

## MESSAGE TRANSCRIPTS

Worship Pt 1

Living a Life of Worship

Rick Muchow, Worship Leader Saddleback Church

Weekend 07.30/31.11

Thank you for our orchestra over here—fantastic!! Today we are going to talk about how to live a life of worship. Before I do that I would like to sing a song for you that I wrote. I was twenty years old when I wrote this song so it was like a couple of years ago. It seems like just a couple of years ago! Who cares, so what? I remember I became a Christian when I was seventeen years old and was very...it is amazing how we become Christians because once we were not Christians and then we are. And what happened was that I sat down...it was the third row of this church on a Thursday. My friends just wanted to show me this church and they promised they would take me out for ice cream after if I just went to see their church. And said, well, OK. And so I went there and we were just hanging out and the youth pastor came in and he said, “So how come you haven’t asked Jesus to come into your heart yet?” And I said, “Well, to be honest with you, I think I have always believed that there was a God and I remember and I could tell you some stories where there was some hard times when I was growing up, family abuse and things like that where I was in the house when all that was going on and I remember looking up to God and just saying, “God, would you help? Help my Mom.” I prayed that I wouldn’t die tonight. I was just scared some of these times. And I remember shouting out to God. But I told the youth pastor I don’t want to be involved in something that is weird—not a real faith. I don’t want to make God mad at me or anything like that. I just don’t know what the right way is. And he said, “Well, why don’t you pray just for a moment, just pray, and ask God if Jesus is His Son and, if so, ask him into your heart.” And that was it. I said, “OK, I could do that.” So I just prayed and as much as I knew how I just tried to communicate honestly to God and I pretty much just said, “God”...and as soon as I started saying that it was like God was answering my prayer...just like that. I said, “God, is Jesus Christ...? Yes, He is. And I asked him to come into my life that day.

Well, fast forward about four years, I was a senior in college and having some tough times my senior year. Have any of you had a tough time in college? How about a tough time paying for college? But, anyway, I just got depressed. There were some issues academically. I forgot about some things and procrastinated. There was a lot of pressure. It was all me...it was all my fault and I had to go face it but I just didn’t want to. And I thought number one: I am letting God down. And then I am going to let my parents down...my friends and the teachers and the witness that I had at school and all that stuff. I was very disappointed in my life. I don’t know if you have ever felt that way...but just disappointed about life...in your life...you don’t know how to get through it. And I turned to God and I said, “God, I am so sorry.” And it was if he put his arm around me and said, “You are my son. I love you. And I am going to be with you while you go try to fix all these problems...but I am going to be with you. And nothing you could ever do will ever cause me not to love you.” And that was so important for me to get. I mean I had heard it before...I had heard about God’s love but I just got it. I cannot believe how wonderful my Heavenly Father is to me. And again, I was away at college and my Heavenly Father was there. And that was a moment...a defining moment in my life. And since that time, I have

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been trying to live my life, build my life on God's principles...build my life on God's principles, not thinking I know everything. I had a long way to go...but just God, you be the leader of my life. And so, anyway, I wrote this song during that and actually I wrote in the bathroom where the acoustics are really good...you know...I sounded great in the bathroom. I was just singing this song out and it ministered to me. I don't know if you guys are going through anything or if this song will just comfort you in any way or give you hope. So I'll sing this song and then we'll get into the message.

(Song)

Thank you everybody. Living a life of worship. I have been a worship leader for awhile. I have been at Saddleback Church almost twenty-four years. Saddleback Church is in Southern California. We speak with an accent—some sort of accent. Weather is beautiful! Someone was asking me how was the weather in California. It is about the same here...it is just that the humidity is different here—there's a little more humidity. And the guy said, Yeh, you know, I don't mind the heat. It's the humidity that gets to me." And I was thinking, you know, that's a really great thought. It just reminded me about living a life of worship and faith in general. Just having a life of faith and that is, faith is not that difficult...it is just the humility that is tough. Because it really does take not thinking about yourself and thinking that there might be another way. I might have to...maybe open up my mind to discover faith.

I want to show you something I read on the internet the other day and I thought it was really clever and I hope it is not offensive. How many teachers do we have in here? How many principals do we have in here? Principals of a school. There is an old saying—it is not the school that I have a problem with; it is the principal of the thing. OK, so, I think all teachers should get raises. So here is the little story about faith: One day a six-year old was sitting in a classroom. The teacher was going to explain evolution to the children. The teacher asked a little boy, the teacher said: Tommy, do you see the tree outside. Tommy said, yes. Teacher said: Tommy, do you see the grass outside. Tommy said, yes. Teacher said go outside and look up and see if you can see the sky. Tommy said, OK. He returned a few minutes later and he said, yeh, I saw the sky. The teacher said: Did you see God? Tommy said, no. Teacher said, well, that's my point. We can't see God because he isn't there. He just doesn't exist. Then a little girl spoke up and wanted to ask the boy some questions. The teacher agreed and the little girl asked the boy: Tommy, do you see the tree outside? Yes. The little girl said: Tommy, do you see the grass? Yes. The little girl said: Tommy, do you see the sky? Yes, I see the sky. Little girl said, Tommy, do you see the teacher? He said, yes, I see the teacher. The little girl said: Do you see her brain? Tommy said, no. The little girl said, well, then according to what we were taught today in school, she must not have one.

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Interesting!! Faith is being challenged on all fronts in our society. People are idiots if they have faith. And things that are said...let me tell you what all of these things are. First of all, most every attack on faith is half-truths and it is the same kind of thing that was in the garden of Eden. It was the same kind of thing—it was a half-truth mixed with a lie. Half-truth and a lie. That's a whole other subject.

Let's get our outline out. I would like to show you how to live a life of worship. Now there is four fundamental principles that we need to understand when we look at what the Bible says about worship. Number one: This for free. Worship is a lot more than singing. It's a lot more than songs. Some people equate worship with, oh, that's when I go and sing. And a matter fact, even what I do, I have been a worship leader for a long time as if the music is the worship part. Interesting factoid. That term, worship leader, came from a magazine that is called, "Worship Leader" magazine. And before that magazine, they were called ministers of music. And then after that magazine, people started saying, yeh, yeh, you're the worship leader and they just came up with that term, worship leader. Is this interesting to anybody or just me? OK.

So the term was in the magazine...they wanted to cover two subjects, worship and leadership so they made the term "worship leader" magazine. That's how that term came about twenty years ago. Worship is a lot more than music. Matter of fact, the Bible...all the way through the Bible, it talks about what worship is. And there's all kinds of Greek and Hebrew words like, *shachah* which means bow down and *avad* which means to serve. All of these words are interchanged with our English word, worship, so when we read the word, worship, in the Bible, it could be a number of things. But it is a lot more than music and I want to give you four of those. But here's four principles of what worship has to be.

Number one: If there is no love, there is no worship. No love; no worship. This isn't in your outline yet. OK, no love, no worship.

Number two: Worship is a command. Everybody, whether you are a believer or not will worship, needs to worship God. OK. He is superior; we are inferior. And that is the proper relationship to say, You, get all the glory. You own everything; I don't. I serve you. Not the other way around.

The third thing is that worship is always accompanied by humility and reverent fear.

And then the fourth thing and this is what we are going to talk about today. And this is Romans 12:1 and this is that worship involves every part of your life—every single part of your life. We need to have a life of worship. Now would you take this card out. It was in your bulletin. Everybody get one? And let's hold it up for a second. See if you can find it; just bring it up. There are several of you that are doing that. OK, very good, very good. I would like you to fill this out during the boring part of the message, OK? Notice there are

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seven things you can commit to at the end of this service. I am going to ask you to actually fill this out and put it in the basket or the box in the back. What is that? The black box. So put it in the black box. You can fill out your name and put your e-mail because I was thinking maybe some of the people that work here at the church would like to get in touch with you later in case you are interested in following up on some of these commitments, OK? But I would like you to make this an act of worship, even today, that you will make some decisions and just ask God what you should do with this. There are seven of these: Receive Christ into my heart. Some of you may not have ever done that before and you could do that today. Begin serving at Crossroads. Read my Bible and pray daily. Live a life of worship. Prepare my heart for corporate worship prior to the weekend service. Attend church for the next three weeks. And invite a friend to church.

So let's look at our outline. Romans 12:1, it says: So here is what I want you to do, God helping you, take your every day, your ordinary life, your sleeping, eating, going to work and walk around life and place it before God as an offering, embracing God. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. So what part of that is not everything? What part of that is not every single part of our life...every part of it. Your ordinary life, your sleeping, eating, going to work, walk in real life and place it before God as an offering. And then it says, embracing what God does for you is the best thing that you can do for him. That is what worship is. In my translation that I have, the New American Standard, it says: 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. That is what that is. Let's look at Luke 10:25-28: Then an expert on the law stood up to test Jesus saying, "Teacher, what must I do to get life forever?" And Jesus said, "What is written in the law?" What do you read there? And the man answered, "Well, love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength and all your mind. Also love your neighbor as yourself." So again the four keys to living a life of worship are: No love; there is no worship. It's a command. Humility and reverent fear and it involves your entire life.

Let's look at number one. That's let God lead your life. That is the first fill-in. Let God lead your life. Again the first step to letting God lead your life is to make Jesus the Lord of your life. That is a church word for like the leader, the controller, the person that makes all the decisions for you in your life. Hebrews 11:6 says: And without faith, it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. So the first thing is that you need to believe that Jesus exists and you need to ask him into your life.

The second way that you let God lead is that you live for him. Proverbs 16:3 says: Commit to the Lord whatever you do and your plans will succeed.

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The third way you can let God lead is you can listen to him. A lot of us, we have so much going on in our minds, even right now. Some of you might even be texting or thinking lunch plans or thinking why did I get up so early or I should be racing my car with the other boys done the block or whatever. But when we get rid some of that noise, the ambient noise in our life, we could actually hear God. The Bible actually says: To be still and know that I am God. So it takes settling sometimes just so you can hear him. So you listen to him. Prayer—a lot of people think it is like rubbing the magic lamp and then you get what you want. The genie pops out; gives you three prayer requests. But that is not what God is; God is not a genie. Actually, He is our God and he wants to have a personal relationship with us as our Father in Heaven. So sometimes, he wants to talk to us too. It is not just us asking him for things.

The fourth way you can let God lead is you can live in relationship with him. It says: I am the vine, you are the branches. When you are joined with me and I with you, the relation, intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant, separated, you cannot produce a thing.

The second thing you can do to live a life of worship is you must imitate Christ...imitate Christ. How many of you know that the Bible...the Bible... is the manual for life? It is God's Word. And a lot of us have stopped reading manuals. We get something and we don't even look for the manual; we just start doing stuff. And they have built things now as to where you don't have to read the manual but if you do read the manual you see things like how not to shock yourself when you plug it in and all those kind of neat things or how the warranty lasts longer if you just read the manual.

Reading the manual of life is very important for us if we are going to imitate Christ. The word Christian actually means Christ imitator or little Christ. That's where that term comes from. John 13:13-17 says: You call me teacher and Lord and rightly so for that is what I am. Now that I your Lord and teacher have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master nor is the messenger greater than the one who sent him. Here is the point. Now that you know these things you will be blessed if you do them. He wasn't talking about washing people's feet. He was talking about the example of serving other people, putting other people ahead of you. That is just one way that we can be like Christ. We can serve others and he was modeling that for us. Look at John 13:15-17 in the Message. It says: I laid down...I love this one. I laid down a pattern for you...what I have done, you do. I am only pointing out the obvious, a servant is not ranked above his master, an employee doesn't give orders to the employer. If you understand what I am telling you, act like it and live a blessed life. Now here is a partial list of the way that Jesus worshiped if you want to look in the Bible, you certainly can find all of these. I wrote a book called, "The Worship Answer Book" and in there, I put fifty-two articles about worship. Several of them are how Jesus worshiped and here are some of

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the ideas. He prayed. He gave. He fasted. He obeyed the Father. He read. He memorized and quoted scripture. He sang. He praised the Father. He worshiped daily and his life was an act of worship.

Matthew 26:39: After walking a little farther away from them, Jesus fell to the ground and he prayed. Why did he fall to the ground? He didn't trip. He was in agony. He was so filled with sorrow for what was going to happen that he could not stand up. He fell to the ground and he prayed. And he said: My Father, if it is possible, do not give me this cup of suffering but do what you want and not what I want. Now that's a model for us. The model is God, do what you want, not what I want, your will, your way, not my ways. There is a lot of things we might want to do, things that we could see. We check those with God and we say, hey, God what do you think? Do you have a better plan for my life? I want your plan and that's what that is all about.

You know, when you are tempted, you can either sin or worship. Being tempted is not a sin. And you know what, a lot of us think, oh man, I am tempted all the time, I am such a sinner. No, Jesus was tempted. He never sinned. Acting on temptation is the sin so you can say, OK, I am tempted here. I have two choices. I could sin, go with the temptation, just say, bring it on, here I go. Or I could say, no, you know what? I choose to do things God's way and that's an act of worship. It is obedience to God's word. I want your will, not my will. And matter of fact, my life does not belong to me; it belongs to you, use it as you want. Wouldn't that be a great way for us to live in our marriage, to have a healthy marriage? Even in relationships working with people. In marriage, a preacher said, now the two shall become one. Have you ever heard that? Now the two shall become one at the wedding. And then afterwards, you figure out which one. A fact is a lot of people want things their way all the time. Well, when you start thinking, you know what? How about if I don't want my way all the time? I am going to prefer somebody else's way. Let's just do it their way even if I would do it different...let's do it their way. God's way is always the right way. God's way is always the right way. And sometimes, we have ways that we're not sure of and we tend to go off kind of like sheep that have gone astray. We tend to keep doing that. But if you keep in your mind, OK, I have this thought. God, let me run it by you. What do you think? And then you just do the best, God will bless that attitude in your life.

The third thing I would like to talk to you about is if you want to live a life of worship, we need to forgive others...forgive others. Now this is a tough one because some of us confuse forgiveness and trust and they are two different things. Forgiveness is something that you can offer immediately. Trust is something that is earned...trust is earned. So I can't trust those people, how can I forgive them? I can't trust that person. How would I be able to forgive them? Well, they are two different things. You can forgive them right away. And you know what? Forgiveness....say if somebody says something to you and you rehearse that over and over and over in your mind. It's like they are saying it to you

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over and over again. But they're not; you're saying to yourself over and over again. If somebody says something to you and it deeply affects you and it hurts and it is wrong for them to say that, the best thing to do right away is to forgive that person for saying it...meaning, OK, I am not going to think about that anymore; it is gone. It helps you to forgive. Jesus made it really clear when he taught about how to pray. He taught about how important forgiveness is just in order to connect with the Father. Look at this. Matthew 6:9-15. He says: Pray then in this way. Our Father who is in Heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. Do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. End of prayer.

Then he comes back and he says: Let me tell you something very important about that prayer. I never noticed this before and just recently I noticed, verse 14 and 15, says...it is right after the model prayer, he says this and he could have said anything right after the model prayer. He could have said things like, well, the kingdom is coming so you have to remember that or remember to trust God for your daily bread or he could have said when temptation comes, you need to make sure that you ask God to deliver you from evil. He didn't say that at all. He came right into, for if you forgive others for their transgressions, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. I think this model prayer...the whole point of the model prayer is you need to come to the Father with the forgiveness in your heart. You have to be a person that forgives other people. Forgive yourself. Some of us don't forgive ourselves for things we have done. We will never be able to have a relationship with other people that is a good one or with God by faith if we don't forgive ourselves. And he starts by saying, forgive others as I have forgiven you.

Matthew 6:14-16 in another paraphrase says: Yes, if you forgive others for their sins, your Father in Heaven will also forgive you for your sins and, if you don't forgive others, your Father in Heaven will not forgive you. Unforgiveness absolutely keeps us from worshiping or connecting with God, having a relationship with God because we feel like we don't deserve it. Well, guess, what? We don't deserve it. We don't deserve any of God's grace. Grace is a free gift; we didn't earn it. We could never earn it. We can't be good enough to have favor with God. It's grace. We need to forgive ourselves for what we have done knowing that God has already done that on the Cross. He forgave us with his life; we can forgive ourselves. Then you move past that and you forgive other people.

Matthew 5:21-24 in the Message says this: You are familiar with the command to the ancients; do not murder. I am telling you that anyone who is so much as angry with the brother or sister is guilty of murder. Carelessly call a brother an idiot and you just might find yourself hauled into the court. Thoughtlessly yell stupid at a sister and you are on the brink of hell fire. The simple moral fact is that words kill. This is how I want you to

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conduct yourself in these matters. If you enter your place of worship and about to make an offering and you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then come back and work things out with God.

Check this out. Colossians 3:12-13: Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Another translation reads: So chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you, compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline, be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense, like whoever's cell phone is ringing. I've forgiven you! Hope I didn't embarrass you. So quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the master forgave you. Notice that he says, right here, forgive as quickly. Some of us go, I can't forgive unless they ask for forgiveness. That is not in the Bible and that is going to be a stumbling block for you in relationships, your self-esteem and your relationship with God. It says, be even-tempered, content with second place. Really? Content with second place. Quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the master forgave you and regardless of what else you put on, where love, it is your all basic, all purpose garment. Never be without it. You're never fully dressed without love. Or as Annie said, without a smile.

There is a big difference between forgiveness and trust. Forgiveness is immediate and trust is earned over time. Sometimes we don't forgive because we are self-consumed. We don't want to be self-consumed. You should ask one of your close friends or your spouse, do you think I am self-consumed? Without getting into a fight over it. But do I just think about myself all the time? Let's talk about me. Enough about me. What do you think about me? Ok, sometimes, that's wrong to be self-consumed. It is not helpful; you think it is. It is like trying so hard but you are doing the wrong thing. You need to let go of yourself and let God take care of you and you go out and serve other people and watch how your life just goes crazy in great ways.

The fourth way that you can live a life of worship is that you can actually exercise your gifts to help other people. Exercise your gift to help others. Romans 12:6 says: Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly. All of us have our super power. There is something we can do that nobody else can do. Some of us think I can't do anything. You should ask somebody else. Do I do anything well and they will tell you...you know what? You're really good at this. Use your gift for God. You say, well, it's not singing. I don't sing or I don't play an instrument or I can't whatever. Use your gift whatever it is for Him.

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James 1:27 says: Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: To visit orphans...which I know that Crossroads is very active doing...to visit orphans and widows in their distress and to keep one's self unstained by the world. There are three things there: Orphans and widows and to keep one's self unstained from the world. What does that mean, unstained by the world...unstained from the world? It means that you do not become like the world; you become like God. We are in this world but our goal is not to become like...name your celebrity. But our goal is to become like Jesus. And again the Bible helps us to learn to be like Jesus. Other people that you thing are godly people in your life; they are not perfect but maybe they are just a little bit further down the road than you are. They can help you become more like Jesus. Listening to sermons or studying the Bible or songs. There are so many songs out there that have Bible promises in them and you can memorize scripture that way. That can help you to become more like Jesus.

Would you pray with me, please?