

# Give It UP!

## Living a Life of Worship

This morning I want to continue to look at the idea of “Give It UP!” Up to this point we have looked at the idea of giving and serving both God and others, we have looked at the idea of surrendering those things in our lives that hold us back from drawing near to God, and this morning I want to look at the idea living a life of worship – giving everything we have up to God. In the past we have seen that the key thought behind what Paul is trying to tell us is found in **Ephesians 5:21**:

*21 And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

This morning I want to look at the idea of reverence for Christ in light of **Ephesians 6:5:9**. Paul uses the example of a slave and master / an employer and employee. Read it with me if you would:

*5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. 6 Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. 7 Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. 8 Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. 9 Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites.*

It is believed that at the time that Paul was writing this to the church in Ephesus that at least half of the population in Rome was that of slaves. So this was a key example for Paul to use, everyone knew what it meant. In **1 Corinthians 7:22-24** we read Paul's words in regards to slaves. He says:

*22 And remember, if you were a slave when the Lord called you, you are now free in the Lord. And if you were free when the Lord called you, you are now a slave of Christ. 23 God paid a high price for you, so don't be enslaved by the world.*

When it comes to the example of slaves and masters, we are slaves to our master Jesus Christ, yet how many of us are grateful that the master we serve isn't cruel, demeaning, full of demands – yet he is kind, gracious, forgiving, giving us free will, showing us the way to peace and blessing. Yet, we all too often forget who we are suppose to be serving. We get wrapped up in life, events, appointments, activities, responsibilities that same to consume us yet forgetting to go to God and ask him “how can I serve you today.”

So when we talk about living a life of worship what are we talking about? **What does a life of worship look like?** Notice in **verse 5** that we are to have deep respect and fear.

## 1. Motivated by a Desire to Fulfill My God-Given Responsibility

The term used here in this verse is (deep respect and fear) or “**fear and trembling**”, **doing my best to meet the expectations that God has for me**. What does God expect? “Love for Him and love for others.” Are we ever going to fulfill everything that God wants from us? No, not always. But we have our moments don’t we. There are times when we can sense God’s pleasure because we know we have done what God expects of us.

For some reason however we have mistaken God’s grace as a license to live however we want, when God’s grace and forgiveness should motivate us to continue to please God, to do the best we can to say that I have fulfilled my duty as a slave of Christ. **We need to develop a healthy sense of value and importance of our God, and then let every area of our life follow suit. Philippians 2:12-13** Paul writes:

*Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. 13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.*

At times I think we become satisfied with just being an average, typical Christian, we fall every once and a while, we make our mistakes, we don’t always do the right thing, and we accept this as if it is okay. We end up living a mediocre life of worship instead of striving for an extreme life of faith and worship. May we never be satisfied with a mediocre life of worship but may there burn within us a desire to do our very best for God, to try with all of our strength to give him the worth and praise he deserves.

In the relationship between slave and master, between employer and employee, there needs to be a sense of respect and importance. Have you ever worked for a boss that that you didn’t respect or value? It definitely makes an impact on how we do our work, doesn’t it? But when we work as if we are working for Christ, there should be a whole other motivating factor – that the one who created me, the one who loves me, that one who now accepts me and who has saved my life is asking for me to live my life in gratitude and value of Him. Live a life of respect and fear of the Lord. The second thing we learn about living a life of worship is:

## 2. Motivated by an Inward Force of Love and Respect.

Notice that in verse 6 that Paul challenges the slaves not to simply work when they are being watched. Worship is not for eye-service. It isn’t so that people around us can see how spiritual we are. **There is a difference between the image of worship and the heart of worship**. And if we aren’t careful we can fall into habits and rituals that have no heart attachment to them at all. Paul wrote in **Colossians 3:22**:

*22 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.*

That is why we can raise our hands, we can kneel down, we can cry out to God, but if our heart isn't into it, it becomes like a resounding gong or noise, or disturbing image to God. I have to remind myself of Christ's love for me, I have to think of the times that he has led me, that he has been by my side, how he has lavished his love upon me, so that when I live I respond in love to him. **1 John 4:19** tells us:

*19 We love because he first loved us.*

That is why we sing songs on Sunday about the great love of God so that we can remind ourselves to love him in return, turning our time of worship on Sunday from just a singing time to a heart connect – an internal love outwardly expressed to God.

Scripture tells us that God sees those things that are both visible and invisible – those things done in public and in private. As hard as it was to be a slave in the time that this was written, Paul challenged them to find their motivation from their love for God. And not just respond when it was seen but to maintain a sense of greater responsibility.

I think it is safe to say that **all of us continually need to develop an even greater sense of responsibility to God each and everyday – that life isn't about me, but about Him.** That leads us to our third point – that a life of worship is:

### **3. Motivated by a Desire to be a Blessing to God**

We read in our text in verse 7 that slaves are to work with **enthusiasm**. That word in the Greek means **to serve with willingness and kindness**. In the work force there is nothing more frustrating than working with someone who is unwilling to be kind and cooperative. I have had a couple in my time who made going to work miserable. But then there is that coworker that is kind and willing to do whatever it takes and it makes work flow like a well oiled machine. Anyone here know what I mean?

When it comes to our walk with God, there are times when we can be that uncooperative, dragging individual. We live our life with no thought of how it effects others, or even how it affects our attitude towards God. Instead we need to be like David who wrote in **Psalm 130:2**:

*2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits-- 3 who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, 5 who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

**When we think of what God has done for us we need to develop a willingness and a kindness in our hearts that desires nothing more than to please God, bless his name, to worship him with all that we have.** When it comes to worshipping God our attitude shouldn't be that we have to worship him, but that we get to worship him – a great privilege and honor to be able to please his heart - Being able to live my life in such a

way that I know that I put a smile on his face. Then finally this morning, a life of worship is:

#### **4. Motivated by an Eternal Reward and Eternal Perspective**

Paul writes in verse 8 to remember that God will reward each one of us based on the good that we do. A heart of worship longs to be with the one who is the most important – that is the ultimate prize. As human beings we can get caught up in the here and now. **A lifestyle of worship goes against our human nature because it is based on delayed gratification and satisfaction.**

I can't wait to see my Savior face to face, can you? What an incredible day it will be when we will finally be home united with our God. Worship maintains this attitude of anticipation of being with God.

That is why I need to be careful that I don't become dependent upon the earthly rewards because I may tend to value those more than what is to come, and find myself living for the wrong focal point. **Philippians 3:13-14** tells us:

*Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.*

When we talk about "Give It UP!" we are talking about service, surrender and worship. Worship is not just something we do, it is something that is a part of us. It is motivated by a desire to fulfill my God-given responsibility, it is motivated by an inward force of love and respect, it is motivated by a desire to be a blessing to God, and it is motivated by an eternal reward and eternal perspective.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, teach me to be a living worshiper of You. May every act, every word, every song I sing be motivated out of love for you. May my heart connect with my life and may you be at the center of all that I live for. Make me a worshiper of you that I may live with the hope of seeing you face to face. That I will strive to put a smile on your face each day, that I won't simply go through the motions but that my emotions will be stirred by your great love for me.

As I give all that I am up to you, I place myself in your hands and say "do with me as you will, make me a living demonstration of love to you and to those around me." Make me a worshiper in everyday life, let me not live another minute without asking what you want, what your plans are for me, but may I start each day with gratitude and love expressed. Lord, I give it up. I will serve, I will surrender, I will worship. For this is what I will live for, In Jesus Name, Amen