

Worship in Spirit & Truth

2 Samuel 6

I. INTRO

- A. Worship is an expression of deep respect, devotion, or love toward something or someone that you believe is greater than yourself.
 - 1. In a Christian setting, that “something greater” is God.
- B. When most people in Christianity hear “worship” they tend to think “music” even though, technically, all of life is worship → a life lived out of devotion to God
- C. When it comes to worship through music, however, it has always been a hot topic
- D. It’s actually probably the most common thing I get feedback about.
 - 1. E.g. People don’t text or call to talk about their DG or their Serve Team, but everyone has an opinion on music
 - 2. What songs to sing, how many songs to sing, how long worship should last, if we should have a closing song, how many songs we should have in our repertoire
 - 3. People debate if you should sing songs by this church or that church
 - 4. Some people want to only sing hymns. Some people want to only sing Scripture. Some people only want to sing songs on the Bridge radio
 - 5. Some music is too fast, too slow, too loud, too quiet, it’s too light in here, it’s too dark, I want to dance, I want to wave a flag, I want candles. I want silence. Why won’t he raise his hands, why is she raising her hands?
 - a) Do you feel me?
 - 6. It’s hotly debated and everyone has a viewpoint they can justify
- E. Nothing’s new. In John 4, Jesus is engaging with a woman at a well and she enters into some worship wars as well. They dance around theology, sin, and practical realities as they discuss questions like:
 - 1. Where do we worship? Who can worship God, the Father? How do we worship? Jesus response to her settles some debate, but not all of it:
 - 2. *John 4:23–24, [23] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. [24] God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (ESV)*
- F. We will not solve your worship music opinions today, but I hope I can accomplish a few things:
 - 1. Give you some guiderails to keep you headed in the right direction for healthy, reverent, celebratory worship through song
 - 2. Encourage you to give others’ grace and stop judging their hearts

II. *[1] David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. [2] And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale-judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim.*

- A. Let's talk about the ark of the covenant.
 - B. The ark was like a chest and within it were the stone tablets of the Law, Aaron's rod that budded, and a pot of manna
 - 1. All of this symbolized God's covenant with Israel which he gave them after Exodus as well as reminders of his provision and guidance
 - C. The significance of the ark was that it represented the presence of God
 - 1. It was also called his footstool, the mercy seat (place of propitiation where the sacrificial blood on the Day of Atonement was poured out)
 - 2. In this way, by the way, the Ark points to Jesus...
 - a) He embodied the presence of God → God in the midst of the man
 - b) He sits on the throne of God → the one who has all authority
 - c) He was the mercy seat, God's wrath satisfied in Christ
 - D. Last week we talked about how God establishing David's kingdom
 - 1. Part of the importance of David seizing Jerusalem was God choosing the central place of worship for the nation, the place his glory would dwell
 - 2. Deuteronomy 12:5 basically said people couldn't just worship anywhere, but only where God placed his glory (the Ark, the temple, etc)
- III. *[3] And they carried the ark of God on a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart, [4] with the ark of God, and Ahio went before the ark.*
- A. There was crazy reverence and holiness in handling it
 - 1. Only levites could handle it, on poles, no touching, etc
 - B. The Ark is central to Israel's identity and worship and it had to be treated as such
 - C. Uzzah and Ahio were Levites, evidenced by the fact that the ark was at their house, but this "new cart" scenario is already a sign of issues
 - D. Who knows, maybe after years of having the ark in their backyard, they grew too comfortable with it, I am not sure, but the fact that right from the beginning there's a problem with carrying it on a new cart instead of ceremonial poles should give a Jew a check in their spirit... something's off.
- IV. *[5] And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. [6] And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. [7] And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God. [8] And David was angry because the LORD had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. [9] And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?"*
- A. David and 30,000 people are worshipping with cymbals... sounds terrible
 - B. Uzzah and his brother are pushing the new cart... the ox trips... the Ark starts to slip. Instinctively? Dismissively? Uzzah steadies it → struck dead b/c of his error
 - 1. He died right there...
 - 2. David is angry. David is scared. (All anger is rooted in fear, by the way)
 - C. Why did God strike Uzzah dead?
 - 1. The Ark was the most holy object in Israel's worship... his presence

2. It was only to be carried by the Kohathite Levites, using poles
 3. No one, not even the Levites, was permitted to touch the Ark itself.
 4. Here, the Ark was placed on a cart — copying how the Philistine pagans moved it (1 Sam. 6:7), not according to God's law.
 5. To us, Uzzah's action looks reasonable, even noble. But the issue was deeper: **Israel was treating God's presence casually**
 6. God's holiness is absolute, and any violation of His instructions regarding the Ark meant death.
 7. Uzzah's death is a reminder that God's holiness is not negotiable.
 - a) You should care "how" you worship. It's serious business
 8. In the bigger picture of Scripture, this incident is similar to other "boundary moments" in Scripture (Nadab and Abihu in Lev. 10, Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5), when God made clear that His holiness and commands must be taken seriously.
- D. At the same time, this scenario really represents humanity's deep need
1. How do we stand before a holy God? Who can touch the ark and live? Who can enter God's presence and not get fried? If we can't handle the ark, how can anyone handle the ACTUAL throneroom of God?
 2. Uzzah *represents* humanity → our feeble efforts before a holy God
 3. Ultimately, only Jesus fulfills that role — making a way for us to enter God's presence without being destroyed by His holiness
- E. Why is David afraid? He knows he is unworthy. He knows he's a sinner.
- V. *[10] So David was not willing to take the ark of the LORD into the city of David. But David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. [11] And the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.*
- A. God IS holy and he WILL be revered
 - B. At the same time, David's fear keeps God's blessing at bay
 1. Isn't that true of so many: "I won't come to church; the roof will collapse"
 2. Despite the fact that God is holy and we are not, he invites us to approach
 3. We don't come on our own accord, but via his appointed means → Jesus
- VI. *[12] And it was told King David, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing. [13] And when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal. [14] And David danced before the LORD with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod. [15] So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn.*
- A. God's presence = blessing. This was true then, it is true now
 - B. So David went to get the ark and this time he is going to do it right and according to the Book of the Law. David brings the ark...
 1. With sacrifice...ox and an animal
 2. With reverence... every six steps

3. With rejoicing... he anticipates the blessing, anticipates the presence, worships the Lord in his holiness. He has CRAZY JOY here
4. With passion... David wants to give God everything that he is due. He dances before the Lord with ALL HIS MIGHT.
 - a) I don't even know what that means
5. Matter of fact, worship dance always made me a little uncomfortable, but it doesn't make God uncomfortable
 - a) Want to be more uncomfortable? David is in his undergarments!
6. What we see here is that David's heart is in the right place!
 - a) He is honoring the Lord. He is following the Lord. He is rejoicing over the Lord. He is worshipping God according to God's TRUTH and with the right HEART & SPIRIT.

C. Worship must hold together both reverence and joy or it slips into a ditch

1. God wants us to serve / worship him with JOY → "Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart..."
2. God wants us to serve / worship him with REVERENCE

VII. [16] As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, and she despised him in her heart. [17] And they brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. [18] And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts [19] and distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed, each to his house.

- A. Michal meanwhile is looking out the window judging his heart...
- B. It tells us that David is worshipping "before the Lord" → his heart is right
- C. But she is upset about **HOW** he is worshipping. CHECK YOUR HEART!!!
- D. She is UPSET & DESPISING David b/c of **HOW** he is worshipping

VIII. [20] And David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' female servants, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" [21] And David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD—and I will celebrate before the LORD. [22] I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes. But by the female servants of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." [23] And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

- A. Michal looks out the window, sees David "leaping and dancing before the LORD," and it says she "despised him in her heart."
- B. Then, she confronts him, accusing him of "uncovering himself"
- C. What's really going on with her?
 1. First of all, David wasn't in his Tommy Johns. He had laid aside his royal robes and was wearing a simple linen ephod (a priestly garment).

2. This is David humbling himself. He isn't masquerading as a king, but entering the crowd as a fellow worshipper, just like everyone else
3. To Michal, this looked beneath the dignity of a king. Why?
 - a) She was Saul's daughter, raised in a royal household that valued appearances and decorum. She judged David through that lens.
 - b) Second of all, she didn't "get" what he was thinking and feeling. She didn't have a desire to worship b/c her heart was cold. Instead of entering into worship, she stood at a distance, critiquing the way someone else worshipped.
 - c) Third, her relationship with David was complicated (political marriage, separation, being taken from another husband, etc.). Resentment probably clouded her mind.

D. But look at David's Response:

1. First, he says, *"It was before the LORD..."*
 - a) E.g. I am dancing for an audience of one, & it ain't you – it's God
(1) Remember this when people judge you for your faith...
2. Second he says, *"I will make myself yet more contemptible than this"*
 - a) E.g. God is so holy, and I am so not, that I am just showing what is true! I will HUMBLE myself before God and give him the REVERENCE and the JUBILATION that he deserves even if it makes me look despicable to you

E. Michal represents a heart that values appearances over true worship. She really represents the heart of the Pharisees (Leaven of the Pharisees)

1. This is someone who is saying, "What are people thinking of me..."
 - a) Sometimes you raise your hands for people to look at you...
 - b) Sometimes you won't raise your hands b/c people might look...

F. David represents a heart fixed on God... he's not worried about anyone else!

IX. Conclusion

A. Back to John 4

B. Why can we worship? Jesus

C. Where do we worship?

1. No longer in Jerusalem b/c now the living water doesn't flow from a single place but in and through every believer → God dwells in US

D. How do we worship?

1. **We worship God in TRUTH** → in accordance with who God is as revealed in the Scriptures and not how we presume him to be
2. **We worship God by his SPIRIT** → only b/c the Spirit of God dwells within us... Jesus sacrifice having made us clean and holy so we can "enter in"
3. **We worship with the right HEART** → not from a place of judgment towards our fellow believers, thinking about THEM or about US, but looking at the King and worshipping him, giving him what HE deserves