



## “Why Worship”

Revelation 4: 8-11, Revelation 5:11-14

August 18, 2019

Sermon Series: “Start with Why”

Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

### THE BIG IDEA

We’re meant to be awake to the glory of God, to God’s purposes in our lives and to joy. These verses from Revelation direct us to our eternal purpose of worship. It highlights that we’re made with a purpose of glorifying a holy God, and that all of nature and creation is meant to declare his praises, and most certainly – his church. Eugene Peterson – in his book *Reverse Thunder*, helps his readers understand that Revelation is not an apocalyptic road map but rather a pastoral letter. It’s intended to comfort and encourage his people. His audience was persecuted for worship and being Christians; he’s revealing to them a glimpse of eternity through rich, poetic images. Rather than miss for the forest for the trees, we can understand these verses and their power as it direct and invites us to be awakened to the glory of God and joy he invites us to.

### GETTING STARTED

1. What helps you best wake up in the morning to start your day? Coffee? An alarm? Sunlight? Exercise? Etc.
2. Explain the title “Why Worship.” Share the intent of the series “Start with Why” and this specific sermon.

### LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read Revelation 4: 8-11, Revelation 5:11-14

3. Don’t overthink these verses – rather, share how they stimulate your mind toward worship and what’s going on behind the scenes of a worship service. The scene here depicts the created order and created, as well as Elders the represent the 12 tribes of Israel (among God’s chosen.)

What rings true here of what you know and also are less familiar with, when it comes to worship?

4. If this passage highlights the why of worship and it’s eternal and finite purpose, consider her the “what” and the “how.” Are there cues here that help us understand worship better?
5. How can this bring hope to the persecuted churches like the ones in the province of Asia? In light of the brutal reign of Cesar, why would this be important?

6. Why do you think many people worship – really? List some practical reasons that are felt needs. How about deeper needs?

Why do you worship?

7. Examine the various elements of a service – Call to Worship, Praise, Offering, Message, Scripture Reading, Prayer and Blessings. Explain what each of those mean to you and how God’s uses them.

## **LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”**

8. Consider your commitment to worshipping regularly? Is it at a high bar? And what’s your posture when you worship – is it God here’s my life for the taking or something else? What is your expectation toward God and the worship leaders when you arrive.

## **THE “EXTRA-MILE”**

9. Practice this quote by Rick Warren throughout the week - “In happy moments, PRAISE GOD. In difficult moments, SEEK GOD. In quiet moments, WORSHIP GOD. In painful moments, TRUST GOD. In every moment, THANK GOD.” — **Rick Warren**

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

Prayer for our worship services this week and as a team that God is magnified through the Gospel and that we witness a surge of growth and renewal through people excited and passionate about worship.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

***Reverse Thunder: The Revelation of John and the Praying Imagination* by Eugene Peterson**

# “Why Give?”

Mark 12:41-44

August 25, 2019

Sermon Series: Start with “Why”

Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

This message looked at the reason behind the question “Why Give?” The ultimate response to this is found in the story of the widow’s mite. The widow gave out of her poverty and demonstrates to us a posture of giving that is paramount – i.e., giving out of sacrifice. The “why” behind giving is our faith in God as the primary consolation in our life and his devotion to us as Giver of all. Our giving of time, energy, ability and finances reveal our values in life. We are constantly making value statements through our actions – time, ability, energy, and financial resources. The widow reveals this much in this passage through her giving of two mites.

## GETTING STARTED

1. When’s a time you received a gift that you were surprised and (positively) overwhelmed by?

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read Mark 12:41-44

3. Describe the contrast behind the givers who gave to the treasury prior to the widow. Why’s her gift different than theirs?
4. Consider the sound made when the coins were dropped in the 13 trumpets that surrounded the Jewish Temple. What’s the sound that most resonated with Jesus in this story?
5. What’s the significance of the woman being a widow and her point of view in life?
6. Consider the rest of the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Marks’ Gospel and what’s being communicating in terms of what’s of the most value. What’s the widow communicating in this story in terms of her life’s value statement?

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

7. Consider your own life – energy, time, ability (talent) and use of financial resources. What is being communicated through your actions about what is to you of most value?

## THE “EXTRA-MILE”

8. Think through your financial faith commitments. Are you giving sacrificially to the kingdom of God? Consider an action step toward giving above and beyond.

OR

Think through all of your faith commitments. Are you giving sacrificially of time and energy toward your relationships and to your church?

## SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS

**Pray for abundant generosity at Bidwell**

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

*Anxious for Nothing, Max Lucado*

**“I have held many things in my hands and lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God’s hands that I still possess.” Martin Luther, 16<sup>th</sup> C.**

# “Why Community?”

I John 1:1-4

September 1, 2019

Sermon Series: “Start with Why”

Rev. Shannon Coon

## THE BIG IDEA

A provocative book from political scientist Robert Putnam, called “Bowling Alone,” uses the decline of bowling leagues in the US as a metaphor for the increasing erosion of community and the continual alienation of Americans from their families, communities and the political process in general. The worldview of “Individualism” pervades Western society and has emphasized the prioritization of the individual over the group. We live in an “I” world. There are many societal ramifications for this and unfortunately, it seeps into churches as well. Many church leaders report that their churches feel like a “collection of individuals” instead of the “body of Christ.” We are not meant to “bowl” alone. We are not meant to go through life without a community. The Christian community, “koinonia” in the original biblical Greek, is a shared life together that we are called to when we live with the belief in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We belong to each other through belief in Christ. Our community is one of commitment, a common mission, and communion. It is about bowling together.

## GETTING STARTED

1. Have you ever gone bowling by yourself? Or have you ever engaged in a game or activity by yourself that is probably better when done with other people? How did it feel to participate in something that was not intended to be a solitary activity?
2. The three things that actually differentiate Christian community from something like a bowling league are commitment, a common mission, and communion. How are these three things vital to what Christian community looks like?

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read **1 John 1:1-4...also look at Ephesians 2:19, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 12:5**

3. What is the basis upon which “fellowship” is established according to John in 1 John 1:1-4? Have you ever heard about our faith being “vertical” and “horizontal?” (Thus cross-shaped) It means that we are to first have a relationship with God through Christ, and then enact that love with others around us. The two go together.
4. What are some other New Testament images for Christian community?
5. Is Christian community different than “the church?”
6. Look at Acts 2:42. What were the primary aspects of faith for the earliest believers? Read on, verses 43-47. What is something quite unique about their “shared common life?” Why don’t we do that as believers today?

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

7. If you don’t have a community of believers that you belong to (i.e., people beyond those you see in church on Sunday!), contact Jill VanderHeiden, the Life Group Coordinator at the church office to be connected to a life group. [jvanderheiden@bidwellpres.org](mailto:jvanderheiden@bidwellpres.org)

## THE “EXTRA-MILE”

8. If you belong to a life group or another small group/Christian community, take time when you meet together to go around and affirm one another. Remind each other of who they are in Christ and how much God loves each one of them.

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES *(optional)***

Additional resources can be listed here: including quotes from message, additional reading (books referred to), websites, etc.

# “Why” Serve

I Peter 1: 4-10  
September 8, 2019  
Sermon Series: Start with “Why”  
Rev. Dr. Henry Hansen

## THE BIG IDEA

This message looks at the reason behind service and why we serve God, the kingdom of God and other people. The answer – there’s dignity in the call and we’re going to serve something or someone, one way or another. We’re all made for service and Joshua 24: 14-15 shows us also that we can serve Yahweh or false gods which can include our ego ideal, other people, our boss and our plethora of choices in a choice-driven society. When we serve God we serve him who calls us chosen, royal, holy, God’s special possession, and a people called into light. It says we’re a royal priesthood. Further, God wants us to focus more on who we are than where.

## GETTING STARTED

1. What’s been a job you’ve been the most proud of and enjoyed?

## LEARNING & LIVING OUT SCRIPTURE

Together, read I Peter 1: 4-10

2. Consider the requirements of being a priest prior to the first century –

You had to be in the Tribe of Levites

Be Perfectly Fit and Healthy –no physical ailments or even a skin rash

Between ages 25-50

Abide by a Strict Moral Code

Required to be a Director descendant of Aaron – the brother of Moses

Priests were mediators to Christ and representatives of his kingdom on earth. What would the response be to first century Jews; do you think that THEY are the priesthood? All of them through Christ the high priest.

3. What do you make of the language that we are each stones building a spiritual house? What does that say about you?
4. Examine the labels given to you – royal, chosen, holy, a special possession, and called. Explain each of those words and the weight and meaning of the call.

## LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

5. Consider the dignity of the call of Christ and what this passage says about you. Why does that matter? Think about some of the challenges we face in discerning our “vocation,” and what this Scripture really says about our permanent one.

6. How are you contributing to the Body of Christ – i.e., this spiritual, collective house? If you're not, make a commitment to serve the kingdom of God in the church. We're a part of a royal priesthood – collectively. We each make a contribution.

## **THE “EXTRA-MILE”**

7. Either commit yourself in some capacity of service to build up the church or invite someone else to if you are already.

## **SHARING & PRAYER REQUESTS**

**Pray for our challenges in the world today – for our cultural violence (recent shootings) and the issues surrounding climate changes.**

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

“God is in charge of history. All history is going to him. He’s going to be the Judge at the end of history, not just the Creator at the beginning. He’s your Alpha. He’s your Omega. And so it’s important you operate in your daily life in accordance with these great and vast truths. What this means is Jesus must be your Omega point. Jesus must be your point. There are two ways to approach God, only two ways. You can either make him the means and something else the end or you can make him the end and everything else the means. There are only two ways to approach God.” Tim Keller