

My Worship

Study Guide

Summary

This sermon explores the concept of personal worship, challenging common assumptions about when and how it must be done. Bill clarifies that while the Bible does not prescribe a specific time or rigid format for personal devotion, it consistently calls believers to a lifestyle of ongoing communion with God. Examples from Jesus, Daniel, and key New Testament passages show that regular, intentional time with God is both biblical and essential for spiritual growth. Bill encourages listeners to move beyond checkbox Christianity, such as brief devotional readings that never lead to personal wrestling with Scripture, and instead pursue a genuine, growing relationship with God. Drawing on the analogy of close friendships and marriage, the sermon emphasizes that the depth of our relationship with God is largely determined by how much we want it. The practical takeaway is to start small, be consistent, and make space not just to speak to God but to listen to Him as well.

Key Verses

- Luke 5:16
- Mark 1:35
- Daniel 6:10
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- Romans 12:1
- Psalm 1:1-2

Questions

- Bill pointed out that there is no Bible verse commanding a specific time or format for personal worship. Did that surprise you? How has tradition shaped your understanding of what personal worship is supposed to look like?
- Jesus often withdrew to lonely, quiet places to pray (Luke 5:16, NIV). What do you think He was seeking in those moments, and what does that pattern tell us about the importance of solitude in our relationship with God?
- Daniel prayed at least three times a day even when it was dangerous to do so (Daniel 6:10, NIV). What does Daniel's consistency under pressure reveal about the role of personal worship in sustaining our faith during difficult seasons?
- Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV) to 'pray continually.' What do you think it practically looks like to pray without ceasing in the middle of a busy, modern life?
- Romans 12:1 (NIV) describes offering your body as a living sacrifice as your 'true and proper worship.' How does that expand your understanding of worship beyond a morning quiet time or a church service?
- Bill described listening to God as a skill that has to be developed over time, much like physical fitness. What has been your experience with trying to listen to God, and what has helped or hindered that practice?
- A.W. Tozer wrote that 'every person is as close to God as they want to be.' How does that statement challenge or encourage you personally? Do you agree with it?
- Bill compared our relationship with God to a marriage, noting that speaking to your spouse for only five minutes a day would not sustain the relationship. In what ways does that comparison change how you think about the time and energy you invest in your walk with God?

Life Application

This week, take one small, concrete step to improve your personal worship. If you have not been spending regular time with God, commit to just ten minutes each day, starting with a brief prayer, a short Bible passage, and a moment of quiet listening. If you already have a routine, identify one specific way to deepen it, whether that means spending more time in Scripture, reducing distractions, or simply sitting quietly and practicing listening for God's voice. Write down what you plan to do and share it with someone in the group so you can encourage each other throughout the week.

Key Takeaways

- The Bible does not prescribe a specific time or rigid format for personal worship, but it consistently calls believers to regular, ongoing communion with God through prayer, Scripture, and listening.
- Jesus modeled a lifestyle of frequent, intentional prayer in solitary places, and Daniel demonstrated that consistent personal worship can be maintained even under extreme pressure and opposition.
- Praying continually (1 Thessalonians 5:17, NIV) and offering ourselves as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1, NIV) point to a vision of worship that goes far beyond a brief daily checklist and encompasses our entire lives.
- Listening to God is a vital but often neglected part of personal worship, and it is a skill that must be developed gradually through consistent practice and a genuine desire for closeness with Him.
- How close we are to God is largely a reflection of how much we want to be close to Him. Growth in personal worship begins with desire and is sustained through small, steady, intentional steps.