

“From Generation to Generation”

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[FIRST SLIDE] How would you like to have one of the world’s weirdest jobs?

I’ve been thinking about this because I recently read an article online that described twelve of the weirdest jobs that people have. These are jobs that actually exist. At least that’s what it says on the internet and you know everything you read on the internet is true so this must be true. But how would you like some of these jobs? **[SLIDES]**

How would you like it if you were a dog food taster? A dog food taster is responsible for doing just what it sounds like a dog food taster might do. A dog food taster actually tastes all kinds of different dog food. They usually put the food in their mouth to see how good it is and then they chew it up to make sure it’s chewable for the dogs. Then once they’ve done that they spit it back out. Sounds like a fun time.

Or you could be a dog surfing instructor. Dog surfing instructors teach surfing classes specifically for dogs. So they are in charge of getting dogs comfortable in the water, outfitting them with a life jacket, and putting them on a mini surf board. So if your career goal is to help people spend money on something totally frivolous, you could be a dog surfing instructor.

Or you could be a snake milker. Now that's someone who carefully wrangles snakes and extracts dangerous venom from them and then sells it to a medical lab so the lab can use it to make antivenin.

Or another scary option is for you to be a shark suit tester, because that's apparently a thing too. It's where you put on a newly manufactured steel suit and jump into the water with a bunch of sharks that are hungry to see if your suit holds up. The chance of death is pretty unlikely, but there's usually a good chance for lots of bruises and cuts.

Okay, so those are all involving animals. But there's more. If animals aren't your thing, you could be a professional bridesmaid. Ladies I know this is for you. You could be a professional bridesmaid where you are responsible for looking pretty and encouraging a bride on her wedding day.

Or you could be a professional line stander who stands in line all day. This is used by companies during promotions or Black Friday so that their stores look busy and in-demand so people will shop there. So you just stand in line for hours on end. And really who doesn't love standing in line for hours?

Okay, the last one I'll mention is an iceberg mover. Yes, that's a real job. Unfortunately, for the people on the Titanic, it's a relatively recent career choice, but there are people who actually move icebergs for a living to get them out of shipping paths.

I don't know about you some of those jobs do sound pretty weird. Eating dog food, wrestling snakes, standing in line for hours. I think I'll keep my job. In fact, I don't know about you, but my job's looking better every day.

Well if you're really fascinated by this you can go online and there are actually lots of other weird jobs out that you can read about. I've been thinking about this because we're in a series where we're looking at things which are part of our job description as a Church. Things that we're just called to do as Church. And in this series we're looking at five things we're called to do. **[NEXT SLIDE]** You can see they are radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission and service, and extravagant generosity.

Today we're looking at passionate worship. And I think it's good that we're looking at worship in the middle of this series because worship is in the middle or the center of everything else we do. As we welcome people, as we grow in our faith, go out to serve others, and give generously, right in the middle of all that we have passionate worship.

Now when we talk about worship, worship of course is more than just the songs we sing. It's the songs we sing but it's also everything else in the service that draws us closer to God. It's also the call and response that we recite together, the scriptures that we read, the testimonies we hear, the prayers we

offer. All of these things are part of worship. But why is worship part of our job as the Church? Why is it so important? Well there a couple of reasons.

The first is that worship is simply a natural response to what God has done for us. Throughout the Bible worship is always first and foremost a response to what God has done for us. Our text that we read says, "Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked for our salvation. Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked for our salvation. We are supposed to sing to the Lord a new song. Why? Because he has done marvelous things, he has worked for our salvation. Psalm 86 likewise says "All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God." So we worship God for what He's done. When we think about God's love and his faithfulness that leads us to worship. Worship is our natural response.

Think about it. God created our universe, put the planets in orbit, handcrafted you and me in our mothers' womb. And if that wasn't enough when you and I

turned our back on God He still came to walk among us so that we could have new life. In the midst of our world which is so messed up and so distorted with sin, with mass shootings, and people driving cars into crowds, and sex trafficking, with all that, God still puts up with us. It's amazing. If I was God, I don't know if I would do that. I probably would have given up on us a long time ago. But God doesn't because God is faithful. And so worship flows from us remembering that and having gratitude.

Allen Bevere says that worship, no matter the style or the setting, should always be marked gratitude. Gordon Hinckley in fact says gratitude is the very essence of worship. That's why we worship.

But there's another reason too. We worship because of what God's done. But we also worship because it changes us. **[NEXT SLIDE]** That's a second thing that's also seen throughout the Bible. As we worship God we are changed. We saw that in the first scripture passage from Isaiah. Isaiah is in the temple worshipping God and he has this radical encounter with God, where he sees angels and visions and actually feels bodily the presence of God. And through that Isaiah was totally changed. And so it is with us. As we encounter God in

worship we are transformed. And we need that. It's not easy to be godly. It's not easy to be loving, to be forgiving, to put others before ourselves. In fact our culture often says to do the opposite of those things. But worship forms us into a different kind of people that can resist those pressures and be godly. So worship is really countercultural. It makes us a different kind of people. A set apart people.

You know this week I heard a pastor named Rudy Rasmus speak. **[SLIDE]** Rudy is the pastor of a big United Methodist Church in Houston called St. John's UMC. And when I say it's a big church I mean it's a big church. It has about 9,000 members. And just to give you a sense of their mission, over the last 25 years they've has spent about \$50 million on community development projects. Rudy leads this church and he's is a pretty interesting guy. Just to give you an idea of how interesting he's 61 and still wears a braided beard and skinny jeans. He's also friends with Beyonce, whose family is involved with the church.

And so Rudy Rasmus was speaking about his experience as a pastor of this big church and everything he's done and someone asked him what are some of

the things you've done wrong and may have done differently. And he had a whole laundry list of ways that he could have been a better pastor over his career. He was very, very open and honest.

But I asked him a follow-up question from that. I said what are the things that you've done right? And he said, only one thing. There's only one thing I've really done right. He said I've loved God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength He said that's it. That's why I've been so successful. Because my love God leads me to do everything else. And he said that's always been my focus, even when I get depressed and distracted, that's always been the key is staying in love with God cause that leads to everything else.

I thought that was a great answer. And that's exactly why we need worship. Because worship helps us to stay in love with God. See we can't be people who show welcome others and go out and serve others and give generously unless our hearts are changed through worship, unless we let worship train us and stretch us. As we are reminded in worship of God's incredible love and faithfulness and are we become people who love God and love others more fully. Gary Bullock says, "worship is the encounter we have with God and the

consequences of that encounter. When we open ourselves up to God we see God differently. We see the needs our neighbors differently. We see the world and its needs differently. We see everything differently.” So as we said we worship first and foremost out of gratitude but we also worship because it changes us. But you know, it’s also is about something else.

You remember that we aren’t just talking about the importance of worship, but the importance of passionate worship. Passionate worship. And that adjective, passionate, matters. **[SLIDE]** Because if there’s no passion, no enthusiasm for worship, our hearts are never going to be changed. If we just come in here and check out or just view it as our Sunday morning routine that’s not real worship. Imagine if you went to a football game and you weren’t into the game, you didn’t cheer, it’s like what’s the point, right? Why go? If you go to a football game you should be excited to be there, you should have passion. When you watch the Bengals and they’re scoring touchdowns you cheer. Well, actually bad example. You probably don’t have much to cheer about with the Bengals. If you’re watching my Packers, then you want to cheer, right? But seriously, it doesn’t make sense to go to a football game and not have some passion. Worship should be the same way. We should come to

church and worship should be dynamic, exciting, living, passionate because only then can we really encounter God and be changed.

Now I know what some of you are thinking. You're thinking, being passionate in worship, you know that's not really my thing. That's not my style. I don't really connect to God by raising my hands or shouting amen or any of that stuff. And you know what, that's alright. Being passionate in worship isn't about raising your hand or belting out a hymn at the top of your lungs. It's really about just showing up. It's about showing up and being open to encountering God. That's what passionate worship is. So if you're a quiet in worship, man, that's fine. Just show and be ready to encounter God. That's what worship is about. Amen?

Well I could stop right there, but I'm going to end this sermon today by giving our church a pat on the back. Giving us some kudos. Because I think we get this right. Because when we talk about welcoming people, reaching our neighborhood, we don't forget that it all starts with worship. And I think of all the people that have made worship here so strong over the years. I think of Jean Burns who led the choir for so many years and still helps today. I think of

some of you who have been at this church so long and your families throughout the generations have helped build this church, figuratively and for some of you even literally. And I think of some of you who have only come here recently but have such passion and enthusiasm and bring so much to our services with your testimonies and your service. All of you help to make this a place of worship.

And my prayer, my prayer, is that on this day as we begin this church revitalization project, that as we change and grow as a church, no matter where we worship, no matter what style we worship in, that we continue to have that passionate worship at the center of everything. And I'm excited that our new music director is going to help us do that. Because that's part of our job description as the Church. From generation to generation God has remained faithful to us and so let us remain faithful in worship. Let's celebrate what God has done, what He is doing, and what he will do. God is good. All the time. Amen.

Today in just a minute we are going to sing Great is Thy Faithfulness to close our service. But let's pray.

Let us worship God passionately each and every time we come in this place.

May our worship be filled with gratitude and may it change us into people

who love God and love others. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Spirit, amen.