

Let's Discuss...Worship

PART 1_Honestly Engaging with God

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Scriptures mentioned:

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.
Romans 12:1 NIV

...Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for Him.
Romans 12:1b MSG

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship Him.
John 4:23 ESV

You [Samaritans] do not know what you worship; we [Jews] do know what we worship, for salvation is from the Jews.
John 4:22 AMP

Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage.
Matthew 6:6a MSG

...for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.
Matthew 6:8b NIV

Hey Group Leaders!

Consider this flow for the study time together with your small group:

1. Feel free to talk about the last video's reflection prompt, or you could watch us unpack this a little bit more in this week's video and chat about it afterwards...

What do you think Jesus meant in these verses?

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.
John 4:23-24 NIV

Have a think about this and we'll chat about it more in the next video.

2. Watch this week's video, **Let's Discuss...Worship PART 1_Honestly Engaging with God**.
3. Choose a couple of the "Let's Discuss..." questions below to discuss in your group.
4. Go over this week's reflection prompt with your group.
5. Choose someone in your group (try to pick someone different each week) to close in prayer, using the prompt below as a guide. Additionally, see if there are any other prayer requests amongst the group and allow your group members the opportunity to pray for each other.

Summary

In this opening conversation, we expand our understanding of worship from something that we do at church on Sundays to a way of engaging with God that permeates every aspect of our lives. We discuss whether there is a right or wrong way to worship, how worshipping in spirit and in truth includes both our head and our heart, and the paradox of offering ourselves as living sacrifices.

Definitons

worship: the natural human response of honour, devotion, reverence, and praise to something or someone whose greatness and magnitude inspire a deep sense of awe and wonder. As Christians, our worship is reserved for God alone, and results in an expansive, all-encompassing lifestyle of adoration that seeks intimacy with Him, obedience to Him, and to glorify Him above all else.

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Scriptures mentioned:

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for Him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what He wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.
Romans 12:1-2 MSG

Let's Discuss...

- What do you love about worship?
- What do you think of Joe's statement that "Worship is simply what we're created for"? Does this only apply to Christians?
- What does it look like to engage with God in the different aspects of your life and day to day activity? Are there areas of your life where you find it difficult to engage with God?
- Read John 4:21-24. After exploring different perspectives on what it means to worship God in spirit and in truth, how would you now describe your own understanding of this idea? What does worshipping in both spirit and truth look like in your life (or how would you like it to look)?
- How easy or difficult do you find it to engage with God honestly – to not hide or hold back any of your thoughts or feelings? If He already knows everything, why do we sometimes find this so difficult?

Let's Reflect This Week...

This week, take time to notice which parts of yourself you bring to God when you engage with Him. Does it feel natural to come as your most authentic self—with your highs and lows, frustrations, gratitude, anger, and joy? Or do you find yourself offering a more polished or idealised version of what you think a "good Christian" should look like? Reflect on whether you invite God into both the big picture and the small details of your life, or if there are areas you try to handle on your own. Simply be mindful of the version of yourself you consciously present to Him—and know that He desires all of you.

Let's Pray...

It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly themselves before Him in their worship. God is sheer being itself—Spirit. Those who worship Him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration.

John 4:23b-24 MSG

- Let's thank God for welcoming all of who we are in worship—spirit, mind, heart, and soul. Let's ask Him to help us come before Him with simplicity and honesty, holding nothing back every time we engage with Him.

Let's Go Deeper...

- **Desiring God** by John Piper [book]
- **Worship: The Reason We Were Created** by A. W. Tozer [book]
- **Being Radically Honest with God Changed Everything | How to Start** by Melody Alisa [video]
- **Ben Hastings on honest worship & feeling alone in the flock** by Spiritual Misfits Podcast [podcast]

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