

Sermon Reflection: Living Worship

Sunday, July 20, 2025

Based on Romans 12:1–2, Psalm 148, and the hymns:

“Eternal Father, Strong to Save,” “In the Garden,” and “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

When you hear the word “worship,” what comes to mind? Maybe it’s a church sanctuary filled with music—an organ and choir, or a band leading songs in a dimly lit room. Those are both meaningful expressions of worship, but worship is much more than music or a specific setting. At its core, worship is our whole-life response to who God is—a sacrificial offering of ourselves in light of God’s goodness, mercy, and majesty. It’s not just about joyful singing; it can also be quiet prayer, service, gratitude, or even honest sorrow over our shortcomings. True worship touches every part of us—body, heart, mind, and soul.

That’s why today, as we gather for a hymn sing, we do more than lift our voices and share familiar melodies. There’s something powerful about singing together, letting the words and tunes connect us not only with one another but with God. We celebrate the gift of music as part of our worship, but we also remember that worship isn’t limited to this room or this hour. It reaches into every corner of our lives—how we speak, how we act, how we treat others, and how we carry God’s love into the world around us.

When we hear Paul say in Romans 12:1, “I appeal to you... to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship,” we’re being invited into something much bigger than just singing on Sunday mornings. Paul isn’t talking about a one-time offering or something reserved for pastors or church leaders, he’s talking to all of us. This is about our whole lives: body, heart, mind, and soul offered to God every single day.

That idea shows up again in verse 2: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds.” Paul is reminding us that life with God is meant to look different. It’s not about blending in with whatever is loudest or most popular in the world—it’s about letting God reshape us from the inside out.

Psalm 148 paints a similar picture. It’s a call to praise—not just for people, but for all creation. It says:

“Praise the Lord from the heavens...

Praise him, sun and moon;

Praise him, all shining stars!”

Even the earth, the mountains, the trees, the animals, everything is part of this act of worship. Worship, in scripture, is never just about music. It’s about how we live and how we show the world who God is through our actions, our choices, and the way we treat others.

That's why we sing hymns like "*Eternal Father, Strong to Save*". This song is a prayer asking for God's protection, especially for those in the armed services, but it's really a reminder of how much we rely on God in all areas of life. When we trust God with our safety, our future, our loved ones, we are offering our lives to Him in worship.

Let's take a moment and sing verse 1 of *Eternal Father Strong to Save*.

In the Garden points us to that quiet, personal relationship with Jesus. It's easy to think worship is only about loud praise, but it's just as much about those still, small moments. Like Psalm 148 calls everything that breathes to praise, it also calls us to take time, step away from the noise, and just listen to God. "He walks with me and He talks with me". That's the renewing of our minds Paul talks about in Romans. Letting Christ shape how we think, how we feel, how we live.

Let's sing verse 1 of *In the Garden*

And in "*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*", we're reminded we don't have to carry our burdens alone. Scripture shows us over and over again that God wants us to bring everything to Him. Psalm 148 isn't just about praising God when things are good. It's about praising Him in all seasons, trusting that even in hard times, He is still worthy, still listening, still loving.

Let's sing Verse 1 of *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*.

So, what does it really mean to present ourselves as living sacrifices? It means we worship God not just with our voices but with our whole lives:

- With our bodies - by caring for others, by serving where we can, by showing up with love.
- With our minds—by letting God renew our thinking, helping us let go of old habits and take on new ways of seeing the world.
- With our hearts and souls—by staying connected in prayer, in quiet time with Jesus, and in community with each other.
-

We worship through song, yes—but also through kindness, through trust, through living in a way that honors God. As Psalm 148 shows us, all creations join in this song. And as Romans reminds us, we are called to join in too—not just on Sundays, not just with our voices, but with everything we are.

May we pursue Christ daily, delight in His ways, and may our lives be a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. And as we seek to worship Christ daily with our lives, our Sunday morning worship services will be transformed, and our songs will ring out in spirit and in truth

So today, as we sing, as we pray, and as we head back into our week, let's remember worship doesn't end when the music stops. It continues in how we live—body, heart, mind, and soul—each moment a living, breathing act of praise.

Benediction

As we leave today,
Remember: worship doesn't end when the music stops.
It keeps going in how you live,
In the way you speak, love, serve, and care for others.
Let your whole life—body, heart, mind, and soul—
Be a living act of worship.
Don't just go along with the world.
Let God keep shaping you, renewing you,
Helping you see what really matters.
Go in peace, go with purpose,
And go knowing that God goes with you.
Amen.