

Worship

"The more we focus on God the more we understand and appreciate His infinite worth. We cannot encounter the worthiness of God without the response of worship."

– Donald Whitney

Opening Questions: What do you think of when you hear of 'worship'? What are some ways you have heard/seen people worship God?

As Donald Whitney said "We cannot encounter the worthiness of God without the response of worship," so what is worship, why is it important, and how can we worship God?¹ Worship can be defined as showing reverence and adoration for God or giving our deepest affections and highest praise to God. Worship is central to our faith. Praise and adoration come from our heart and we all worship someone or something. Tonight we want to discuss ways we can worship God, and it might lead to some self-reflection about who or what you are worshiping, which is okay. We can all grow in this together and learn more about true worship.

Worship can take many forms in our faith. We can worship God through singing and playing music, meditating on scripture, prayer and acts of service. Paul wrote in Romans 12:1, "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." This verse says to be a living sacrifice to be true and proper worship which means that as we go throughout our day we are being transformed into who Jesus has called us to be and praising Him for what He has done to transform us. It involves showing honor and praise to God, acknowledging His greatness, and aligning our lives with His will.

Worship depends on the motive of our hearts. Worshiping God is about living a life surrendered to Him so that He may receive the glory! Simply put, as we live as Jesus-followers in obedience to Him, others should be able to see Him in that.

¹ Whitney, Donald. *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*. 101.

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Two of the main things that we often think of as worship are praise through song and by giving thanks. Throughout the Bible, we can read many songs and prayers that were written as worship! The book of Psalms is made of songs and prayers of thanksgiving, praise and lament, and we can learn how to worship God through them. Having the right view of God and understanding of what worship is and how we can do it is so important to living as a Jesus-follower. Let's look at one of these psalms to see what the Bible has to say about worship!

Read Psalm 63.

Questions: What stood out to you while reading/listening to this psalm? What did you learn about worship through this psalm?

In Psalm 63, David writes this song in the wilderness and praises God for who He is! Written as a song, the people would have sung this together, and as we read, it is full of gratefulness to God. We can worship God in a similar way through writing or saying the things about God that we are thankful for as well as the things He has done for us.

We learn that worship is about deeply longing for and connecting with God. Even when facing difficulties, David shows that worship can thrive through a sincere desire for God's presence. Remember worship is about the motive of our heart. The psalm emphasizes that true worship recognizes God's unwavering love and finds joy in Him above all else.

What characteristics of God can we praise Him for?

What are some things in your life that you can praise God for?

How has this conversation tonight changed how you view worship? What is something that has stood out to you?

Through this we learn how we can worship God through song and offering thanksgiving. We can worship by joyfully singing praise and remembering what He has done for us. Worshiping God through music is great but in doing this, we have to examine the posture of our hearts. This simply means recognizing the words you are saying and

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understanding if you mean them. It's crucial to examine our motives. It is also important to use this as a way to grow. You might recognize that your motive needs to change and that's okay. We can ask God to help us change the posture of our hearts as we learn to worship Him. Be intentional in growing in how you are worshiping so that your relationship with God continues to grow. As we worship, whether in song, prayer, or service, we should focus on God and not on ourselves or others.

Although we focused on a couple main ways that we worship God, these are not the only ways. Remember true worship comes from our whole lives being surrendered to God. John Piper put it this way, "This is my spiritual worship. To show the world that You are my all-satisfying treasure."

We have been able to worship God in community at Monday Night Worship and for those of us going to Fall Retreat, we will be able to worship God with students from across our region. As we worship through song and thanksgiving, let us be reminded of who we are worshiping!

Share about different ways that you personally worship God.

How can I incorporate worship into my daily life?

What will I continue to study about worship on my own or with friends?

Listen to "Better than Life" by Erik Nieder and pray to close.

A Few Recommended Worship Songs:

Names - Elevation Worship

All Hail King Jesus - Bethel

What a God - SEU Worship

Such an Awesome God - Maverick City Music

Rest on Us - Upperroom