

Session 3

Worship Together

Coming from our various backgrounds, we may have differing views on the meaning of worship. Here at Fellowship, we unite around the teachings of scripture regarding worship. Scripture teaches us that worship can be both collective (something we do when we come together) and also deeply personal (individually expressed). Worship is lived out in the attitude and actions of God's people toward their infinitely trustworthy Lord.

How might we define worship? **Worship is seeing God as He truly is and giving an appropriate response.**

While worship gatherings and worship music are examples of "an appropriate response," we see in the Bible that worship is so much more! Worship is responsive engagement with God throughout our daily lives. We can worship through the way we work and play. From how we treat loved ones and strangers, to how we spend our time and money, all of our interactions can be expressions of worship. The more we see God for who He truly is, the more appropriate and comprehensive our response will be. What we will find is that worship is not an act, or a few hours of our week, but the all-embracing description of the Christian's life.

Pray

Does anyone have any answered prayers from the prayer cards exchanged last week? What has the experience of praying for someone daily been like for you?

In John 4, Jesus says God seeks “true worshipers” who worship both “in spirit and in truth.” Invite God’s Spirit to fill your heart with increasingly truer worship. Ask God to reveal Himself in truth as we study what His Word says about Him and the worship He desires.

Discuss

God designed us for worship and it has been said that we all worship something or someone, allowing it to rule over our choices. When we worship something other than God, the Bible calls that an idol. What are some common idols in our culture that people worship? Where do you see people putting their time, energy, money, and passion?

Read

Read this passage aloud:

Romans 12:1-2 NIV

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. ² Do not conform any longer 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.

Interact

While Old Testament worshipers repeatedly brought animal sacrifices to God, God provided a once-and-for-all sacrifice for the sins of mankind in the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. In the book of Romans, the author (Paul) explains how worshipers can now engage with God through the provision of the person and work of Jesus Christ (Romans 1-11). So “in view of God’s mercy,” the verses above spell out the appropriate response! How would you explain to someone how Jesus’ death serves as a sacrifice that satisfies our Holy (perfect) God, being the sacrifice to end all sacrifices?

In response to Jesus’ sacrifice of death on a cross, what are some practical ways we can present ourselves as living sacrifices? How can we, as living, breathing beings exalt God with our energy, activities, work, thoughts, intellectual pursuits, and health?

Brainstorm with the group some answers to these questions:

- *How could the way you take care of your body be an act of worship?*
- *How could the way you work in your workplace be an act of worship?*
- *How could your conduct in your home be an act of worship?*
- *How could you worship on vacation in your recreation?*
- *How could you worship with your checkbook, credit card, and other expenditures?*
- *How could you worship with your time in front of the computer?*

What makes our dedication of all-that-we-are “holy and acceptable” to God? Isn’t everything we do contaminated by “The Fall” and selfishness? What makes it possible for our efforts to qualify as “spiritual worship”?

What are some ways it is easy for us to conform to our world? How does that impact our worship of God? What does the transformation of our mind have to do with worship? Name some things that compete with God for our worship, our trust, and our obedience?

What are some ways the mind can be renewed? What does this verse say is the result of a renewed mind?

Consider breaking into groups of men and groups of women to discuss to discuss these questions in a more intimate setting:

- *What aspect of your life are you holding back from offering to God?*
- *What aspect of your life do you suspect is not pleasing to God—and therefore not a spiritual act of worship?*
- *Are you willing to ask God to transform you so you can offer this as your sacrifice of worship?*
- *Can you think of any action steps that would allow God to transform your thinking?*

Share

If you split into men and women, gather back together for a time of sharing. Give some group members the opportunity to share the story of their life before Christ, how they met Christ, and their life since coming to know Christ. Remember to keep the sharing of stories brief so that everyone will have the opportunity to tell about what God has done for them.

Respond

One of the ways we worship is by praising God for who He is. Pray and invite each member of the group to praise God for an aspect of His character (such as His grace, His mercy, His love, etc.) Consider closing your time together by singing a verse of “Amazing Grace” together as an act of worship.

Notes: