

Worshiping Church
Romans 12:1-2, Psalm 95, and Colossians 3:16
Small Group Discussion Guide

OPENING QUESTION (get everyone involved in discussion): What is one event that moves you to cheer or celebrate expressively—such as a ballgame, concert, etc.?

TRANSITION: This is the final week of the “This is Us” series. We’ve been talking about the defining marks of our identity as the people of Jesus. Who are we? We’ve seen so far that we are a disciple-making, serving, caring, and praying church. Today we’re talking about the practice that is probably the most visible, most frequent practice of the church: worship.

READ 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.”

- From this passage, what do you learn about what worship is?
- Why do you think that Paul uses the metaphor “living sacrifice” when most sacrifices are dead? What are the implications in being a living sacrifice to God?
- In this verse, worship is a response to “God’s mercy.” What is God’s mercy? How does it move us to worship?
- Agree or disagree with the following statement: it is impossible for humans to *not* worship something. By default, we are creatures who worship something.
- Pastor Josh defined worship as “attributing ultimate worth to something or someone,” in such a way that it shapes your life.
 - What are some of the things in life, to which you attribute worth? (They don’t have to be the ultimate things, necessarily.)
 - What would it look like to attribute ultimate worth to Jesus? Might anything change about your life?
- What are some ways that you have found to worship Jesus throughout the week, between Sundays? What practices help you?

READ PSALM 95:1-5.

- In this passage, what do you learn about God’s a) character and b) actions?
- What implications do these attributes have for our worship?
- What are the implications of the word “for” in this passage? (*Pastor Josh said that worship requires pondering or considering who Jesus is and what he’s done, and then responding*). Do you feel that you do this throughout the week?
- Pastor Josh says that what we do during the week impacts our worship on Sunday. How have you seen that play out?

READ PSALM 95:6-8, 28:2, 47:1, 134:2, as well as Isa 29:13. (You can assign certain verses to certain members of the group.)

- What are all the forms of worship that you notice from these passages?

- What are the various aspects of our being that are involved in worship? See if you can find these aspects of our being: mind/intellect, heart/emotions, will, physical bodies, and hearing. Are there any others?
- What do you learn about worship from reviewing the various forms and aspects of our being that are involved in praising God?
- On Sunday, we learned that true worship engages all of our being. How do you feel about this claim? What aspects of your being do you want or need to involve more in your worship of Jesus—body, mind, will, emotions, other?

READ Colossians 3:16

- In this passage, what is the relationship between “the message of Christ” and the musical expressions that follow? Explain the effect that these practices can have on our character.
- Do you agree that we worship because it serves as a bridge between belief and character? Why or why not?
- Josh discussed how we learn the alphabet and national anthem by singing them. Why do you think singing is an effective tool for not just memory but instilling truth?
- How much importance do you place on worshipping corporately, with the gathered body of Christ?
- While individual worship is acknowledged in Scripture, why do you think corporate worship is so powerful? What about it transforms your character and your relationship with God in ways better than individual worship?
- The NT says that we, collectively, ARE God’s temple; his presence dwells among us. Have you experienced the Holy Spirit moving or speaking in corporate worship? How so?
- CS Lewis captured the essence of worship well, in his book *Reflections on the Psalms*: “I think we delight to praise what we enjoy, because the praise doesn’t merely express, but completes the enjoyment. It’s not out of compliment that lovers keep telling each other how beautiful they are. The delight is incomplete unless it’s expressed.” How does this last sentence apply to our worship of God?
- We don’t often talk about *receiving* as a part of worship. How might preparing your heart to receive God’s Word each Sunday be an act of worship? How receptive do you feel you are?
- Let’s be transparent: Does your corporate worship show that you have attributed ultimate worth to Jesus? If we were to watch your outward expressions of worship, compared to say, your outward expressions at a sporting event, what would they say about what your heart cherishes most?
- How might you be blocked in worship? Do you have any outstanding hurts or resentments towards others or God? How can we pray for you?
- From this study today, how do you want to grow in your worship of Jesus?

PRAYER: As well as sharing our current needs, let’s share requests for where we are blocked or want to grow in our worship of Jesus.