from God and I just knew everything was going to be all right. And you know what - it was.

I called the manager the next day and he was very apologetic. He said, "I'm sorry, I don't know what got into me. I still want you to meet here." And we met there for a year and grew from 30 people to 100.

I believe a breakthrough happened when we chose to praise. It released the power of God into a difficult circumstance. You see, we must praise before the battle and during the battle. Most of us don't have trouble singing God's praises once the battle is over and the victory won, but it can be difficult to praise in advance. It takes faith. But, if we believe that God dwells in our praises, and that

as we praise Him it releases His power, then we can silence the enemy and change our circumstances.

It happened for Jehoshaphat in the Old Testament.

It happened for Paul and Silas in the New Testament.

It happened for us on Palm Sunday, 2002.

And it will happen for us on Palm Sunday 2020 – even in the midst of this coronavirus epidemic!

If you're feeling overwhelmed with all you're going through, I encourage you to make the Decision to Praise, that you change the direction of your focus--instead of looking down, look up. Instead of looking around, look up.

Don't wait for the victory to begin, but praise during the Battle, start today. Praise Him for who He is and for what He's promised and you will experience His Deliverance!

Jesus is our example in praise and worship. There are many times where the Bible tells us Jesus thanked His Father. He thanked God when He fed thousands of people with a few fish and a few loaves of bread. In fact, He thanked the Father BEFORE the food multiplied. God provided after the giving of thanks.

We usually reverse this order – I'll be thankful if and when God provides. "God – give me something to be thankful for and I will be. But, how can I be thankful when my bills are overdue or my job hunt seems fruitless or something I'm believing for still hasn't happened?"

Let me ask you this- what if God is waiting for you to be thankful before He multiplies what you have?

You must be thankful for your sack lunch before you're able to feed 4,000!  
 You must be thankful for the job you have before you get promoted!  
 You must be thankful for the car you do have before you get a new one!  
 "But, Pastor, I don't have a car." Well, thank God for a bicycle.  
 "But Pastor, I don't have a bike." Well, thank God you can walk!  
 Look for something to be thankful for right where you are!

But Pastor, you don't know the situation I'm in. No, I don't. But I do know the will of God for you in the situation you're in. We saw it in 1 Thessalonians 5:18

*Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

The Bible does not exempt you from being thankful in tough times! The Bible teaches us that there is something to be thankful for in every situation – even in tough times.

God created us to worship, calls us to worship, commands us to worship. This is not a Sunday morning activity - this is a lifestyle! Worship is not a part of your life; it is your life!

I don't know about you, but I refuse to offer God watered down worship.  
 I refuse to disrespect God by giving an offering that is not a sacrifice.  
 I will give my God the sacrifice of praise.

- That means that if no one else is praising, I will still praise.
- If everyone thinks I'm crazy for rejoicing, I will still rejoice.
- When my accountant says I'm foolish for giving God 10% of my income, I will still give my tithe to the Lord.
- When my doctor tries to take the credit for my healing, I will give God all the glory.
- When people say I'm lucky in life, I will refuse to give luck any credit – I'll give all the praise to God who blesses me.
- When my co-workers try to get me to do less than my best, I will glorify God by doing my job as unto Him!
- When the devil tries to lie to me and get me to complain rather than praise, I will choose to bless the Lord instead.
- Even when I don't feel like praising, I will overcome my excuses and I worship my God in spirit and in truth!

I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth because I was wired for worship!

I may not know a lot about you – but I know you were wired for worship!  
 You were created for Eden!  
 You were made for the presence of God!  
 You were wired to worship!  
 Let's enter His courts with thanksgiving.  
 Let's praise Him!  
 Can you join me in offering up a sacrifice of praise today?