

The Second Commandment

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 August 2022

Preacher: Stephen Murray

[0 : 00] Let's look at Exodus chapter 20 and verse 1. And God spoke all these words, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord your God will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.

On it you shall not do any work, neither you nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day.

Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony against your neighbor, you shall not covet your neighbor's house, you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

[1 : 38] When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, Speak to us yourself, we will listen, but do not have God speak to us or we will die.

Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning. The people remained at a distance while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.

This is the word of the Lord. Let's ask for God's help as we study this. Father and gracious Lord, we are eternally thankful for your word.

Those Israelites stood at the foot of Sinai and they heard the audible voice of God. It was a chilling voice. They asked to be kept from it.

They were so afraid of it. And yet we get this voice every single week when we open up the scriptures. And no longer do we cower in fear before it because in this voice we hear about Jesus.

[2 : 47] We hear about our hope and our salvation and our joy. And so now it is a voice of life. It is a voice that shows us who you are and a voice that shows us how we can be redeemed and a voice that shows us how we live into that redemption.

So speak to us this morning, I pray. Teach us your scriptures. Let us understand them with our heads. Let us believe them in our hearts and let them activate us to service in your glory.

And we ask this all for Christ's sake. Amen. So we're back in the Ten Commandments, our series in Exodus with this micro-series in the Ten Commandments.

And I did some sermon research this week, building up. Some of you might have seen that research if you are on Facebook and you are friends with me on Facebook. I asked people on Facebook, what is your pet peeve about church worship services?

Some of you might have actually answered, but then a lot of my other kind of Christian friends from all over the place answered what their pet peeve was about church worship services. Now, it's clear after reading everybody's answers that I personally am responsible for a lot of people's pet peeves about church.

[3 : 57] Here are some of the pet peeves that came up a lot. I can't go through them all. There were a lot there, but here are some of the common ones. Several people pointed out that they can't stand it when church services start late.

Guilty. Guilty. Several people mentioned that they wished pastors would retire certain words from their servants.

Phrases and words. Phrases like, let's unpack this together. Or in the original Hebrew it says, guilty on both counts there as well.

But if you read that stream, you'll notice that the number one thing that people complained about, more than anything else, and I am very glad that at this church we are not guilty of this, and I'm not guilty of this, is that moment about ten minutes into the service where the service leader or the minister says, all right, everyone, turn to the person next to you and greet them.

We won't ever do that, so don't worry. We know that you guys like your anonymity. You don't like to shake hands with random people, so we won't ever do that to you. Now today I want to talk a little bit about what we do in worship, in worship services.

[5 : 05] Not all the kind of particularities that make up a worship service, but the driving force behind worship. It's that driving force that we actually find in the second commandment.

And so I'm going to ask you to get out your Bibles. Let's unpack this together in the original Hebrew. Two points for you this morning. Number one, what is the command exactly?

And number two, why did God give us this command? What is the command and why does God give it to us? What is the command? Look at verse 4. Exodus 20, verse 4. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

You shall not bow down to them or worship them. Now that command is literally something like this. It's don't make a carved image or any sort of likeness based on something outside around in the world and then start worshipping that thing as God.

And you can see that it very naturally then follows on from the first commandment, to worship God alone. So Kevin DeYoung in his little book, his helpful little book on the Ten Commandments, he says, If the first commandment is against worshipping the wrong God, the second commandment is against worshipping God in the wrong way.

[6 : 18] First commandment, don't worship the wrong God. Second commandment, don't worship God in the wrong way. That is, you and I, we don't get to devise in our own minds or according to our own wisdom how to worship God.

And we actually know a lot more about the second commandment because later on in the book of Deuteronomy, as Israel, 40 years later now in the future, Israel are about to go into the promised land, Moses stands in front of them and he actually expounds the second commandment for them. He says, remember back when you were at Sinai. And he says this, he says, You saw no form of any kind that day the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire.

Therefore, watch yourselves very carefully so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, whether formed like a man or a woman or like any animal on earth or any bird that flies in the air or like any creature that moves along the ground or any fish in the waters below.

And when you look up to the sky and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the heavenly array, do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven.

[7 : 26] Now you see what he's saying. He's saying that the invisible, uncontainable God spoke to you on the mountain back there at Sinai and you didn't see him. You didn't see a thing.

You didn't see a form. You didn't see an image. You only heard his voice. So now don't go off and create images or create idols to represent him.

And then he actually lists all the things. Did you notice he lists all the things that God himself created in Genesis chapter 1? People, animals, birds, fish, the sun, the moon, the stars. And his point, you cannot contain all of who the creator God is by using images of the very things that he created in the first place.

That is to confuse the creator with the creature. That is to confuse the infinite with the finite. So the second commandment is telling us that we cannot worship God according to our own conceptions of him.

All you can do is listen to his voice. So the way that we know then positively how to worship God rightly, well, is to listen to his voice.

[8 : 36] Our Presbyterian forebears, they knew this. So when they wrote the Westminster Confession of Faith, they put this down in the confession, chapter 21. Paragraph 1, they said, So how do we worship God?

Well, we can only worship God on the basis of what he has revealed to us, what he's said to us, what we have in the Bible, his word to us.

But in Reformed and Presbyterian circles, we call this the regulative principle. Scripture alone must regulate our worship.

And the foundation of that regulative principle is the second commandment. One of the writers I find incredibly helpful on the subject of worship and particularly corporate worship, what we do when we gather, is someone who actually preached at our church a number of years ago, Dr. Leggan Duncan.

He's the principal of Reformed Theological Seminary in the U.S. And he teaches classes there on biblical worship. And he's got this little phrase that I think is incredibly profound and important. And he says this, he says, there is a God we want and a God who is, and the two are not the same.

[10 : 19] There's a God we want and a God who is, and the two are not the same. We need to worship God according to who he is and not according to who we want him to be. Now, the second commandment certainly has ramifications for kind of like all of life worship.

You know Romans 12, your entire life is a sacrificial worship act unto God. But I want to zoom in on our worship services for a moment this morning. Our times of gathered formal worship.

What we do in these worship services when we come on a Sunday, it communicates something about God whether we like it or not. How we do things here communicates something about God. For those of us who come in here week in, week out, the forms, the shape, the content of the different elements in the service, they are shaping us.

Almost subconsciously even. I've got an Anglican friend from Sydney who once wrote a blog post where he shared how there was a kind of rigid prayer book service that they had that he grew up with where it was the same.

There's kind of three forms of worship that you can do every single Sunday. And they follow those three things. And he said, growing up in church, I never had these big aha like Jesus' present moments. But turning 40 years old, he turns back and he goes, look, I've been completely and totally shaped by that worship service.

[11 : 39] The week in, week out, going and going through that prayer book. And so what we do here, the forms, the shape, the content is shaping you if you come in here Sunday after Sunday. Whether you like it or not.

What we do in worship communicates something to those who visit us. People who come in here on the odd occasion to try and figure out who this God is. The things we do here say something to them about who God is.

And then for our children. We're growing up here trying to figure out this God that mommy and daddy keep teaching them about. What we do here Sunday in and Sunday out, what it shapes them too.

It forms them. It forms their understanding of God. How they relate to God. And so we have to be very, very, very, very careful then to keep the second commandment. And to worship God in a way that presents the God who is.

And not the God of our imaginations. So let me give you a couple of examples here. The Bible tells us explicitly to give attention to the public reading and preaching of Scripture as we gather.

[12 : 45] It's in the pastoral prisons. Now I have sat in a lot of different types of worship services over the last two decades. And listen, everything I'm going to say now, I'm not saying this to try and beat down on certain churches.

But I do want you to know what good biblical worship is. I've sat in lots of church services over the last two decades. Where we've kind of like sung for two-thirds of the service.

Someone then has got up, shared a personal testimony, and then we've all got home. Friends, I think that's a violation of the second commandment. And it communicates that listening to God's voice in Scripture is not a key part of relating to God.

What about prayer? The Bible explicitly tells us to give attention to prayer when we meet. And lots of different types of prayer. So prayers of praise, adoration, prayers of thanksgiving, confession prayers, prayers for God's help when studying the Scripture.

What we call the prayer of illumination. Pastoral prayers for people in need. Prayers for government and for leaders. And we can't do all of those prayers in every single one of our services.

[13:52] But when you go to a service and the only thing you have is the kind of odd, off-the-cuff prayer that goes something like this at the beginning. Father God, we're so thankful to be in your presence. Father God, Father God, draw us near.

Father God, we love you. Father God, we praise you. Father God, friends. Father God is not an adjective. When we don't have rich, varied prayer in our meetings, we come close to breaking the second commandment.

And we communicate to people that prayer really is only useful as a kind of casual incantation to get God to show up and do something in the service. What about singing?

The Bible has so many different types of songs in it. So many different themes in it around the songs. So look at the diversity of the Psalms, for example. 150 Psalms. And they're all different. When we only ever sing songs that sound like weak renditions of Coldplay with Jesus is my boyfriend type lyrics, then we make a mockery of the second commandment.

[14:53] And we communicate that God is not a God who listens to us when we sing songs of lament, when we sing songs of justice, when we sing songs that expound all his glorious attributes.

The problem with a lot of our worship is often not a lack of sincerity or a lack of passion. It's not a lack of good intentions.

It's not a lack of planning and preparation sometimes. It's not a lack of skill. It's a lack of listening to his voice. We have his voice in the scriptures.

And it's that voice that must regulate our worship so that we encounter the God who is and not the God we create. Now, why?

Why does God give us this command? Why does God care about the particularities of how we worship him? I mean, isn't it all... Isn't worship just about your heart? That you have the right heart attitude?

[15:49] I mean, the Bible even says that in some places. God chastises people for going through the sacrificial system, doing worship, but their hearts are not in the right place. Isn't it just about your heart, your sincerity, your passion?

Why care about the particularities? You might notice this commandment, of all the commandments, gets the longest explanation attached to it. Some of the other commandments don't get any explanation at all.

This one gets a long, detailed explanation. And it starts in verse 5. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. Now, I don't know about you, but I always used to find it very weird that God would call himself a jealous God.

I mean, as a kid, I knew I was taught to be a jealous person is a bad thing. So why is it acceptable for God, then, to be jealous? Well, think about it this way. Our human jealousy, if you think about the way human jealousy works, human jealousy is born out of something that we want that we don't have and that we see in somebody else.

So possessions or status beauty. Someone else has them, we want them, and so we become jealous. But God, the God of the Bible at least, He's not in need of anything.

[16:57] There is nothing in this universe that He created, the entire universe He created, that He could possibly want that He doesn't already have. That is the definition of being perfect and being complete in and of yourself.

He doesn't need your worship, sorry to say. He doesn't need it. He doesn't need you to acknowledge Him. He doesn't go and have a pity party when you forget to do a quiet time in the morning. He's not like sitting there when Stephen forgets to go to church and go, Oh, I feel so neglected this morning because Stephen never came to church.

He's perfect and content within himself, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But He's jealous. He's jealous. He's jealous for two reasons. Number one, He's jealous because He cares about truth.

Every now and again, The Guardian or The Telegraph, one of those British newspapers, releases a top ten list of the top ten most beautiful cities in the world. Cape Town often tops that list, rightfully so.

But occasionally, some other website or publication comes along and releases a list, and Cape Town ends up third or fourth behind places like Sydney or Barcelona or Vancouver. I think those are the other popular ones.

[18 : 06] Now, at that point, when those publications release those lists, they are participating in the denial of ultimate reality. Because it is an objective fact that Cape Town is the most beautiful city in the world, and anyone who doesn't think that is living in a state of denial.

Now, God jealously wants to be worshipped above all because objectively, He is inherently worthy to be worshipped above all.

You see, you can sit here and you can debate about whether or not there's some subjective bias in my assessment of Cape Town. There's not. But if God is, as the Bible says, the infinite, eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, creator God of this universe, then by definition, there is nothing, absolutely nothing in existence that could be worshipped above Him.

There just isn't. And to worship anything above Him, then, is a denial of ultimate reality. It is a denial of truth. And so God cares about truth, and so He is jealous for our worship.

For right worship. Secondly, though, God cares about us. So, Deuteronomy chapter 6. Right as Israel are getting ready to go into the promised land, Moses tells the people again to worship God alone.

[19 : 22] He's kind of reiterating the Ten Commandments in those chapters. And he says one of the reasons you need to worship God alone is because He's a jealous God. But then he adds this. He goes and he says, If you do this, it will go well for you in the land that you're about to enter.

Israel is going to go into the land. It will go well for you. Worship God alone because God is a jealous God. It will go well for you in the land. Now, I always read that and I thought, well, that's kind of like a reward. Obey God's commandments and you get this nice reward.

Worship God. Things go well for you in the promised land. And it is a reward in some sense for Israel should they worship God. But it's more than that. It is an indication of why God jealously wants right worship from His people.

He is jealous for right worship because He is jealous for us to live well in the land. His divine jealousy is an expression of His divine love.

It's nothing like human jealousy. God is jealous for exclusive relationship from you because He knows that that's the best possible thing for you. He knows you were made to worship.

[20 : 26] He knows that your deepest desires and your deepest longings will only ever be fully met in Him. He knows that all the pain and the heartache that is in our lives really can ultimately be traced back to wrong worship.

He's jealous for right worship because He loves you. Look at how the text goes on here. This becomes clearer.

Exodus 20. Back in Exodus 20. 20 verse 5 and 6. It says, God punishes the children for the sin of the parents of the third and fourth generation of those who hate Him, but shows love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Now friends, that's not some sort of precise mathematical formula or generational curse. It's an ancient Semitic saying, aphorism, contrasting those who hate God with those who love God.

You're not supposed to sit there and kind of go, look, if I steal that cookie from the cookie jar, does that mean that my, one, two, three, four, my great-grandson, well, he's going to be punished for that and then my grandson and my son after that.

[21 : 33] That's not how you're supposed to interpret this. That's to miss the point. In fact, the Bible is pretty clear about personal sin. Ezekiel 18 verse 20 makes it clear that our sin is our sin. It says, The one who sins is the one who will die.

The child will not share the guilt of the parent, nor will the parent share the guilt of the child. The righteousness of the righteous will be credited to them, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against them. But alongside that, the Bible also recognizes the communal covenantal nature of human experience.

We exist, you and me, we exist in systems of intricate relationships. A husband and wife, well, they covenant together in marriage. Parents are in a de facto covenant with their children to look after them and to care them.

There are obligations and consequences, therefore, if they break that covenant. Governments enter into covenantal agreements with their constituents. We live and exist in webs of covenantal

relationships at home, at work, in society at large.

And so your personal sin, for which you are personally accountable, is to use the language that the ESV does of Exodus chapter 20, of the second commandment, is visited on to other people, to the next generation.

[22 : 52] In fact, this is particularly evident in covenantal relationships between parents and children. Verses 5 and 6 are dripping with covenantal language. So look at how the saying works here.

On the negative side, the father who does not worship God rightly, because remember this is in the context of the second commandment, so that's what the disobedience he's talking about here is, the father who does not worship God rightly, God visits the sin of that father onto the third and fourth generation of the children, those with whom he's in covenant relationship.

And if you think about it, those are the people he's most likely to have direct covenantal influence upon. You don't generally have influence upon your great-great-grandson. But then on the positive side, for those who love God, demonstrated by their keeping of God's commands, and again in this context, the command to worship God in the right way, for those who love God, God shows love not to three or four generations, but to thousands of generations.

And here's the key, key part. That love that God shows to a thousand generations, it's not ordinary love, it's covenant love. And if you will permit me to quote the Hebrew for a moment here, that's the Hebrew word *chesed*, God's covenant faithfulness, His covenant grace.

Why keep the second commandment? Well, because to the extent that you persist in your false worship, it's going to wreak havoc in your covenantal relationships. It's going to affect your children, and your children's children.

[24 : 30] And don't we even know that to be true from kind of basic social science research? I mean, in trendy justice conversations today, we talk about systemic injustice, we talk about the compounding effect of generational dysfunction.

The Bible has a very, very clear notion of systemic sin and systemic evil, because it realizes that we are by nature covenantal people, and if we infuse those covenants, those covenant relationships with our idolatry, that idolatry filters down to the next generation and to beyond.

Bad worship, neglect of right worship, has a knock-on effect. An obvious example of this, in our own country's history, is when we violated the second commandment by segregating worship across racial lines.

The Bible is crystal, crystal clear that the worship of God brings all nations and ethnicities together. Ephesians 2, Revelation 7. But we didn't listen to the voice of God in Scripture.

We listened to politicians. We listened to ethnic nationalists. We listened to social Darwinists. And so today, we are still dealing with the generational sin brought about by the breaking of the second commandment.

[25 : 49] Bad worship can breed injustice, even beyond the walls of our church. What second commandment violations are we engaged in right now that might be visited upon the generations after us?

Let me poke the bear here a little bit. If you treat Lord's Day worship as an optional extra, Lord's Day worship is something that is clearly commanded in Scripture, yet something that easily kind of slips off the agenda when there are other things to do.

But if you do that, if you treat that as an optional extra, don't be surprised when your child goes off to university one day, stops going to church, stops believing in God altogether.

They got that from you. Idolize recreation. Idolize family time over God. Idolize work over worship. And your children will idolize those things after you.

When you only get to one, maybe two services a month, but you're always at that Sunday morning friend's picnic, or you're always at that family brunch, or you're always at that weekend away in Amarnas, or your Sunday's always consumed with work projects for Monday, don't be surprised when your friends, and your colleagues, and your family members aren't particularly convinced by your attempts to share the gospel with them.

[27 : 18] Because they see how you worship. In fact, they see what you worship. And so they remain thoroughly convinced that this is such a life-changing message that you claim it to be.

Now, I know that's pretty in your face in the City Bowl culture. And you say, Stephen, you're poking where it hurts here a little bit. And I'm not saying there aren't legitimate times to miss worship. We're

going to talk about that when we get to the Fourth Commandment.

But I think it's hard to argue with the fact that even among Bible-believing Christians, firm commitment to the consistent gathering of God's people to worship Him in ways prescribed in His Word has fallen on hard times in this culture.

Especially amongst those of us who have means to do other stuff. Which is most of us here.

Ironically, part of the reason that churches in their worship services are doing all sorts of crazy stuff that you can't actually find in the Bible is because they're turning to pragmatism to desperately try and get people back into church on a Sunday to obey some of the most foundational commands about worship in the Bible.

Like Hebrews 10, verse 25, do not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing. To the extent that you persist in false worship, it's going to wreak havoc in your covenantal relationships.

[28 : 39] God is jealous for right worship because wrong worship breaks us down. It does. I know you don't believe that. But it does. It breaks us down.

It degrades us. It robs us of the joy that we have in Christ. But, and this is so critically, critically important, look at the other side of the equation.

God's covenant faithfulness. The other side of this saying. The sin of the Father is visited on the third and the fourth generations, but God's covenant grace extends way beyond, way beyond three or four generations.

It extends for thousands and thousands and thousands of generations. And friends, isn't that the testimony of the Bible and of human history when we look at it? Today, today there are over two point, at conservative estimates, there are 2.6 billion Christians in the world.

Now say, let's just say for argument's sake that two thirds of those 2.6 billion Christians are nominal Christians. That is, they're Christian in name only, but they don't actually believe. That's still 800 million Christians in the world today.

[29 : 44] Now to get a sense of how many people that is, it's the entire metro of Cape Town, and by metro I mean kind of Atlantis in the north to Simonstown in the south, Gordons Bay in the east to Komaki in the west.

I checked this on the map, Komaki is the most western neighborhood. That's roughly 4 million people in that area. Times that by 200. 200 Cape Towns at the most conservative, conservative of estimates, that's how many Christians there are in the world right now.

Where did all these Christians come from? God made a covenant of grace. He showed Chesed to a father and his family.

Genesis 17 verse 7, God speaks to Abraham and he says, I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

Where did all these Christians come from? As the old Sunday school song goes, you can sing it along with me. Father Abraham had many sons, many sons had Father Abraham.

[31 : 05] I am one of them and so are you. So let's just praise the Lord. Right arm, left arm, right leg, left leg, not yet, turn around, sit down. If you are a Christian this morning, friends, you're a child of Abraham.

You're a recipient of God's Chesed, His covenant of grace and faithfulness coming down to you through the ages, through generation after generation after generation after generation.

And you sit there maybe and you think, well how on earth did that possibly happen? I know who I am. How did that happen? Generation after generation we fail to worship like we ought to.

Generation after generation we turn to idols. How is it that we are still receiving this covenant love? Well think about it. God says, don't make an image and worship it.

And if you know how the Bible starts, then you will know why that command makes complete sense. We don't have to carve images because God has already placed His image in this world.

[32 : 10] Genesis 127, you and me. God created mankind in His own image. In the image of God He created them, male and female He created them. We don't need any more images because God has already put His image into this world.

Our mission, our purpose in life is to reflect His glory. That's what a mirror does, that's what an image does. It reflects His glory. We are His image bearers and yet ever since Adam and Eve took that dastardly fruit, we have been failing at that mission, at that God-given purpose every single

day, failing to worship God rightly.

So then why, why, why do we still receive His covenant love and His grace? Well here's why. Paul tells us, Colossians chapter 1 verse 15, the Son, Jesus, is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

At Sinai, the people couldn't see the invisible God, they could only hear His voice. But now, we see the invisible God more clearly than ever before because we see Jesus, we see His Son, we see the invisible God, all the fullness of God dwells in Him, Colossians 1 says.

We see the perfect worshiper. We see the true worshiper of God. We see the one who never, ever, ever fails to reflect God's glory. And we see His chief act of worship, the offering of a sacrifice, the sacrifice of His life.

[33 : 39] And it's through that act of worship that God extends His covenant faithfulness to us. Christ takes away our sin, our constant violation of the second commandment, our idolatry.

He takes it all away. He takes our broken, imperfect, faltering worship and He makes it acceptable to His Father. So that what we do here on Sunday is like beautiful music to His Father's ears.

We have God's covenant faithfulness because we have Christ. Right worship is all about Christ. It actually was all the way back there in Sinai and it is even more so now today.

think as we close here about our worship service on a Sunday. We are called to worship because of Christ. We sing praise to God out of gratitude to Christ.

We pray our prayers in the name of Christ. We preach Christ and Christ crucified and we eat the bread and we drink the cup.

[34 : 44] Christ's body broken for us, Christ's blood shared for us. We don't need to make images of worship because we have Christ the image of the invisible God.

Let's pray together. Our Father, our King, won't you lead us deeper and deeper into right worship of you?

We don't want to damage ourselves. We don't want to sin by breaking the second commandment and we don't want our sin to be visited on those around us, those with whom we are in covenantal relationship.

We want to worship rightly here so that what we do here on a Sunday communicates the God who is and not the God of our imaginations. Help us to do that, Lord.

Help us to order our own personal priorities to do that well. Maybe we are being drawn away from worship because of all sorts of strains and pressures on our life, Lord.

[35 : 42] I pray that you will give us the strength and the power by your Spirit and the commitment to rightly order our lives around the worship of you. And maybe there are people here this morning who are sitting here and going, I didn't worship God at all really.

I'm not sure I worship Jesus. I pray that you will bring them to faith and repentance in Christ this morning, that they will trust in your Son. Lord, I pray that when people come in here to the Union Sunday after Sunday, our worship's not spectacular, it's fairly ordinary, but I pray we will communicate the truth of God and people will be changed and transformed by that.

Help us as a church collectively to do that well, Lord, we ask. And we ask for Christ's sake. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.