

Hope Church April 12<sup>th</sup> 2026

FAQ's: why we worship?

Psalm 57

As most of you know I'm a real introvert. I don't love the spotlight. **My facial expressions don't give me away much**. If you've ever heard me laugh out loud, it had to be really funny. *I mostly laugh with my inside voice.*

But there is ONE EXCEPTION. I am a very passionate rugby supporter.

- When I watch a game. **I turn into a different person.**
- I'm loud. I'm intense. I'm fully in it.
- My kids have seen it. My dogs know it.
  - ⇒ When a match starts, the dogs are usually sitting with me on the couch.
  - ⇒ By the end of the game – they are gone.
  - ⇒ Missing in action. Hiding in someone else's lap.
- When South Africa won the Rugby World Cup two years ago, Lynette got this on video.
- Remember: this is a safe space. NO JUDGING.

**VIDEO**

- I'm deeply thankful our neighbors don't understand Afrikaans!

Let me ask you this:

**What are you like when your team is playing?** The LIONS or the TIGERS or the CUBS?

What are you like on the sideline watching your kids?

Because it doesn't take much for us TO GET LOUD. To get PASSIONATE. To get FULLY INVESTED. And that's not a bad thing. It's kind of beautiful. We're **wired for passion**.

But then we come here on a Sunday. **And suddenly it's inside voices**. A little unsure. A little distracted. And here's the tension:

It's easy to get excited about a game but with God we somehow hold back.

- Hold back on the One **who made me**.
- Hold back on the One **who knows me fully**.
- Hold back on the One **who loves me deeply anyway**.

Here's the question we're starting the FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS series with:

**If God doesn't need my worship, why do we worship at all?**

That's a great question. And to even answer it, we need to be clear on what WORSHIP is.

WORSHIP isn't just singing.

**It's giving your deepest attention and your ultimate trust to something.**

Which means this. WORSHIP isn't something only religious people do. It's something every single one of us does.

**PAUL TRIPP** puts it like this:

You cannot divide human beings into those who worship and those who don't.

Everybody worships. It's just a matter of what, or whom, we serve.

**Everyone worships.** It's not a church thing. It's a human thing. It is about WHAT or WHO *has my attention*.

- Because whatever has my attention **eventually has my heart**.
- And whatever has my heart **shapes my life**.
- If I don't choose what I worship, my **circumstances will choose it for me**.

We are reading from **PSALM 57** today.

- Saul is trying to kill David, and he is running for his life.
- He ends up at a **place called Nob**. He is welcomed by a group of priests and **DAVID LIES**.
  - ⇒ He told the priests that Saul sent him to them.
  - ⇒ They helped him. They gave him food. They even gave him Goliath's sword.
  - ⇒ When Saul finds this out, he has all 85 priests killed.
- David ends up *hiding in caves* and is **carrying this guilt**.
- And about 400 men gather around him. Men running from the law. Men struggling with debt. Bitter. On the edge. Not a dream team.
- His **past is heavy**. His future is unclear. And everything around him *feels unstable*.

That's where he writes this Psalm.

#### Verses 1-3:

Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me, for in you I take refuge.

I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.

I cry out to God Most High, to God, who vindicates me.

He sends from heaven and saves me, rebuking those who hotly pursue me —

God sends forth his love and his faithfulness.

- David doesn't start with confidence. He **starts by begging**:

God, have mercy on me.

- He doesn't hedge his bets. He doesn't have a backup plan. **He puts everything on God.**
- DAVID uses a royal image people back then would have understood.
  - ⇒ Kings traveled with attendants who carried out their work.
  - ⇒ David says **God has attendants** too. Their names are LOVE and FAITHFULNESS.

Verses 4-6:

I am in the midst of lions; I am forced to dwell among ravenous beasts – men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

They spread a net for my feet – I was bowed down in distress. They dug a pit in my path – but they have fallen into it themselves.

- DAVID doesn't pretend everything is fine. He says it feels like he's surrounded by lions. Like people are ready to tear him apart. **That's honest.**
- Some of you know that feeling – life closing in. Pressure is building. There is **nowhere to hide.**
- But right in the middle of that **DAVID lifts up his eyes:**

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

- It was his way of saying: God You are bigger than what I'm facing. And God You are **right here in the middle of it** with me.

Verses 7-11:

My heart, O God, is steadfast, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music.

Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.

I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples.

For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

- Here's what's wild: David's circumstances have not changed.
- Saul is still hunting him. The danger is still real. *This doesn't get resolved* until much later in DAVID's story. He only became king of Judah between 3-5 years later!!!
- **But David finds peace anyway**. Not because his problems go away. But because he remembers who God is.

⇒ A God of grace.

⇒ A God who responds when people cry out.

⇒ A God who is involved.

- And in that cave DAVID **makes a decision**. He chooses to worship.
- Not because life is easy. Not because everything makes sense. **But because God is still worthy.**
- Before anything changed around him. Something **shifted inside of him**.
- That's what worship does.

Here's what David shows us in **PSALM 57**:

- Worship isn't something you wait to do once life gets better. It's something you choose right in the middle of the cave.

And this is where it hits home for us. Most of us are waiting for the cave to clear. **Waiting** for CLARITY. **Waiting** for RELIEF. **Waiting** for LIFE TO MAKE SENSE.

David didn't wait.

If worship is giving your deepest attention and your ultimate trust.

Then in the cave, **you still have a choice**.

- You can give your attention and trust to FEAR. To CONTROL. To COMFORT. Or to SUCCESS.

- Or you can give it to the God. WORSHIP a God whose **love** and **faithfulness** are already *moving toward you*.

## WORSHIP STARTS IN THE CAVE.

- David is DESPERATE. **He goes all in.** God, I'm trusting you.
- David is pleading with us that we don't wait for life to get better to worship. That we will WORSHIP **so we don't lose ourselves while life is hard.**
- It's a deep challenge. WORSHIP is **not about** my preference or my comfort or my feelings.
- It is not supposed to be about the organ or hymns or a band.
- **Worship is about God.**
  - ⇒ About who He is.
  - ⇒ About what He's done.
  - ⇒ About what He's doing.
  - ⇒ Even when you can't see it.

## WORSHIP CHANGES YOU IN THE CAVE.

- David says: *I'm surrounded by lions.* **That's real.**
- But in the same breath he says: *Be exalted, O God.* **That's worship.**

- WORSHIP is not pretending everything is fine. It's bringing your real life to a real God.

Your FEAR. Your GUILT. Your QUESTIONS.

- It's saying: God this is where I am. But You are still my refuge. **You still deserve my worship.**

- And here's what happens *when we get this right.*

- Worship doesn't necessarily change my circumstances. But it **changes me.**

- When we *find ourselves in our caves:* we spiral. We react. We let fear lead.

- But **worship recenters me.**

⇒ It reminds me: God is still God.

⇒ I am still held.

⇒ This is not the end of the story.

- DAVID reminds us that **we don't WORSHIP because we feel strong.** We WORSHIP so we don't fall apart.

Worship doesn't deny the cave. It reminds us of who is bigger than the cave.

**WORSHIP FLOWS OUT OF THE CAVE.**

- WORSHIP isn't just one thing. WORSHIP is your whole life responding to God. Your **thoughts**. Your **decisions**. Your **relationships**. Your **reactions**.
- It's learning to *trust God in all of it*.
- **It's my head and my heart**. It's truth I understand. It's truth that actually hits me. Not fake hype. Not just information. It's truth that moves me.
- It's internal and external. It **starts on the inside**. Reveals what I trust. Reveals what I love. But it doesn't stay there. **It shows up in how I live**.
- **It's vertical and horizontal**. It's about God. But it doesn't stop with God. *The way I respond to Him shapes the way I treat people*.
- It's planned and unplanned. Sometimes it's intentional. I plan it. I make space for it. Other times it just interrupts my day. A moment where I stop and go: God, I see You. Thank You.

Worship is humble and glad. Worship forgets itself in remembering God. Worship celebrates the truth as God's truth, not its own. True worship doesn't put on a show or make a fuss. True worship isn't forced, it isn't half-hearted, doesn't keep looking at its watch, doesn't worry what

the next person in the next pew may be doing. True worship is open to God, adoring God,  
waiting for God, trusting God even in the dark.

**NT Wright**

Let's come back to this idea of holding back with God.

I know some of you are **naturally expressive**. Others are **more reserved**. And that's okay.

But here's the honest question David puts in front of us:

If I can get excited about a game...if you can get excited about life, why do I hold  
back with God?

- **PSALM 57** invites us to redirect our energy. Not to perform. Not to fake anything.
- But to **respond in a way that fits who God is**. Not shaped by comfort. Not limited by preference or insecurities. Not worried about what anyone else may think.
- It calls us to WORSHIP with our time and our money and our attention and our energy.

**And some of you are in a cave right now.** Under pressure. Carrying more than people realize. Sitting with things you haven't said out loud.

*Maybe you've been waiting. Waiting for things to settle down.*

DAVID DIDN'T WAIT. He **started to worship** right there in it.

Here's the invitation today:

- You don't have to have it all together.
- You don't have to feel anything special.
- But you can take a step.

You can **turn your attention** and **your trust back to God**.

This needs to be a space where **we don't hold back**.

Your cave may not change today. But you can.

If WORSHIP begins in the cave, then the **communion table is where we bring it**. In a moment, we're going to come to this table. *And the bread and the wine is inviting you to come just as you are. To bring your cave with you.* Your FEAR. Your GUILT. Your QUESTIONS.

This table is where the **story of Jesus becomes personal**.

- The bread reminds us. His body was broken for you.
- The cup reminds us. His blood was poured out for you.

We don't come because we have it all together. **We come because we need Him**.

We come remembering. We come receiving.

And we come **trusting that what Jesus has done is enough**.

**Communion video...**