



BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

What Worship Reveals

Sunday 7th September 2025

Genesis 22:1-14

The final segment of this Building Our Community series is about worship. You and I were made to worship, therefore, your and I will worship something. Tim Keller defined worship as **“the act of ascribing ultimate value to something or someone in a way that energizes and engages your whole being.”**

It is deciding what you value above all else and pursuing that with your whole being. The way we are made means it is possible for us to worship the wrong thing, something/someone other than God. In **Exodus 20:2** the first commandment says,

“You shall have no other gods before me.”

In other words you shall not ascribe ultimate value to someone/something other than me. Why? Simply put, God loves you. **To do so does ultimate harm to us and those around us.**

Today we go back some 600 years before these commandments were given to the life of Abraham and the first mention of worship in the Bible. Through this story I want us to see 5 things that worship reveals to us.

1. **Worship reveals your heart (vv1-3)**

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” [...] ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

Two things to notice, **firstly** God tested Abraham. **Testing is the idea of revealing what is inside.** God was using this opportunity for worship to reveal the heart of Abraham. Once a week God calls us to worship together to worship. This is to test, or reveal, the heart that is within us.

Secondly, Abraham gives us a strong clue for how this story will ultimately end by his preparation. How do you prepare for Sunday worship? **Preparation starts with a commitment to be there** (early in the morning), **a readiness to**

sacrifice (cut wood), and **a priority above all else** (went to the place God had told him).

Is that how you prepare? Or do you just wing it, scraping in at the last minute, hoping there will be a spare Bible for you on the side? Or do you worship other things during the week that distract you from even getting here?

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2. Worship reveals your expectations of God (vv4-5)

⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.”

Abraham knew God had called him to make the ultimate sacrifice. So when he and Isaac head up the mountain on their own, how is it that he fully planned for the two of them to return? The answer is in **Hebrews 11:17-19**,

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By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” ¹⁹ He **considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead**, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

If God told you to sacrifice the very thing through which you thought you were going to reach others for Jesus, what would you do? **Will you sacrifice your talents and your gifts? Even though you think that is how God is going to work through you?** Can God not raise from the dead? Did He not resurrect His own Son for you, with a resurrection body that far outdid the original body? What is it that you expect of God?

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3. Worship reveals the mercy of God (vv6-8)

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷ And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” ⁸ Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

Isaac has noticed something is missing. **When you come to worship God, do you ever stop to realise what you don't have; how little you bring?** The call to worship God is a call to see we have nothing to bring.

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11 As Paul wrote in **1 Timothy 6:7**,
for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. [ESV]

12 The only way that worship can function is if God is a God of mercy, which He is and affirms in **Exodus 20:6**,
showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. [NKJV]

13 **4. Worship reveals Jesus to us (vv11-12)**

But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ¹² He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

‘The Angel of the Lord’ is none other than the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. The same Angel of the Lord who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and to many others. **Jesus reveals what matters to Him is that you place ultimate value on God.** And how did Jesus affirm that? ‘You have not withheld you only son’ – a foreshadow of John 3:16. God loved so He did not withhold that which was most precious. Do you love the Lord? Then withhold nothing from Him. As Paul write in **Romans 12:1**,

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.

16 True spiritual worship means holding nothing back, including your own self, your whole being. **What are you holding back?**

17 **5. Worship reveals God’s provision (vv13-14)**

And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. [...] ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

When you are thinking about coming to gather to worship God together as His redeemed people, the devil (who wants your worship) will feed you all sorts of ideas about why you shouldn’t and why you can’t – health, work, kids, stress, relationships, education, busy...

You name it he, the devil, will use it. And all the while feeding you a lie that your God cannot bring strength for your tiredness, healing for your illness, success for your education, peace for your stress, unity for your relationships.

18 **What lies have you believed that have caused you to place ultimate value on something other than God Himself?**

Did God not provide for you the ultimate sacrifice when you were dead in trespasses and sins? Let your worship reveal a new confidence in God about whom Paul wrote in **Romans 5:6**,

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

If HE did it then He can do it again and THAT's why we worship, because HE. IS. ABLE.