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- Part: 24 [Better than Gold, Sweeter than Honey](#)
- Part: 23 [Liberating Truth](#)
- Part: 22 [Fearing God II](#)
- Part: 21 [Fearing God](#)
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- Part: 19 [The Glory of God](#)
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Better than Gold, Sweeter than Honey



Part 24 (970209AM)

[Return to previous Page](#) | [Print](#)

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Worshipping God is the highest calling we can have as His creation. We were created to worship God. Yet I find more resistance in my life to worship than anything else. Distractions pour in, doubts arise and the constant downward tug of the world, the flesh and the devil all make it hard.

On the positive side, we can all agree that the most precious moments in our life are those few that we know were spent standing consciously in the very presence of God. This morning may I ask you to rise to this moment?

This is a worship service. We have come to worship the sacrificial death of Christ in our place. We have come to worship God the Father's plan. Would you lay aside all the plans, imaginations and distracting thoughts of other things and give the gift of your total attention to God? Will you follow along in the Scriptures and in a spirit of continual prayerfulness ask the Lord to open your heart more and more to Him? Its the hardest and yet most rewarding exercise I can think of!

Isaiah 64: 7 No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins. (NIV).

God was lamenting His worshipless people. Note the key words "strive to lay hold of you."

Isaiah 64: 7 And [there is] none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. (KJV)

As you open to the 19th Psalm, you turn to the testimony of one young man, inspired by the Holy Spirit to extol the benefits of experiencing God.

David spells out two superlatives of the Scriptures: their attraction is greater than anything else, and their satisfaction is better than all else.

Psalms 19: 10-11 More to be desired [delighted, covet] [are they] than gold [splendor, shimmering], yea, than much fine gold [pure gold]: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb [dripping honey, honey comb]. 11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: [and] in keeping of them [there is] great reward . (KJV)

This morning, have you experienced the irresistible attraction and the incomparable satisfaction of experiencing God? The two metaphors David used are Possessions "fine gold" and Pleasures "dripping honey". In his world - gold was king of riches and honey was the sweetest known substance. He proposes to all who will try, that experiencing God is the highest pleasure and greatest treasure to be found. What do you think? God and His Word have fallen on hard times in our world. There are far more exciting pleasures and captivating treasures than Him, aren't there?

Rich and Empty

In 1923 seven men who had made it to the top of the pyramid met together at the Edgewater Hotel in Chicago. Collectively they controlled more wealth than the entire United States Treasury, and for years the media had held them up as examples of success. Who were they?

- Charles Schwab, president of the world's largest independent steel company;
- Arthur Cutten, the greatest wheat speculator of his day;
- Richard Whitney, president of the New York Stock Exchange;
- Albert Fall, a member of the president's cabinet;
- Jesse Livermore, the greatest bear on Wall Street;
- Leon Fraser, the president of the International Bank of Settlement;
- and Ivar Kreugger, head of the world's largest monopoly.

What happened to them?

- Schwab and Cutten both died broke;
- Whitney spent years at Sing Sing Penitentiary;
- Fall also spent years in prison, but was released so he could die at home;
- and the others, Livermore, Fraser and Kreugger, committed suicide. ⁽³⁾

In more modern times Elvis "the King" had gold plated, crushed-diamonds-in-the-paint limousines, world wide worship and wealth in banks. He died alone, despairing and lost!

When Diet Coke could only be found in America, Aristotle Onassis's daughter Christina dispatched a weekly jet to replenish her supplies of the "real thing". She would drink her Coke with "friends" hired at the rate of \$30,000 a month to spend time with her . . . all the while never experiencing the REAL FRIEND who could fill her empty soul with inexpressible joy!

Have you found God in such a way that it has filled your soul with sheer delight? Is He sweeter than the sweetest experience you have ever felt? Are you captivated by His beauty, His perfections and the brightness of His glory? If there is any hesitance in your responses look again at [Isaiah 64:7](#) No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins. (NIV)

Does God Delight Your Soul?

1. GOD WANTS TO MEAN MORE TO US THAN MONEY OR NICE THINGS: [Job 22:25](#) then the Almighty will be your gold, the choicest silver for you. (NIV)

"Lord You are More Precious Than Silver"

2. THE LORD WANTS US TO FIND OUR LASTING JOY AS WE LINGER IN HIS PRESENCE: [Psalm 16:11](#) You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. (NIV)

3. HE WANTS US TO TRY HIM OUT, TAKE THE TASTE TEST THIS MORNING: [Psalm 34:8](#) Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. (NIV)

4. GOD THE FATHER WANTS TO INTOXICATE US WITH HIS LOVE: [Psalm 37:4](#) Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. (NIV)

5. THE LORD IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF DEEP AND ABIDING JOY: [Psalm 43:4](#) Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God. (NIV)

6. GOD IS THE MOST RIVETING, BREATHTAKING AND ALLURING SIGHT IN THE UNIVERSE IF YOU WILL JUST STOP AND FOCUS ON HIM: [Psalm 96:6-8](#) Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary. 7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts. (NIV)

7. LISTENING WITH OUR HEARTS WE TASTE HIM: [Psalm 119:103](#) How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! (NIV)

[Isaiah 64:7](#) No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins. (NIV).

Do You Want to Worship God As Few Ever Do?

"I Love You Lord"

We now just start the process of trying to worship Him as we startledly sit still in front of His awesome Majesty: [Psalm 46:10](#) "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." (NIV); [Habakkuk 2:20](#) But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him." (NIV)

"Be Still and Know"

Then as we comprehend even a fraction of Who He is and how utterly magnificent He is we stop again in awe, wondrous reverence and sheer delight at the magnitude of His power, might and infinitude: [Psalm 33:8](#) Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. (NIV)

"We Worship You "

As we linger in the glow of His presence we find our lack of holiness becomes painfully revealed: [Isaiah 57:15](#) For this is what the high and lofty One says -- he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. (NIV)

"There is a Fountain"

Then it hits, a pang of hunger. We want to know Him, love and adore Him. We begin to fill up with wonder and gratitude for even the chance to have this moment: [Psalm 42:1-2](#) Psalm 42 For the director of music. A [maskil] of the Sons of Korah. As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? (NIV); [Psalm 63:1](#) Psalm 63 A psalm of David. When he was in the Desert of Judah. O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. (NIV); [Psalm 73:25-26](#) Whom have I in

heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. 26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (NIV).

"Love Divine"

Awash with wonder we feel the sheer delight of a new hope. Joyously He begins to flood our souls with His response of bearing away the deadening load of our sin. We feel the burden lifted, the stains removed, the coldness warmed and the emptiness filled. We are experiencing our God: [Psalm 30: 11-12](#) You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, 12 that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give you thanks forever. (NIV); [Psalm 27:4](#) One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. (NIV).

1. O.1 Swindoll,
2. Swindoll,
3. Donald McCullough, *Waking from the American Dream* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1975), 15.
4. Adapted from Swindoll, *Shedding Light*, p. 61.
5. As told by Charles R. Swindoll in *Come Before Winter . . . and Share My Hope* (Portland, Oreg.: Multnomah Press, 1985), p. 34.
6. Euripides, as quoted in *The Home Book of Quotations*, 10th ed., comp. Burton Stevenson (New York, N.Y.: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1967), p. 377.
7. From Heaven, by J. Oswald Sanders, p. 148-49.
8. *Maier, The Book of Nahum*, p. 127. Diodorus's work is called the *Chronicles*. The material on the fall n in turn from *Persica*, a chronicle of Assyria and Persia in twenty-three books by a Greek physician named Cresias, of which only fragments survive.

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