

CITYWEST CHURCH

DEEP DIVE #6 - 12.07.2026

YOU BECOME WHAT YOU WORSHIP.

Over the past six weeks we've followed the story of worship through Scripture.

We learnt from David as he said:

The one thing I ask of the LORD— the thing I seek most— is to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, delighting in the LORD's perfections and meditating in his Temple.

Psalm 27:4 (NLT)

We watched him bring the Ark to Jerusalem and make the presence of God the centre of national life.

We saw David's Tabernacle become a prophetic picture of open access to God.

We discovered that worship involves our whole selves—our voices, our hands, our knees, our hearts.

We explored the Davidic Covenant and saw David acting as a king-priest, pointing us toward Jesus, our true King and Great High Priest.

Week after week we've been asking one question:

What is worship?

Paul now answers it from another angle. Worship isn't just what happens when we sing.

It's what happens when we decide what is worthy of our lives.

Because every heart has a throne, and something always sits on it.

Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. ²² Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. ²³ And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies. ²⁵ They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen. ²⁶ That is why God abandoned them to their shameful desires. Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other. ²⁷ And the men, instead of having normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved.

²⁸ Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done. ²⁹ Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. ³⁰ They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They invent new ways of sinning, and they disobey their parents. ³¹ They refuse to understand, break their promises, are heartless, and have no mercy. ³² They know God's justice requires that those who do these things deserve to die, yet they do them anyway. Worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too.

Romans 1:21-32 (NLT)

Every human being is a worshipper. The question is never if we worship.

*The question is **what—or who—we worship.***

The Apostle Paul tells us that worship is not simply one activity among many. Worship is the orientation of the human heart. It is what sits at the centre of our lives. And whatever sits at the center will ultimately shape our identity, our desires, our relationships, and our future.

Throughout this Deep Dive series, we have discovered that worship is about far more than music. It is about presence, surrender, formation, participation, and communion with God.

This final message brings everything together.

Because Paul shows us that worship is never neutral. It either transforms us into the likeness of Christ or it deforms us into the image of whatever has taken His place.

Everything that follows flows from that one decision. Notice Paul does not begin with behaviour. He begins with worship. Sin begins with misplaced worship.

WORSHIP SHAPES WHAT WE SEE.

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Romans 1:28-29 (NLT)

Paul says the problem wasn't first intellectual.

It was liturgical. It was worship.

When worship is distorted thinking becomes distorted.

Our culture often tells us:

"If you change the way people think, you'll change how they live."

Paul says something deeper.

Change what people worship... and everything else follows.

Notice the progression:

They stopped worshipping. They stopped giving thanks. Then they began believing lies. This is still true today.

When God is removed from the centre, something else immediately replaces Him.

Career. Comfort. Politics. Money. Identity. Relationships. Success. Even ministry.

John Calvin famously wrote:

"The human heart is a perpetual factory of idols."

The issue is not whether we have idols. The issue is whether we recognise them.

David understood this.

David didn't simply enjoy worship. He organised his life around God's presence. He knew that whatever occupies the centre determines everything else.

That is why Psalm 27 begins: "The one thing I ask..."

One thing. One centre. One pursuit.

And those who make idols are just like them, as are all who trust in them.

Psalm 115:8

We become what we worship.

FALSE WORSHIP ALWAYS DEFORMS US.

And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.

Romans 1:23 (NLT)

Notice the exchange.

Truth for lies.

Creator for creation.

Presence for possessions.

God for self.

Every idol promises life. Every idol eventually takes life. This is why Paul lists all the brokenness that follows.

Greed. Envy. Violence. Pride. Deception. Broken sexuality. Broken relationships. Broken communities.

Notice these are not random sins.

They are the fruit of disordered worship.

The Bible consistently teaches that behaviour grows out of worship.

Jesus said,

Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

Matthew 6:21 (NLT)

The heart always follows worship.

This is why worship matters so much.

When we gather every Sunday we aren't simply singing songs.

We are retraining our loves. We are reminding our hearts.

We are placing Jesus back on the throne. This is why the Church has always gathered.

Not because God needs music. Because we need reordering.

James K. A. Smith writes:

"Christian worship is the heart of discipleship because it is the gymnasium in which God retrains our loves."

Every Sunday your heart is being pointed somewhere.

Toward Christ or away from Him.

TRUE WORSHIP RESTORES US INTO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST.

The beautiful news of Romans doesn't end in chapter one.

Paul keeps writing. The gospel changes everything.

Because Jesus came to restore true worship. The first Adam exchanged God for created things. Jesus perfectly worshipped the Father.

Israel failed. David failed. Every one of us has failed.

But Jesus never did.

He loved the Father completely. Trusted Him completely. Obeyed Him completely. Then He died for idolaters like us. So that our worship could be restored.

Paul says later,

And so, dear brothers and sisters,^[a] I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

Romans 12:1 (NLT)

Notice how Romans begins and how Romans ends.

Romans 1 — People worship creation.

Romans 12 — People offer themselves back to God.

The gospel restores worship. And restored worship restores people.

This is why charismatic worship matters. Not because loud music changes people.

Not because emotion changes people. But because when the gospel fills our songs Christ fills our vision and the Spirit transforms our hearts.

Paul writes elsewhere:

So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NLT)

The more clearly we see Jesus the more we become like Him.

That has been the story of this entire series.

One of the great gifts of the historic Church is its understanding that God forms His people through practices.

In Eucharistic traditions, believers return again and again to Christ's table.

Not because bread saves. But because Christ meets His people.

Charismatic worship testifies to the same reality.

Week after week we gather.

We sing the gospel. We pray. We surrender. We behold Jesus.

The Holy Spirit meets us.

And slowly patiently faithfully He reshapes our loves.

Worship is one of God's ordained means of grace. Not because music is magical. But because the Spirit delights to glorify the Son.

1. Identify what sits at the centre of your heart.

Ask yourself this week:

What occupies my thoughts most? What do I fear losing most? What do I sacrifice most for?

That often reveals what we worship.

2. Let Sunday reorder your Monday.

Don't come to church as a spectator. Come ready to worship. Come ready to surrender. Come ready to be transformed.

3. Carry worship into everyday life.

Every decision is an opportunity to declare:

Jesus is worthy.

At work. At home. With your money. With your time. With your words. With your body. Whole-life worship is the goal.

David knew something that our generation desperately needs to recover.

The presence of God is everything.

Not success.

Not comfort.

Not influence.

Not performance.

Presence.

Paul tells us the greatest tragedy in human history wasn't simply that people sinned. It was that they **stopped worshipping God as God.**

And once worship was misplaced everything else fell apart. But the gospel tells a better story. Jesus came to restore worshippers. Not merely forgiven people. Not merely religious people.

True worshippers.

People whose hearts are centred on Him.

People who carry His presence.

People who become more like the One they behold.

Let's be a church that doesn't simply sing songs.

Let's be a people whose whole lives declare:

Jesus is worthy.

Because in the end, you will become what you worship.

So worship the One who alone can make you fully alive.

