

# FirstFruits Gathering At Harvest Christian Church

## Building Altars May 10, 2022 Suzi Armstrong

An altar is a place of sacrifice and dedication. Altars commemorate and honor. Altars speak of sacrifice, of devotion, of surrender, of being consumed. They speak of a life that is wholly given up to the one for whom the altar was built. This makes altars spiritually significant – they are a place of spiritual transaction. In the Old Testament, altars to God were built by the men of God of that time period. The first altar recorded in the Bible was built by Noah. Abraham built altars in Canaan as he explored the land that God was giving him. These altars honored God and dedicated the land to God. Abraham built an altar to sacrifice his son Isaac on, but God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son and provided a ram for the sacrifice. Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon all built altars to the Lord.

### Genesis 8.20-21 NIV

<sup>20</sup> **Then Noah built an altar to the LORD** and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. <sup>21</sup> **The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma** and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.

Altars are connected to worship. Worship is a place of devotion, dedication and sacrifice. The activity of worship builds an altar. God inhabits the praises of His people. When we worship God, He responds by manifesting His presence. The Bible says that where two or three are gathered in His name that He is in the midst of that. Worship is a powerful dynamic that impacts our hearts – how we think and process what is going on, how we see the world and all that is in it, where we draw our strength from and what we believe. This impacts us as individuals and it impacts nations.

### Romans 12.1-3 NIV

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to **offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.** <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Where worship is released, an altar is built. Where an altar is built, a throne is then put into place. This creates a covering and an environment that influences the lives of all people and all that is done in a territory or city. There are altars that are built to the One True God, Creator of the heavens and the earth and there are altars built to false gods that invoke witchcraft and wickedness. In the Bible wicked kings built altars to false gods creating a culture of wickedness, control and oppression over the people. When Godly kings would rule over the nation they would tear down the altars dedicated to evil.

### Deuteronomy 12.2-3 NIV

<sup>2</sup> Destroy completely all the places on the high mountains, on the hills and under every spreading tree, where the nations you are dispossessing worship their gods. <sup>3</sup> **Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and burn their Asherah poles in the fire; cut down the idols of their gods and wipe out their names from those places.**

## 2 Chronicles 14.2-5 NIV

<sup>2</sup> **Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God.** <sup>3</sup> **He removed the foreign altars and the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles.** <sup>4</sup> He commanded Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and to obey his laws and commands. <sup>5</sup> **He removed the high places and incense altars in every town in Judah, and the kingdom was at peace under him.**

## 2 Chronicles 20.18, 21-22 NIV

<sup>18</sup> Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and **all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD.**

<sup>21</sup> After consulting the people, **Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army,** saying:

"Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever."

<sup>22</sup> **As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes** against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.

## Psalm 47.5-9 NIV

<sup>5</sup> **God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.**

<sup>6</sup> **Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.**

<sup>7</sup> For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.

<sup>8</sup> God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.

<sup>9</sup> The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham, for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted.

There are altars, places of blood sacrifice, in our nation that feed spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. They are enthroning powers and principalities of darkness releasing perversion, violence and destruction over our cities and all the people. God is saying, worship Me. Worship builds an altar. Release your praises over the city. Build an altar to God by your worship. Where the presence of the Lord is there is freedom. Build an altar of worship in your home, over your family, over the place where you work. We are gatekeepers for the Lord. Invite God in everywhere. How do you do this? By speaking out loud who is and what belongs to Him.

## DECLARATION:

### Psalm 150 NIV

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD. *Praise the Lord over Detroit. Praise the Lord above the news of the day.*

Praise God in his sanctuary; *praise God in your home, praise God in the streets,* praise him in his mighty heavens, *praise for His kindness and faithfulness.*

<sup>2</sup> Praise him for his acts of power; *lift up His name that is above all other names,* praise him for his surpassing greatness.

<sup>3</sup> Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre,

<sup>4</sup> praise him with timbrel and dancing,

praise him with the strings and pipe,

<sup>5</sup> praise him with the clash of cymbals,

praise him with resounding cymbals.

<sup>6</sup> Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD.