

How to Ignite a Heart of Worship - Part 2

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of heart engagement, truth, and lifestyle in igniting a genuine heart of worship.

Scripture: John 4:24, John 8:32, John 14:6, John 17:17, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 4:15, 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 4:3, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Worship In Spirit", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the importance of worshiping God in spirit and truth, highlighting the two extremes in worship - emotional fanaticism and void of emotion. He stresses that true worship is not in fanaticism but in the fruit of a lifestyle walking in the Spirit. Shane encourages reigniting a heart of worship through full surrender to God, acknowledging that sin hinders worship and quenches the Spirit. He discusses the significance of embracing the truth of God's Word, warning against watering down truth or rejecting essential doctrines like the atonement and resurrection. Shane underscores the unity of believers in truth and faith as the foundation for genuine worship.

Transcript

Now on this area I felt it relevant to talk about the two camps again that I talk about sometimes when I talk about the Holy Spirit. On one side, when you're talking about worship people say, "Brother, the Spirit's moving," and then excuse all kinds of things that are just weird and bizarre and emotional. There's emotional people, right? And some are conservative, some are emotional, I know God has created us differently, but that's not really worshiping God, because it's not in the fanaticism, it's in the fruit. A person who is truly worshiping God, they might get excited and that's good, but it's really in their fruit. What is the fruit of that lifestyle, walking in the Spirit?

And then the other side, of course, we know, we call the cemetery, right? They rarely talk about the Spirit. They're void of emotion and they're void of engagement. You really don't know if they're alive until the service is over. You know, they get up out of the chair and leave - okay, they're alive, okay. But you do have the two extremes. I've talked to people on this side and they think that is worship. Reverence and respect and just nothing, you know- and that's not worship either. I believe the heart has to be engaged to some degree.

Try having a lively conversation with somebody and doing either extreme. That won't go over very well. This side will say, "Can you just calm down and sit down so I can talk to you?" And this side is, "Do you

hear anything I'm saying? Are you engaged at all?"

So the heart of worship, God has created us, and that's one thing I think on this topic of worship, and that's why even though I poke fun at both sides, I really try not to be too critical about it because God has designed people differently. I mean, there's worshipers who can just worship God in their chair and when Amazing Grace comes on, there's tears flowing down their face, and they're just worshipping, and then there's other people who've just been delivered from a difficult, abusive marriage or they just got their kids back from the Department of Social Services and they're excited and they're happy, and they're joyful, and that's how God has created different people, so there's differences there. Those things are not bad things, that's what we call character, that's who we are, that's how God has made us. But you can't gauge worship by that alone. Now that can come out at some point, but that's not what I'm talking about when I talk about worship. Because I'll go to some services and they'll say, "Man, the Spirit was really there." You know, or, "They were really worshipping." And you go to another service and "They were really worshipping," but they look different, they really look different.

But there is a heart engagement there, I know that for sure, the heart has to be engaged, because if we're in a hurry, and we're kind of bored, and we're in a hurry, I don't think that's worshipping. I think there's a kink in the hose, so to speak. And that "rivers of living water," is not flowing freely. Now everybody's going to be a little bit different in that but there should be some engagement. Again, it doesn't come naturally, it doesn't come naturally.

So what I would encourage you to do on this first step of "in spirit," worship Him in spirit and in truth, say, "Lord, I want a heart of worship. I want what Shane's talking about. I want to reignite my passion for You." And this can happen in a lot of different ways. Some people remember when they used to worship God twenty years ago and tears would come to their eyes. You talk to them six months later and, "I remember," and six months later, "I remember," they never get to a point, they're always living in, "I remember twenty years ago," and then it becomes twenty-two years ago, and then it becomes twenty-three years ago, and you want to say, "Hey, don't live in the past, you can have that heart of worship again." So it's reigniting a heart of worship.

Then there's other people who've never experienced this. And a lot of times it's because we're coming to God on our terms. He's in this little box and we'll keep Him right here, "Don't get too crazy, God, I like You in Your little box," but really God wants full surrender. That's why I talk about it often and I'll continue to talk about it until the day I die. Because that is how one of the bigger ways you ignite a heart of worship is through full surrender, saying, "Lord, my life is Yours. Give me that heart of worship."

If a person truly comes to Him, they're on their knees, they in a chair, wherever, and they're crying out to God, saying, "Lord, give me a heart of worship, my life is Yours, I've been fighting You in this area, I've been arguing about this area, I let this unforgiveness go, I let this bitterness go, this anger, Lord, this addiction, all these things are taking me down, I fully surrender everything, I give You my life." There's no way you're going to leave that unchanged. If you're sincere. If you're sincere, there's no way. That's how you ignite a heart of worship.

And that's what I alluded to earlier, this is why sin is a big deal. Sin hinders worship. It quenches the Spirit, it grieves the heart of God and it sidetracks us from our mission to walk in the Spirit. He who does not live well does not worship well. So worship is often a byproduct of our lifestyle choices. How a person lives affects their worship. Think about this. Grab somebody tonight who's leaving the services, or GraceFest,

and grab somebody tonight who's leaving Schooners, and ask them tomorrow morning if they feel like worshipping God. What's the difference? Our lifestyle often complements worship. It encourages it or it draws us away from worship. He who does not live well does not worship well. I was spring boarding off of what E.M. Bounds said, and I can't remember the quote exactly, but he said, "He who does not live well, does not pray well." Our prayer life is directly related to how we live our life, our lifestyle, they complement each other. And the same applies with worship.

It's interesting on this note, I've found that we often avoid the sins of the heart. Because when I talk about sin as a big deal, many people are saying, "Yeah, Shane, you go get 'em." You know, "You go get those adulterers and those fornicators and those other sins, you go get all those guys, you tell 'em." But we forget about sins of the heart. And I came across a good book I wanted to recommend some time ago and I pulled it out again and went through the highlights, it's called Wounded by God's People by Anne Graham Lotz, and her story on being wounded (Billy Graham's daughter), being wounded by God's people. And a lot of times, I didn't realize in her case, and I've noticed in my own life, our wounds can prevent worship. It's a cycle of pain. It's rejection, there's deep wounds, there's extreme hurt, and I can't worship very good when I'm hurt because I'm carrying bitterness and resentment and everything in and I see that person over there and that person and we're wounded, and a wounded heart cannot worship God. A wounded heart cannot worship God.

But, I'm going to throw that back on you, a wounded heart, a wounded heart can be the catalyst toward worshipping God. It has everything to do with what you do with that hurt. Because some of the best worshipers I've ever met are people who have been hurt deeply. And it's through that pain, that pain draws them to Christ, that pain draws them to the prayer closet, being wounded and gossiped about and slandered and backbiting and people saying mean and awful things, it draws you to the cross, it draws you to the point of, "Lord, I'm so hurt, can You rebuild me? Can You comfort me?" But if you don't do that, it'll turn to something very ugly, very ugly, and it will prevent worship, every single time.

I often tell people, if you want to get hurt, plant a church. It's unbelievable, I mean people have called me and my wife everything from this is a cult, to slander and backbiting, and saying things that just aren't even [true], I don't even know where they come up with this stuff. But they're also hurting, so they're wanting to hurt you. They're wanting to hurt you. And it's just wounds after wounds, so if I don't take that to the cross, and if I don't say, "Lord, I forgive them," because I'm not perfect, I'm sure I've done my share of wounding myself. What comes out of here is not perfect. Or nowadays we have to say what comes out of here (phone) - email, texting, right?

We wound each other, and if you don't allow that hurt and that pain to drive you to Christ, and what I mean by drive is, pain makes us bitter or it makes us better. Many people who are wounded are not reading their Bible, you think they would. Many people who have been hurt by the church are not going to church, they're not listening to worship, they're hurt and they're wounded, and that's why it's so important that we take these things to Christ and we allow forgiveness to come in. I've been forgiven much more than I could ever forgive. Haven't we all? That's why the Bible talks about He who forgave you, shouldn't you? Ought you be even more forgiving and more understanding and more patient?

I don't know why I threw this in here, but it ties right in with worship because I've seen a lot of people that aren't worshipping God because they've been hurt by the church. And I don't want to minimize this, but I want to say, "Well, who hasn't?" Who hasn't been hurt by the church? Me, times ten. Because it's a whole bunch of sinners, coming together, broken, need God, and everything, the flesh comes in, wants to argue,

wants to fight, we say things we shouldn't, and we do things we shouldn't, it's sinners trying to have church. Now how is that not going to get ugly from time to time? It's impossible.

So, I would encourage you, I've seen tears flow when people finally release, and they allow bitterness and unforgiveness to stop hurting them. Yeah, people have wronged us. But forgiveness doesn't mean I was wrong and they were right. I've said this many times from here. It just means that, "Lord, I'm releasing this, I'm not holding this poison in anymore. Even if they were wrong, completely wrong." And then from that, usually you'll see a heart of worship come from that. You don't see a heart of worship when somebody is bitter and angry and resentful and hurt. You don't see it. But the heart of worship follows, once that person releases all of that. It's powerful. This prevents worship, I think, more than people realize. Pain either prevents worship or it ignites it. It's what we do with it.

So reignite to cause the heart to catch fire again. That's what we have to do in this area of worshiping in spirit and in truth, especially in spirit. You have to make an effort to reignite your heart to walk with Him in spirit and in truth. It's interesting, the Bible says, "[John] was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." (Rev. 1:10). Do think they're in some yoga trance? Or are they walking in the Spirit? They're walking in the Spirit and they're being lifted by God and they're being given revelation and different things and wisdom, but they've been walking in the Spirit. They're not living in sin. They were walking in God's Spirit and God walked with them, He talked with them, He spoke with them in that way. So it's absolutely crucial to worship Him in spirit.

Now, those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. And here's where the battles lines are being drawn. I don't have to spend a lot of time here, because I have many, many, many times before. But if you have a watered down version of truth, you will not know the character of God. See that's the problem and I love the churches with the rainbows on them and they're all welcoming and affirming and things, but you can't worship God and know the character of God if you're rejecting His truth. See, when I embrace His truth, then true worship comes from that. They'll also say that God saves everyone, some churches, or they'll say that His Word is true as long as it's interpreted correctly.

Once we start to put, what I call modifiers, on His truth, or governors on His truth, as long as it fits my theology, and I'll make it fit, and people think, it's called universalism, that everybody will be saved in the end, and even the devil. Yeah, there's universalism, they believe that everybody will be saved in the end. And I believe somebody like Rob Bell, if you've ever read his books, he believes that kind of stuff. See you're not going to go and worship God if you're rejecting His truth. And I'm not trying to belittle or cause division, I'm just telling you, you cannot. True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. You can't say, "Well, yeah, that's true, but I'm not going to believe it."

And to reject the concept of hell is to reject the need [of Christ.] Why did Christ come? This is not something little. When you talk about universalism, that everybody will be saved, you just mocked the cross. As if God is some abusive Father? There's no need for the cross? Guess what, do you think they talk about salvation much? Or repentance? Or the blood of Christ? Or the judgment that is to come? No. So that's why this is major stuff, folks. That's why they can go on Oprah and say these things, and that does not please God. So they think they're worshiping God. They're not, they're arrogantly mocking His truth, and they're putting themselves in place of God because they're changing His truth. How can you tell me [that], when Jesus spoke more about hell than heaven? Jesus Christ spoke more about hell than heaven! Yet you're going to erase it? "Yeah, let's erase all this stuff," - that's not the nature of God, that's not the character of God. Well, Jesus said it. Jesus said it. He who believes on Me will be saved. He who

does not believe on Me will be condemned and is condemned already. Is damned, is condemned. I'm not going to prepare to erase that verse. So you see how important this is? Because I think sometimes, "Okay, Shane you're just getting a little carried away with truth." No, I'm not, that's the foundation of everything. A person cannot truly worship God without the truth, because that reveals the character of God.

See, that's why I say try reading from Genesis to Revelation every year, then you'll know the character of God. Then you'll know the heart of God. Because if all you do is stick in John, you'll never know the God of wrath and indignation and holy fire and righteous jealousy. "Oh no, I'm not going to touch that God." Well, that's God, that's the nature of God. And people say, "I can't understand that." I sure can. I can understand a God who says, "I die for you, I created for you, and you're loving some other idol, I'm jealous for that." That's a healthy jealousy, what husband isn't going to be jealous of his wife talking to her ex-husband? That's a healthy jealousy. Now there's unhealthy jealousy too, but you look at the whole attributes of God, that He is loving, and merciful, and gracious, but He's holy, and righteous, and He indwells in unapproachable light.

And all these things, that's the only way to get the character of God. Do I understand everything? No. No, absolutely not. Every time I get to the parts where He would say, "Go into the cities and destroy everything." I'm like, "God, I'm not following there...I don't understand, but You are good, You are true, You are the one true and living God, I bow my knee to You even though I don't understand everything, I praise You and I worship You." And although I don't understand all of the truth, I embrace it - do you see the difference?

But then there's people that say, "See, that's not the nature of God. That's not the nature of God. If He did those things that's not God's nature and I'm changing my view about God." They can't worship Him. It was unbelievable, I had an atheist, I sat for three hours - he's an atheist, and at the end, I didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

"Well, God supports slavery, I can't worship a God that does that."

Well, let's look at all the passages. If I had time, I need twenty minutes, but there's a big difference between indentured servants and what you saw in the movies Roots. There's a big difference between God saying, "Listen, this is how the economy system works," and America and her sins of slavery, its atrocity. And he wants to tie in all these things and say, "See, I can't worship a God like that."

Well, what about the other passages that you missed in Isaiah and Jeremiah that say to care for the foreigner and the sojourner, treat these people good and with respect, and give them the firstfruits and all these things - what do you do with that? Yet this person has to say that God endorses slavery, yet he goes on the next day and posts support for Planned Parenthood. He supports Planned Parenthood yet you're going to say this about God, are you kidding me? Are you kidding me? That's a mockery! You're supporting an organization that will rip children from the womb and sell those body parts and you have the audacity to sit here and tell me that God is a mean God because of some Old Testament Scriptures that you took out of context.

That's how important this topic is, folks. The truth is everything. That's why I get fired up about the truth, it's the foundation of everything. The foundation of all sound doctrine and learning is the truth. Paul told Timothy, "Preach the truth." What's the truth? Everything, the totality of the nature of God. In the difficult seasons, he said preach the truth, Timothy, in and out of season, wherever you are, rebuke, exhort, warn the people, because there will come a time when they will not endure sound doctrine, the truth, and they

will look for teachers who will tell them what they want to hear and they will tickle their ears.

"Ah, I want to follow that teacher."

Good, because he doesn't have the truth. Well, you're not worshiping God. I don't know what you're doing but you're not worshiping God. And that's one of my concerns, and I've talked to young pastors before and I'll tell them, "Listen, if all you're going to is talk about community and painting neighborhoods and love and mercy and grace, if that's all you're going to talk about every single week for fifty-two weeks, that's only one side of the coin. That's not the whole truth."

"Well, I'm hoping they read those difficult passages on their own."

"No, that's up to you. That's the pulpit. That's the pulpit, it sets the tone for the church. It says here's what God's Word says in Genesis, here's what God's Word says in Revelation, here's where it talks about the love of God, the mercy of God, if you would just turn to Him, but then it talks about the wrath of God being poured out on all mankind because of sin. You have to preach everything. Then and only then can you truly worship God."

That's how important this topic is. And so that's hateful? That's mean? That's bigoted? No, that's the truth. And the truth hurts, and it offends. You want to know something? The truth is supposed to hurt and to offend. When my little kids hear the truth, do they like it? No.

[Slapping] "Don't put that knife into the electrical outlet! Get your hand out - what you are doing that for?"

"That offended me, that hurt me, I might even cry."

"Good, because you almost died."

How is this any different? Yes, it offends you, but you're almost dead. Dead men walking. I'm not just talking about that lifestyle, I'm mean all lifestyles in general that are outside the will of God, that are outside God. They are dead men walking. Have you ever thought about that? The majority of America is going to hell in a handbasket. The majority, there's a lot of people in the church, who are coming in and they are worshiping and they think they're on the right road but they're not. They've never repented. They've never embraced the gospel. They've never trusted in Christ as their Savior. They've heard all the right things, right? But they've never, they've never taken that step and they've never repented from their sin, they've never embraced the truth. That's why they can't worship God in spirit and in truth, because they've never embraced it.

It's a good point to remind you that half-truth is not the truth. Partial truth is not the truth. Avoiding the difficult passages is not embracing the truth. When we avoid the truth, we actually come to God as a coward, not a warrior. And this is where when I mention Mormonism or I mention Jehovah Witnesses or I mention different things, it's never to pick fights. But it's to say listen, you can't just embrace half the truth. You can't just embrace half the truth. Next time when a person is having surgery to remove cancer, try telling them to just remove half of it.

"I have a malign tumor here, it's the size of a baseball - can you just leave half? Just take out half of it."

But that's the same thing in the spiritual.

Now, nobody has the corner. People get mad at me, I got a few emails on this too when I said it last year, I don't have a hundred percent truth. I don't have the full knowledge of every truth in the Bible. You want to know how I know? Because one group believes in the rapture, another group believes it's not the rapture. Another group believes the gifts of the Spirit are ceased, another group believes that the gifts have not ceased. Another group believes in what they call eldership rule of the church, where elders govern the church, and others believe, like the Calvary Chapel movement believes in the Mosaic form of church government where the pastor leads the church. Women in leadership. To what degree according to Paul's words? "Women should not teach, but remain in submission." Ooh, Paul did you have to say that? Okay, well, how this church defines it, how John MacArthur defines it, compared to Chuck Smith is going to have a big difference there. So who's got the truth? But see, this is over what we call non-essentials. These are not essentials to salvation.

But when it comes to, He is the only way, the only truth, the only life, nobody comes to the Father except through Him, not through an angel, not through a side gate, not through a different religion, not that Jesus was a created being, not that God was once a man like us and through following a whole bunch of moral codes He became what He is today, no, no, no, no, that's very dangerous ground. That's blasphemy.

So there's a big difference in the Christian community, this will help some people, there are essentials that we all agree on. He's the only way, the only truth, the only life, you cannot come to God on your own merit, there's no good works, it's His shed blood and His blood alone, the inerrancy of Scripture, the sufficiency of Scripture, the atonement, the atoning work of Christ, the finished work on the cross, propitiation, all these big words, it basically means He did it all. He did it all.

And the inerrancy of Scripture is something being challenged today. Either God meant what He said and He meant what He said or He didn't. The inerrancy of Scripture, this is a hill to die on. As soon as you say, "Well, it's good to a certain point, but you need this book too and this Watchtower society, and this...it's okay, but it's not sufficient." See, it's sufficient. It's sufficient for all godliness, it's sufficient. It's the inerrancy of Scripture, but most churches will say, "Well, I don't think Paul really meant that." And wasn't David gay? A guy just asked me this this week, "David was gay."

I said, "His love for Jonathan exceeds that of a woman. You're going to take that Scripture and say he was gay?" It just meant, that's a best friend. Have you ever had a guy you're really close with and it exceeds that, you know, you can go play baseball, you can do some things [together], it exceeds that of a woman.

[Or,] "And Paul, he was writing in a different time, a different thing, and he really didn't [mean it that way], that was back then, this is [now]."

No, it's sufficient. That's why these are hills to die on. The cross, the resurrection. The resurrection, did it occur? That's a biggie. That's a biggie, and people begin to doubt those areas. So that's what I mean by the essentials.

It's interesting on this topic of unity, right, all the churches coming together, all the churches can come together if they're united on truth. See, I can fellowship with the Baptist, the Pentecostal, Presbyterian, and the Methodist. Methodist, John Wesley, methodology, there's a methodology, small groups, they're more Arminian in their theology. Presbyterian, following John Calvin, they're more Calvinistic in their theology. Baptists, very, you know, suit and tie preaching, this and that, King James only. And then Pentecostal, anything goes. You know, but the majority agree on the truth. The truth. The essentials of the faith. And that's what unity really is. See, unity isn't unity for the sake of unity. There's ecumenical movements that,

I've told you before, they'll email me and they're getting Buddhists and Hindu and Hare Krishna and New Age and this, and they just want us to all come together, kumbaya, as one united religion. I say, "I can't even step foot in there."

"Well, that's bigoted, that's arrogant."

No, I'm united with God. I'm united with God not man. I'm united with the truth, not man. I'm united with faith in Christ, not man. Because when you come together on that, then you're not united with God. See, that's unity. Unity in the Bible is unity of truth, unity of faith, and unity of doctrine. We're united, one cause, Paul would say with one mind. That's unity. So don't let anybody fool you and say, "Well, Christians just aren't united, they're against all this." Well, we're united with God, if you're not, then yeah, I'm divided against you, but you cause that, not me. Because we're united with the truth.

Boy, I had a whole section on the truth, alétheia, there's a Greek word for what Jesus used, and it means reality. There's a genuineness, sincerity, you're not fake. There's an accuracy, integrity, there's a dependability, and then there's morality. Because sometimes we often think the truth is just moral, right? Moral.

And sometimes it's the angriest people who say they're contending for truth, and I want to say, well, wait a minute, truth should make you sincere and gentle and patient and loving and dependable, not just angry. You don't have to angrily contend for the truth. I want to recommend another book, Contentiously Contending. It's free Kindle download, I recommended it before, and I think it's got many thousands of hits now. Contentiously Contending, Anton [Bosch], who speaks here sometimes, very short book. Contentiously Contending, it talks about how to contend for the truth with the right attitude. And he just saved me thirty minutes of explaining. I would encourage you to look that up.

But let me just close on this. Every five minutes, I'm sure you've seen the statistics, every five minutes a Christian is dying for the truth. Every five minutes. A Christian around the world is dying for the truth. It's the offensive part of the truth they're dying for, right? Not the pleasantries. It's the offensive part of the truth. That means eight to ten Christians were just martyred during this service.

So the next time we want to avoid the truth, we have to remember that people are dying for it. And then don't forget Somebody who did die for it two thousand years ago on an old rugged cross. See people are dying for the truth. That's how important this is. So if you truly want to worship God in spirit and truth you have to have both, you can't neglect one without the other. If you have truth, but no spirit, you're a modern day Pharisee. And I can tell you right now, you're probably pretty depressing to be around. You're upsetting your family, you're mean, and you're arrogant. That's not having the truth.

But if you're all spirit, watch out, because there's no fruit. And you're just allowing things to happen that are not of God. You're excusing sin, saying, "Well, led of the Spirit, brother..." No, you need both. We need spirit and truth. That's the compass. Jesus said true worshipers will worship Him in spirit and in truth.

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