

Changing the way we think (Part 4)

Wired for worship

There are three concepts I'd like to unpack for us today....

1. In western culture, we truly have no problem with the concept of “worship”. As a matter of fact, I dare say we are the best worshipers on the planet.
2. The object of our adoration, and affection....leaves us longing, and is always lacking
3. Who is worthy of worship?

Basic Origin

Old English weorthscipe ‘worthiness, acknowledgment of worth’

Here are some examples of giving worth in our culture....

In Entertainment

February 9, 1964—*It is estimated that 73 million Americans were watching that night as the Beatles made their live U.S. television debut. Ed Sullivan gave his now-famous intro, “Ladies and gentlemen...the Beatles!” and after a few seconds of rapturous cheering from the audience, the band kicked into “All My Lovin’.” Fifty seconds in, the first audience-reaction shot of the performance shows a teenage girl beaming and possibly hyperventilating.*

And then came “She Loves You,” and the place seems to explode. What followed was perhaps the most important two minutes and 16 seconds of music ever broadcast on American television—a sequence that still sends chills down the spine a half a century later.

May 25th, 1977—*With its groundbreaking special effects, Star Wars leaped off screens and immersed audiences in “a galaxy far, far away.” By now everyone knows the story, which followed the baby-faced Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) as he enlisted a team of allies—including hunky Han Solo (Harrison Ford) and the robots C3PO and R2D2—on his mission to rescue the kidnapped Princess Leia from an Evil Empire governed by Darth Vader. The film made all three of its lead actors overnight stars, turning Fisher into an object of adoration for millions of young male fans and launching Ford’s now-legendary career as an action-hero heartthrob.*

July 13th, 1985—*at Wembley Stadium in London, [Prince Charles](#) and [Princess Diana](#) officially open Live Aid, a worldwide rock concert organized to raise money for the relief of famine-stricken Africans. Continued at JFK Stadium in Philadelphia (where [Joan Baez](#) famously kicked it off by telling the crowd “this is your [Woodstock](#), and it’s long overdue”) and at other arenas around the world, the 16-hour “superconcert” was globally linked by satellite to more than a billion viewers in 110 nations. In a triumph of technology and good will, the event raised more than \$125 million in famine relief for Africa.*

In Sports

While some might consider it just a game, the Super Bowl has become a unique, shared experience in American culture.

It's likely the only time of the year that viewers are glued to television screens watching the same broadcast, even if they don't care about the teams or the outcome of the game.

The Super Bowl combines sports, music and advertising into one extreme event. In essence, it provides a fascinating picture of what many Americans consider ideal entertainment.

In our consumption

We crave the convenient, we want things in 30 minutes or less....emphasis on the "or less", we tolerate the temporary as long as it makes us feel good now, we spend like there's no tomorrow until tomorrow comes....then we figure out a way to spend some more, we value comfort culture....what good could come from suffering, we adore temporary, random interaction with humans and call it intimacy....

Eat, drink....for tomorrow we die! Does it get any better than this?

Yes.....yes it does.

C.S Lewis said....

"I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation."

We long to find something greater than ourselves. We will give our very being to find it, experience it, touch it, feel it, taste and see that it is good. We'll give our time, talent, treasure, blood, sweat, and tears.

This is great worship.....for not so great god's.

1

**I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?**

2

**My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.**

3

**He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;**

4

**indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.**

5

**The Lord watches over you—
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;**

6

**the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

7

**The Lord will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;**

8

**the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.**

Psalm 121

Let's focus on the question and answer of verses 1 and 2...

As worshipers approached Jerusalem, they could see the mountains around the city. In ancient times, some of those mountains were used during periods of Israel's history as high places (places where altars were built to worship pagan deities). As they looked to those mountains and asked where their help came from, they were reminded that their real help didn't come from idols. It came instead from the Lord, the one true God—*the Maker of heaven and earth* (v. 2).
(NIV Quest study Bible notes)

- * We're distracted by the idols, and bright and shiny things around us
- * Tie in 1 Kings

11 The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. 12 After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. 13 When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

1 Kings 19:11-13

So....How do we decipher what is worthy of our worship?

Jon showed us last week with this verse....

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

2 Timothy 1:7

And our base scripture for this series....

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

- * We're broken and we sometimes want quick fixes
- * God is calling us to turn from the temporal, and cling to Him
- * God is faithful to show us, to transform our minds, to reveal what is good....in spite of the noise and distraction that vie for our attention
- * Spoken word