



God is spirit, and those who
worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

John 4:24

On Worship
with Pastor Steve

Abandoned Worship

I began playing football when I was in the third grade. Year after year I suited up in the spring for spring drills and again in July to prepare for the season. For ten years (that's a professional career for some folks) I banged heads with my fellow team mates vying for a starting position. The off season was spent running and lifting weights to stay in shape in hopes of gaining an advantage when the season started. All the benefits of that hard work were realized on the opening kick off of the first game.

Athletes have a phrase they often use to describe their intensity of play. It is "Leave it all on the field." The idea is to give it all you've got. All the conditioning, weight lifting and studying the play book have brought you to game time. Preparation is over; it's time to give 100% on every play the entire game. There is no holding back or saving it for later.

Most of us would not recognize the Apostle Paul as an athlete, but in the game of life he was one on those who left it all on the field. He chose to abandon popularity, position and power to gain an eternal prize.

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ. . . .

Philippians 3:7-8

And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

1 Corinthians 9:25-27

The American Heritage Dictionary renders this meaning for the word abandon: 1. To forsake; desert. 2. To surrender one's claim or right to; to give up. 3. To desist from. 4. To yield (oneself) completely, as to emotion.

What better word could describe the life the Paul? What better word could describe a person whose one desire is to live a life of worship? Paul went on to say in Philippians 3 that he counted all his gain as rubbish that he might know Christ. His one desire was to have intimate fellowship with Christ.

A life of worship has deserted all other ways of living to have an intimate relationship with Jesus. It has forsaken all that is familiar to walk by faith. It has surrendered all rights to have its own way and has yielded control to the one who formed it. The bible gives us many examples of believers who paid the ultimate price to leave it all on the field. We are not given the names of some of them; they are simply known as "Others."

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented -- of whom the world was not worthy. . . .

Hebrews 11:35-38

Once we have abandoned (past tense verb) our old way of life we are called to abandoned (adjective) worship. What is abandoned worship? When abandoned is used as an adjective it means shameless; thus we have shameless worship. Shameless worship can best be described by the life of two very familiar bible characters; King David and the woman who let her hair down. Here are their stories.

Then David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet. Now as the ark of the Lord came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the Lord. . . .

2 Samuel 6:14-16

And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at his feet behind him weeping; and she began to wash his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed his feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.

Luke 7:37-38

David and this woman were not concerned about what those watching them thought of their worship. Their reputations were of no consequence. They were shameless in their worship. They worshiped with abandonment; a complete surrender of inhibitions.

I heard a well known prophet by the name of James Goll speak at a conference once. I'll paraphrase his remarks. He said that he had seen a target being painted with a bull's eye in the middle. As he was looking at it he saw a dart fly through the air and hit the bull's eye. He heard the Lord tell him, "My dart shall hit the bull's eye." He asked the Lord, "What is the dart?" The answer was "David's Abandoned Revolutionary Tribe" (DART). James Goll went on to say that God is releasing, not just a few, but a whole company of abandoned Davidic worship and praise warriors.

God is calling us, his bride, to a life of abandonment; to set aside all inhibitions we have about the way we live and respond to his love. God is calling for abandonment when we get up every morning and go about our daily lives. He is calling for abandonment every time we gather with believers to worship him. No more "playing it safe." It's time to be reckless with our lives and with our worship. It's time for the bride of Christ to leave it all on the field.

Will you decide today to live a life of abandoned worship? Is it time for you forget about what others around you think and worship God with all your might? Will you be a part of David's Abandoned Revolutionary Tribe? God is calling.