



## 2. The Centrality of Worship



# The Centrality of Worship in Creation



# God the Creator

1. Most basic truth about God
2. First truth about God- Genesis 1:1
3. All that is not God was made by Him
4. A fundamental distinction

○ God, who is like You? (Psalm 71:19)

○ Lord, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You. (1 Chronicles 17:20)

There is no one like the Lord our God. (Exodus 8:10)

“I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me.” (Isaiah 46:9)

“I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another.” (Isaiah 42:8)

True worship presupposes this  
fundamental distinction

“You are God, and I am not.”

▶ “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.” (Revelation 4:12)

▶ Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. (Psalm 95:6)

**True worship  
presupposes  
this  
fundamental  
distinction  
“You are  
God, and I  
am not.”**

▶ I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. But he said to me, “Do not do that! I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God.”

▶ (Revelation 22:8-9; cf. 19:10)



# The Centrality of Worship in the Fall



The Fall  
challenged  
this  
fundament  
al  
distinction:  
God's  
unique  
glory

- ▶ Satan
- ▶ “I will make myself like the Most High.”
- ▶ (Isaiah 14:14)



## *Adam & Eve*

[Satan said:] “You will be like God. ”

(Genesis 3:5)

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

For even though they knew God, they did not honor [glorify] Him as God or give thanks.

(Romans 1:20-21)

False  
presupp  
osition →

False  
worship

▶ Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Romans 1:22-23)

**For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.**

**(Romans 1:25)**

# WORSHIP was the central issue in the Fall

▶ WHOM are you  
going to worship?



# **COMPETING WORSHIPS**

The problem is NOT that  
there are people in this  
world who do not worship

Rather it is that so  
many worship the  
wrong thing

+

What's all-important is  
**WHOM** you worship






# The Centrality of Worship in Redemption

# The SECOND ADAM chose differently

▶ Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.”

**Then Jesus said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’ ”**

**(Matthew 4:8-10)**



➤ Why did Christ come? Why was He conceived? Why was He born? Why was He crucified? Why did He rise again? Why is He now at the right hand of the Father?

➤ The answer to all these questions is, 'in order that He might make worshipers out of rebels; in order that He might restore us again to the place of worship we knew when we were first created.'

➤ **(A. W. Tozer)**

**Christ  
came to  
restore  
true  
worship by  
reversing  
the effects  
of the Fall**

- ▶ (v. 21) Enabling us to glorify God as God, and give thanks
- ▶ (v. 23) Enabling us to exchange images for the glory of God
- ▶ (v. 25) Enabling us to exchange the lie for the truth of God
- ▶ (v. 25) Enabling us to worship and serve the Creator rather than the creature



# Christ came to create true worshipers

- ▶ “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)**

# The Gospel is a call to turn from false to true worship

▶ For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God. **(1 Thessalonians 1:9)**

▶ “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, Who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.”  
**(Acts 14:15)**

# The Goal of the Gospel

Therefore, brethren,

- since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

let us draw near to God

- with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.

(Hebrews 10:19-22)

# The Goal of the Gospel

O come to the  
Father

- ***through Jesus  
the Son***

And give Him  
the glory:

- ***Great things  
He hath  
done!***

# Worship and the Gospel



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**God is the Creator, unique in His glory and alone worthy of worship.**

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**The Fall usurped God's claim to exclusive worship.**

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**Christ came to undo the effects of the fall and to enable true worship.**

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**The Gospel then is a call to all mankind to come to the Father through Christ, a call to worldwide worship, to the glory of God.**

# **The Centrality of Worship in Missions**



A world map with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. The map is color-coded by continent: North America (orange), South America (green), Europe (yellow), Africa (purple), Asia (pink), Australia (light green), and Antarctica (light blue). Major geographical features like the Tropic of Cancer, Equator, and Tropic of Capricorn are marked. The map is titled 'MISSIONS' in large, bold, black letters.

# MISSIONS

**the worldwide application  
of the gospel's call  
for true worship  
to the glory of God**

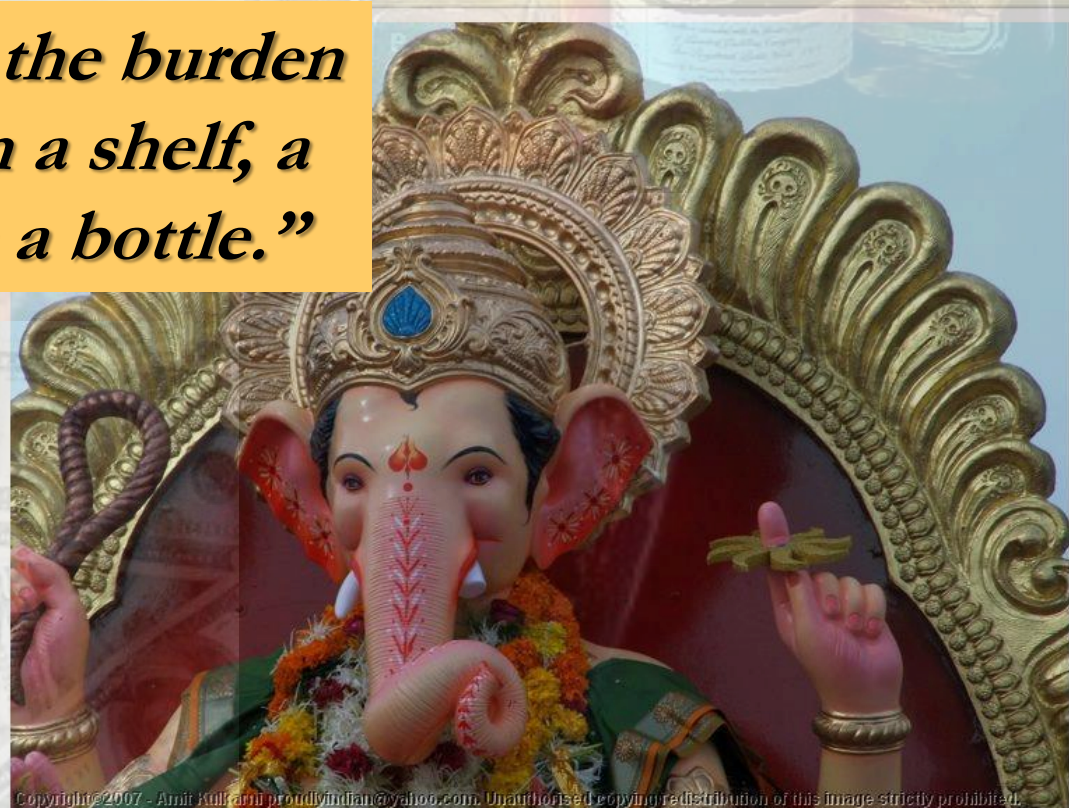


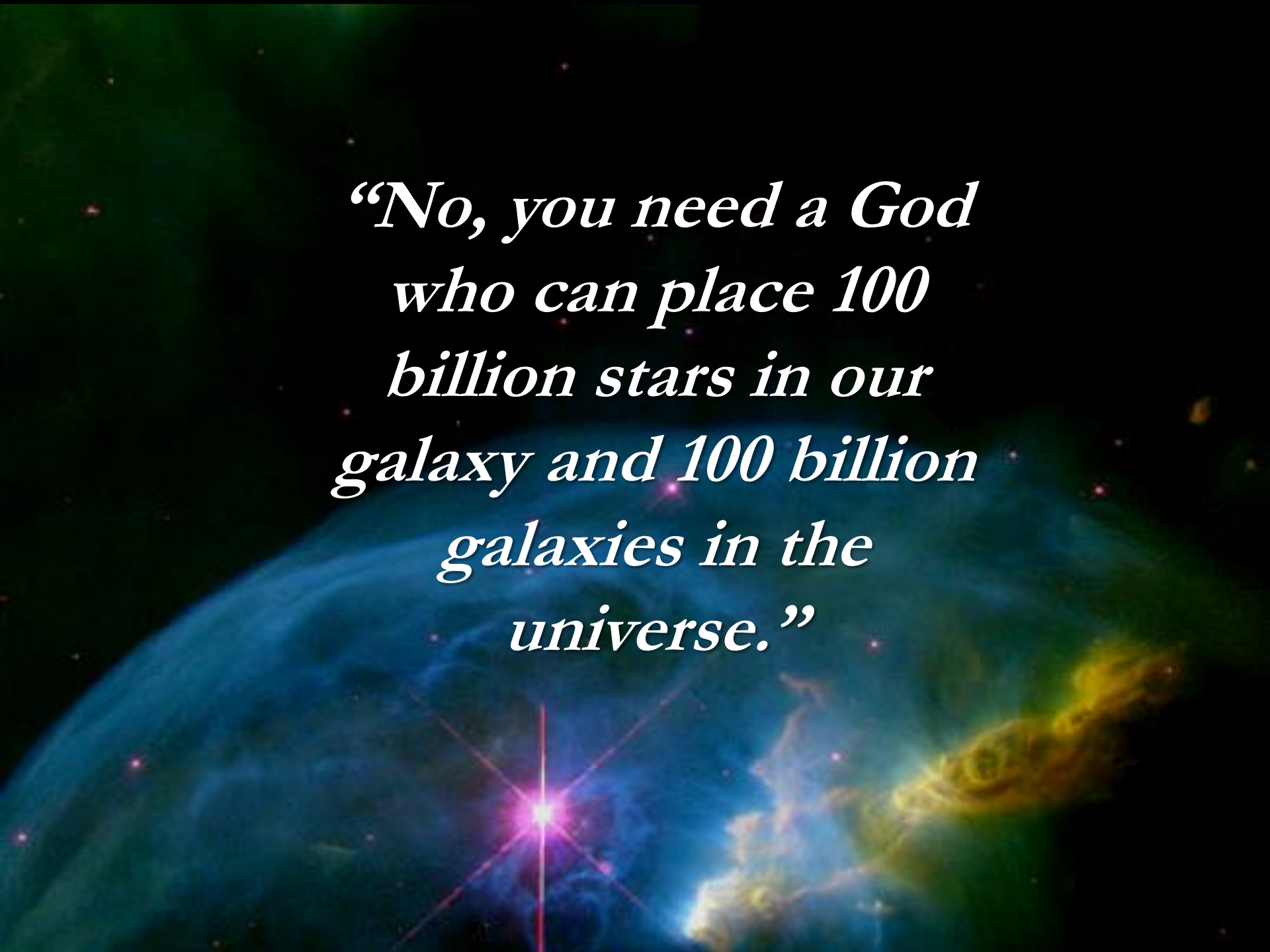
Max Lucado:  
*“You don’t need what  
Dorothy found.”*





***“You don’t need to carry the burden of a lesser god, a god on a shelf, a god in a box, or a god in a bottle.”***





*“No, you need a God  
who can place 100  
billion stars in our  
galaxy and 100 billion  
galaxies in the  
universe.”*

# MISSIONS



1. There are people who are dying without knowing Christ.
  2. God has given us the Great Commission to go out into the world.
  3. There are areas of the world, whether here or to the ends of the earth, *where God is being robbed of His glory.*
- (Eric Alexander)**

*Second Edition,  
Revised and Expanded*

LET THE  
NATIONS  
BE GLAD!

THE SUPREMACY  
of GOD  
IN MISSIONS

JOHN PIPER

Джон Пайпър  
НЕКА  
СЕ  
ВЕСЕЛЯТ  
НАРОДИТЕ!

Божието господство  
в мисионерството



*“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. . . .*

*Missions is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.”*

**(John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*)**

# Worship is the goal of missions

“In missions we simply aim to bring the nations into the white-hot enjoyment of God’s glory.”

“The goal of missions is the gladness of the peoples in the greatness of God.”

***“Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.” (Psalm 67:3-4)***



# Worship is the fuel of missions

▶ “Passion for God in worship precedes the offer of God in preaching. You can’t commend what you don’t cherish.”



Gre



# Commission

(Matthew 28:28-30)

man-focused

temporary

means

secondary

# Commandment

(Matthew 22:35-38)


God-focused

eternal

end

primary



A hand is raised in a gesture of worship, set against a background of blurred, colorful lights (bokeh effect) in shades of blue, orange, and red. The hand is silhouetted against the lighter background. The overall mood is spiritual and reverent.

“Worship is the  
only Christian  
activity  
which is an end  
in itself.”

**(John Piper)**

# Paul, the Gospel and the Nations in Romans

(N.T. Wright)

Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name (Romans 1:5 NKJV)

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith . . . (Romans 16:25-26)

# Paul, the Gospel and the Nations in Romans

... those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is <sup>d</sup>the father of us all, (as it is written, “A father of many nations have I made you”) in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations.

**(Romans 4:16-18)**

# Paul, the Gospel and the Nations in Romans

► For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name." [nations, 2 Samuel 22:50; Psalm 18:49] Again, it says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people." [nations, Deut. 32:43] And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples." [nations, Psalm 117:1] And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him." [nations, Isaiah 11:10]

(Romans 15:8-12)

# God's Goal for the Nations

God be gracious to us and bless us,  
And cause His face to shine upon us--  
That Your way may be known on the  
earth, Your salvation among all nations.  
Let the peoples praise You, O God;  
Let all the peoples praise You.  
Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.

(Psalm 67:1-4)


# God's Goal for the Nations



*“God is pursuing with omnipotent passion a worldwide purpose of gathering joyful worshipers for Himself from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.”*

**(John Piper)**

# God's Sufficiency for the Nations



All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will worship before You. (Psalm 22:27)

*“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”* (Psalm 42:10)

# God's Sufficiency for the Nations

All the earth will worship You,  
And will sing praises to You. (Psalm 66:4)

All nations whom You have made shall come  
and worship before You, O Lord,  
And they shall glorify Your name. (Psalm 86:9)

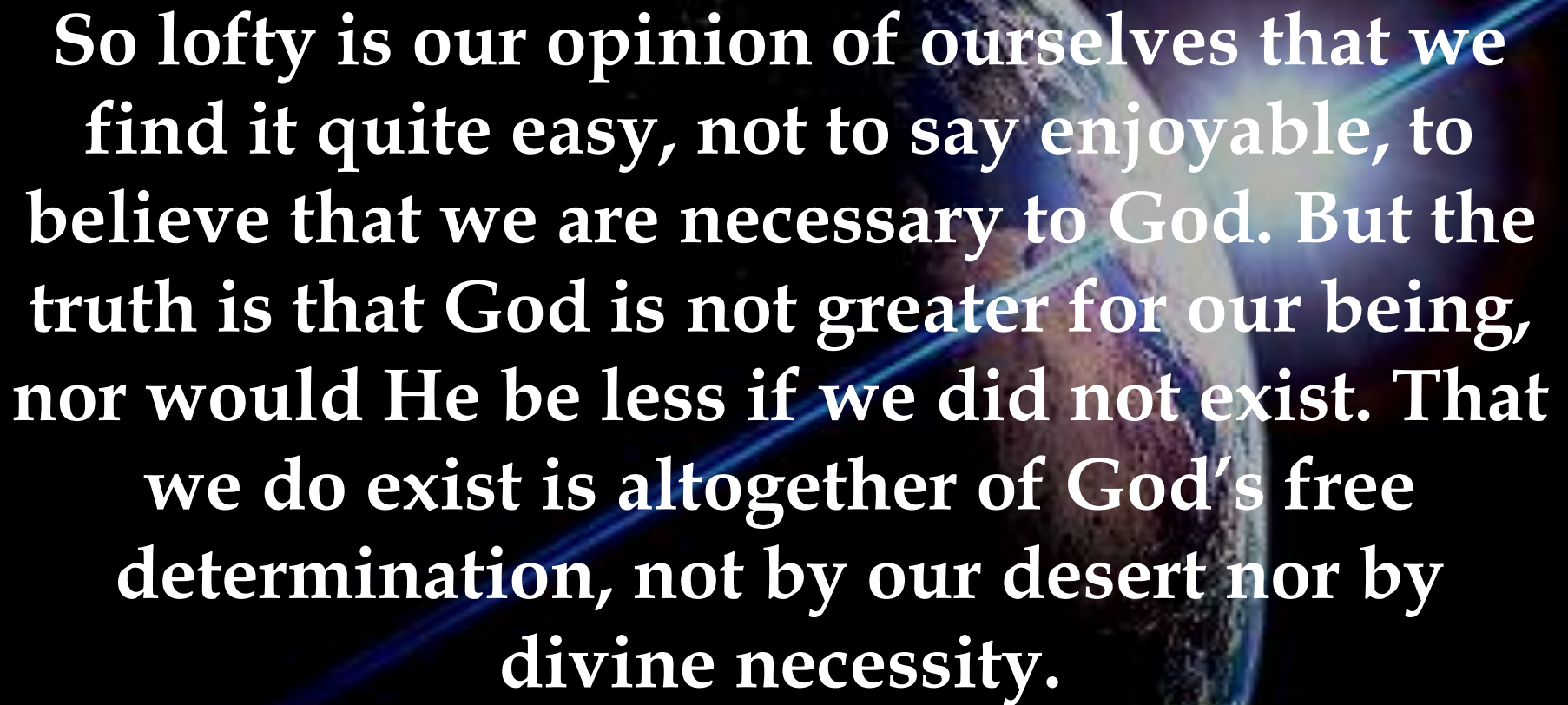
For the earth will be filled with the  
knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the  
waters cover the sea. (Habakkuk 2:14)





▶ **A.W. Tozer**, "The Knowledge of the Holy"

▶ "Almighty God, just because He is almighty, needs no support. The picture of a nervous, ingratiating God fawning over men to win their favor is not a pleasant one; yet if we look at the popular conception of God that is precisely what we see. Twentieth-century Christianity has put God on charity."



**So lofty is our opinion of ourselves that we find it quite easy, not to say enjoyable, to believe that we are necessary to God. But the truth is that God is not greater for our being, nor would He be less if we did not exist. That we do exist is altogether of God's free determination, not by our desert nor by divine necessity.**

▶ Probably the hardest thought of all for our natural egotism to entertain is that God does not need our help. We commonly represent Him as a busy, eager, somewhat frustrated Father hurrying about seeking help to carry out His benevolent plan to bring peace and salvation to the world; but, as said the Lady Julian, *"I saw truly that God doeth all thing, be it never so little."* The God who worketh all things surely needs no help and no helpers.

# God's Call to the Nations

*Kings of the earth and all peoples;  
Princes and all rulers on earth;  
young men and maidens; old men and  
children.*

*Let them praise the name of the Lord,  
For His name alone is exalted;  
His glory is above earth and heaven.*

(Psalm 148:11-13)




# **Our Role**

**to proclaim:**

**Praise the Lord, all nations;  
Laud Him, all peoples!**

**(Psalm 117:1)**



“God is pursuing with omnipotent passion *a worldwide purpose of gathering joyful worshipers for Himself from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. He has an inexhaustible enthusiasm for the supremacy of His name among the nations. Therefore let us bring our affections into line with His, and, for the sake of His name, let us renounce the quest for worldly comforts, and join His global purpose.*”

(John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, pp. 11, 40)

The QUESTION of the ages

WHOM are you going  
to worship?

The MESSAGE to the nations

**Worship GOD!**




# Our Role



to proclaim:

*Praise the Lord,  
all nations;  
Laud Him, all  
peoples!*


**(Psalm 117:1)**



*Sing to the LORD a new song;  
Sing to the LORD, all the earth.  
Sing to the LORD, bless His name;  
Proclaim good tidings of His salvation  
from day to day.*

*Tell of His glory among the nations,  
His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.  
For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised;  
He is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
But the LORD made the heavens.*

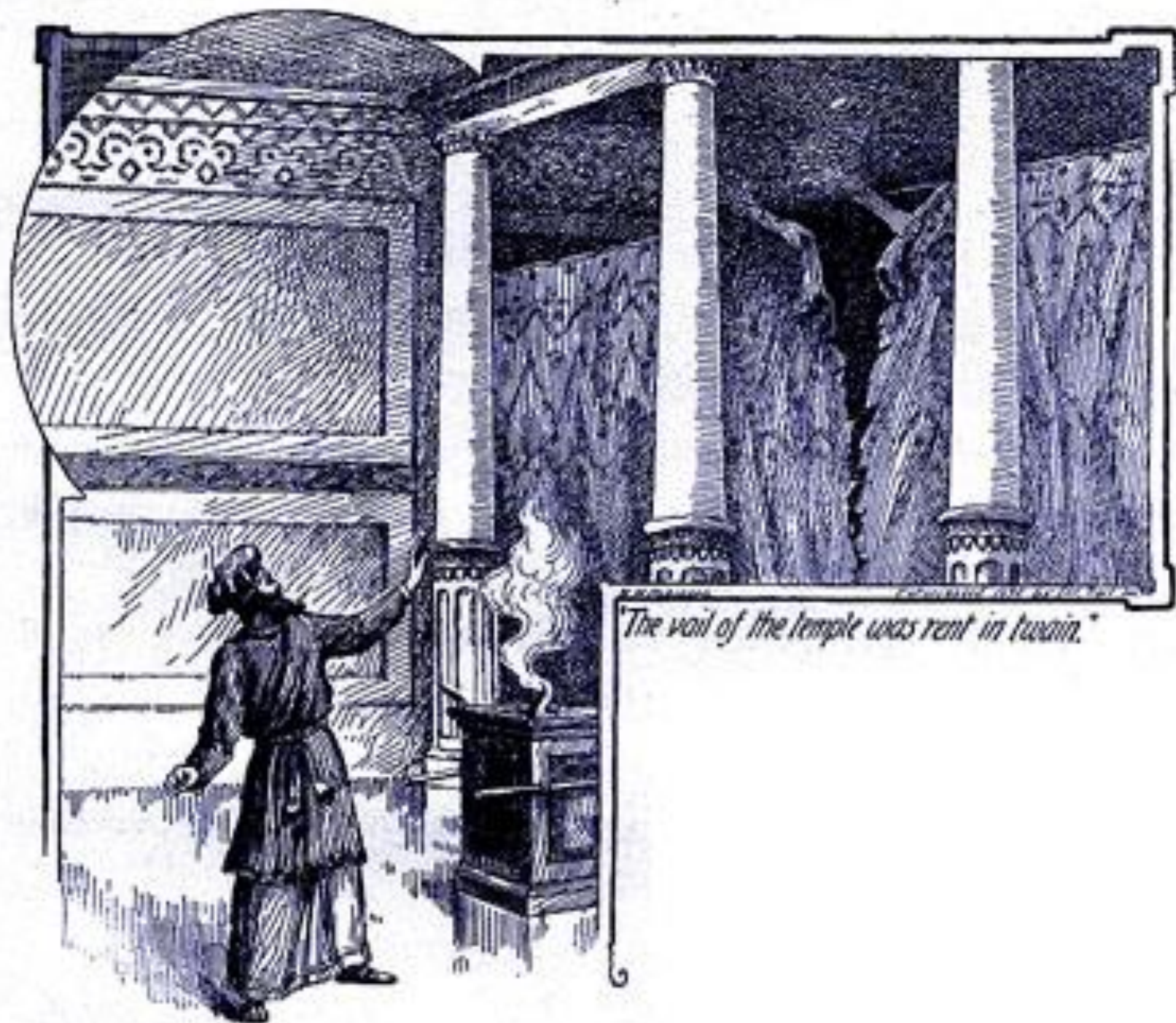
*(Psalm 96:1-5)*



# The Centrality of Worship in All of Life (John 4:19-24)

# Barriers between the individual and God under the Old Covenant





*"The veil of the temple was rent in twain."*





A scenic view of a mountain valley with a lake and a red vertical bar in the top right corner. The mountains are covered in snow and the sky is blue with some clouds. The text is centered over the image.

# A TALE OF TWO MOUNTAINS

(John 4)





## WORSHIP:

- ▶ Jesus breaks down
- ▶ geographical
- ▶ barriers
- ▶ (4:3-4)



# *Samaritans*

WORSHIP:

*hated by Jews:*

- Half-breeds
- Rejected most of OT
- Worshiped on Mt. Gerizim

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

GOLAN  
SYRIA



MEDITERRANEAN SEA



Nahariya □

Katamonim □

Akko □

GALILEE

Salted □

GOLAN  
SYRIA

Haita ■

Tiberias □

Nazareth □

Tuta □

Beit She'an □

Hadere □

Jenin ●

Tulkam ●

Netanya ■

SAMARIA

Kakliya ●

Nablus ●

Ramat Gan ■

Bnei Brak ■

Tel Aviv - Yaffo ■

Arif ■

Bat Yam ■

Petah Tikva ■

Rishon LeZion ■

Holon ■

Marabish ●

Ramla □

Rehovot □

Jericho ●

Ashdod □

Beit She'an □

Jerusalem ●



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Jesus breaks  
down

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*social*

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barriers

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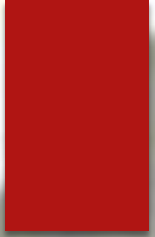
(4:5-9)



**Jesus breaks down  
spiritual  
barriers  
(4:10-15)**



Jesus  
breaks  
down  
religious  
barriers  
(4:16-26)





**She had raised the subject of worship, and the Saviour's reply was as pregnant a statement on this issue as had ever escaped the lips of man.**

**Indeed, once He had uttered it, it would be impossible thereafter for any man intelligently to ponder this theme without returning to consider those priceless words. As an utterance on worship they were timeless and absolutely definitive.**

**(Zane Hodges)**





a “question”  
about  
worship (vv.  
19-20)



*Jesus changes the rules (vv. 21, 23):*

“neither IN this mountain,  
nor IN Jerusalem”

but “IN spirit and truth”

No longer a matter  
of  
**WHERE** or **WHEN**  
you worship,  
but  
**HOW** you worship



# *worship in spirit*

(contrast the Jews)



# *worship in truth*

(contrast the Samaritans)



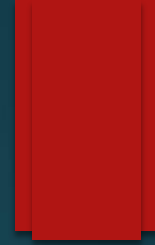
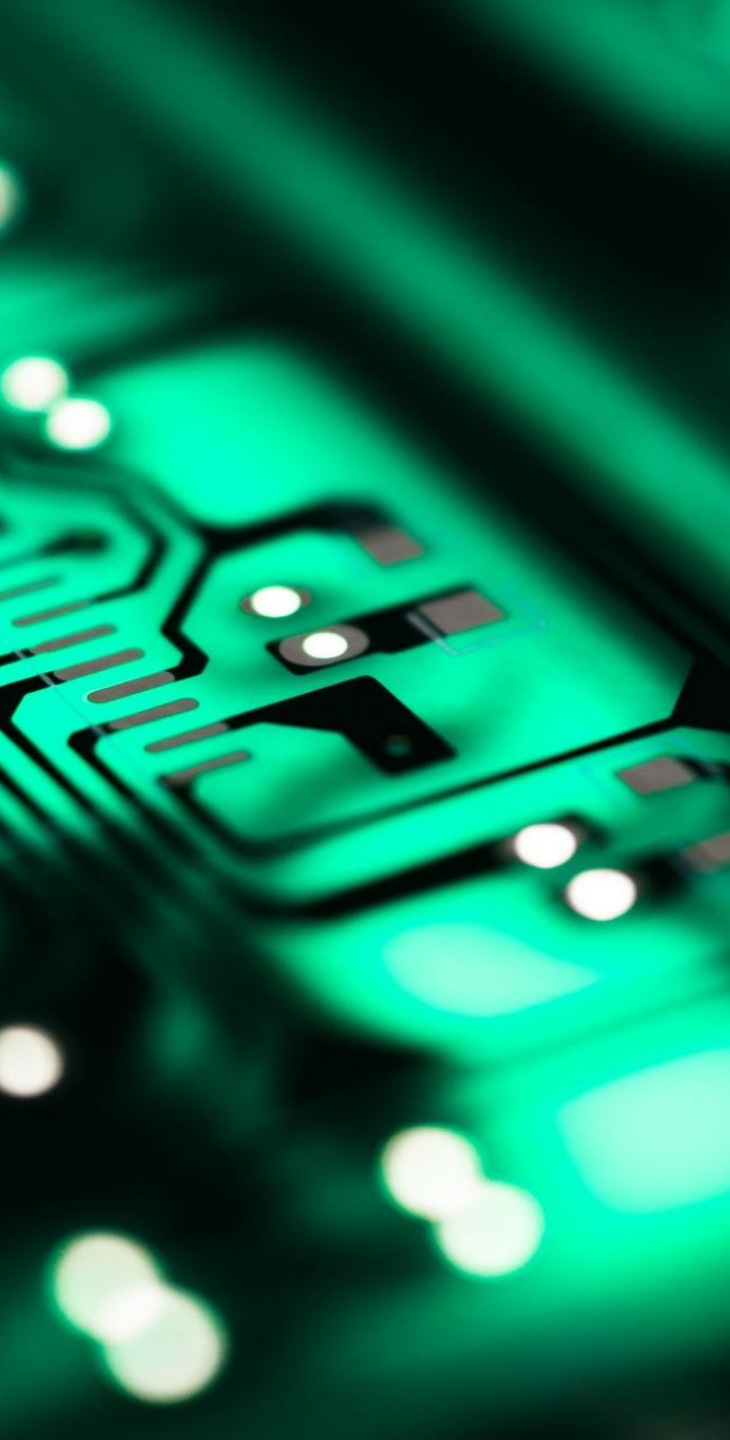


WORSHIP:

*spirit*

**AND**

*truth*



a new  
program

# *yet not wholly new*

Deut 6:5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Psalm 69:30-31 I will praise the name of God with song and magnify Him with thanksgiving. And it will please the LORD better than an ox or a young bull with horns and hoofs.

Hosea 6:6 For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.



# *the unchanging essence*



The essence of worship . . . is the inner act of the heart treasuring God as infinitely valuable.

The outer forms of worship are the acts that one does which show or reflect how much the heart treasures God.

(John Piper)

## *the difference*

“The way wholly loving God works out under the old covenant is in heartfelt obedience to the terms of that covenant and that includes the primary place given to the cultus [sacrificial system]; and the implications of this outworking include distinctions between the holy and the common, between holy space and common space, between holy time and common time, between holy food and common food.

(Don Carson)

## *the difference*

The way wholly loving God works out under the new covenant is in heartfelt obedience to the terms of that covenant and here the language of the cultus has been transmuted to all of life, with the implication, not so much of a desacralization of space and time and food, as with a sacralization of all space and all time and all food.”

(Don Carson)



What God  
wants:  
OUR HEARTS

worship in spirit

**What God  
wants:  
OUR LIVES**

▶ Rom 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

*all of life is worship!*

*What God wants:*

*OUR LIVES*

**1 Cor 10:31** Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

*a life and lifestyle of worship*

*What God wants:*

## **OUR WORSHIP**

*“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


*He's seeking WORSHIPERS*

# *What God wants:* **OUR WORSHIP**

“The Father seeks to commune with you in worship. He is not looking for your money, your glory, or your strength. He is looking for your heart. . . . If you are not worshiping God, but you are serving Him (or so you think), you are making a big mistake. To pray without worship is mockery. To sing without worship is sounding brass. To work without worship is an insult to God. To teach without worship is ignorance. To serve without worship is hypocrisy. To witness without worship is perjury. God wants your worship.”

**(Adrian Rogers)**





# The Centrality of Worship in Heaven (Revelation 5)