

Worship, with Reverence & Awe

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LESSON 1. WHY WE WORSHIP

Objective: Engage students in a discussion of what makes for a good worship experience. Focus students on God as the recipient of our worship, why Christ is worthy, and how worship previews heaven.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU HEAR “WORSHIP”?

WHEN YOU THINK OF YOUR BEST EXPERIENCES WORSHIPPING,
WHAT MADE THEM THAT WAY?

THEY TOOK HOLD OF HIS FEET AND WORSHIPED HIM

The Greek word we translate as “worship” is *proskuneo*. It means to “kiss the hand” – think like a dog licking its master’s hand. It is often used in relation to someone falling down to show reverence, which we see happen frequently to Jesus throughout the gospel accounts. Read **Matthew 28:1-10**.

WHAT WERE THESE WOMEN EMOTIONALLY FEELING AND
PHYSICALLY DOING WHEN THEY WORSHIPED JESUS?

WAS THAT RESPONSE JUSTIFIED? WHY OR WHY NOT?

HOW CAN WE RESPOND TO JESUS IN THAT WAY?

WHY SPECIFICALLY DOES JESUS DESERVE OUR WORSHIP?

What day of the week did this event happen? _____

Read **Acts 20:7**. What day of the week did the
local church “gather together”? _____

WHY WOULD THE FIRST CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLE ON THAT DAY?

Read **Acts 2:42-47**. What was the daily life of the first Christians like?

HOW DOES A “SUNDAY MORNING EXPERIENCE OF WORSHIP” AFFECT OUR LIVING WITH A DAILY ATTITUDE OF WORSHIP?

“BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND”

Read **Revelation 4-5**, where John provides a symbolic depiction of what he witnessed in heaven.

WHO IS WORSHIPED?

WHY?

HOW?

Notice the actions we see occurring in this scene are mirrored in what Christians do during our worship assemblies!

Revelation 4:9-11

Revelation 5:8-10

Revelation 5:11-14

WHY DON'T OUR ATTITUDES IN WORSHIP ALWAYS MIRROR THIS SCENE EVEN WHEN OUR ACTIONS DO?

WHAT SPECIFICALLY CAN WE DO INDIVIDUALLY AND AS A CHURCH TO ENSURE OUR ASSEMBLIES TRULY ARE *PROSKUNEO*?

LESSON 2. WHERE WE WORSHIP

Objective: Familiarize students with the function of the Temple under the Old Covenant. Demonstrate how that function is now fulfilled within Christ's body, the church.

THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE

At the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt, a cloud would cover the **Tabernacle**, or "**tent of meeting**" where the **ark of the covenant** was kept, serving as sign to the people that the **glory of the Lord** was present (**Exodus 25:21-22, 40:34-38**). Long after Israel settled in the Promised Land, the ark continued to be housed in such a tent (**II Samuel 6:17, I Chronicles 28**). It wouldn't be until the reign of David's son **King Solomon** that a proper temple would be built.

Read **II Chronicles 6:1-21** and **7:1-3**.

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE TEMPLE?

The temple would need to be rebuilt following its destruction for the nation's unfaithfulness (**Ezra 3:10-13, 6:13-18**). Eventually, having the temple became a point of national pride (**Matthew 24:1-2, John 2:18-22**). When _____ in **Matthew 26:59-66**, _____ in **Acts 6:12-14**, and _____ in **Acts 24:5-9** were accused of wrongdoing, it was in relation to the Temple.

This shows the risk focusing too much on the physical location of worship can pose to its true objective of coming into God's presence. Stephen's sermon and example dramatically pointed this out to the Jewish council in **Acts 7:44-8:1**.

TEMPLES MADE BY MAN

The Jewish people weren't the only ones to struggle with overemphasizing the physical location of worship. Paul observed the same among the Athenians, whose city was "**full of idols**." Read **Acts 17:22-31**.

WHAT DOES PAUL TELL US HERE ABOUT GOD'S NATURE?

HOW DO WE ENTER GOD'S PRESENCE?

Jesus Christ's role in bringing us into God's presence is frequently emphasized by His Apostles.

- At the beginning of his gospel account, the Apostle Matthew explains that "Immanuel", the name Isaiah used to describe the Messiah, means "
_____ " (**Matthew 1:23**).

- The last words Matthew records Jesus saying are, “_____” (**Matthew 28:20**).
- John said, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have _____, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (**John 1:14**).

Rather than focusing on a physical structure, Jesus shows us what it truly means to live in God’s presence.

YOU ARE GOD’S TEMPLE

We clearly see this shift away from a physical place of worship in the mindset of the first Christians. While the first Jewish converts still attended the temple, they also met “day by day” in each other’s homes (**Acts 2:46**). When Paul encountered resistance in the synagogue (a Jewish “church building”) in Ephesus, he simply moved to a nearby public lecture hall (**Acts 19:9**). The church often met in the houses of some of its members, like:

- _____ (**I Corinthians 16:19, Romans 16:3-5**)
- _____ (**Colossians 4:15**)
- _____ (**Philemon 1-2**)

Jesus made this possible by how we now experience God’s presence through the gospel. Read **I Corinthians 3:16-17** and **I Corinthians 6:19-20**.

WHAT IS GOD’S TEMPLE NOW ACCORDING TO EACH PASSAGE?

HOW IS GOD PRESENT WITHIN THAT TEMPLE?

This reality of God’s presence should fundamentally shift how we think of assembling for worship, too.

HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT CHURCH BUILDINGS TODAY?

HOW MIGHT UNDERSTANDING THIS CHANGE OUR FOCUS IN WORSHIP, INDIVIDUALLY AND AS A CHURCH?

LESSON 3. HOW WE WORSHIP

Objective: Define what it means to worship “in spirit and truth”, “decently and in order”, and “with reverence and awe” and why it matters. Help students apply it.

IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

While we often describe “worship” in terms of its location and activities, the New Testament is more likely to focus on who is being worshiped and the worshiper’s attitude. We see this in Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in **John 4:16-26**. While she tried to put the focus on the where to worship, see what Jesus said instead.

WHAT WAS “THE HOUR” JESUS SAID WAS COMING?

WHO IS WORSHIPED, AND WHAT DOES HE SEEK?

RECALL FROM LESSON 2 THAT “YOU ARE GOD’S TEMPLE.” WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH?

This is a consistent theme throughout the teaching of Jesus and His Apostles. We often cite **Ephesians 5:19** for singing in worship. Read **Ephesians 5:15-21**.

WHY DO WE SING TOGETHER AS A CHURCH?

WHAT ATTITUDES SHOULD WE HAVE AS WE DO THIS TOGETHER?

DECENTLY AND IN ORDER

By addressing the bad attitudes and practices some Corinthians had in exercising miraculous gifts in their assemblies, Paul also gives us guidance as to what matters when we assemble. Read **I Corinthians 14:13-40**.

WHAT PRINCIPLES DOES PAUL GIVE FOR HOW WE ARE TO CONDUCT OURSELVES “IN CHURCH”?

Paul makes clear that Christian assemblies are not free-for-alls. All things that are done should be for “building up” and “decently and in order” (14:26, 40). To that end, he lists three situations where people should refrain from speaking up.

I Corinthians 14:27-28 _____

I Corinthians 14:29-33a _____

I Corinthians 14:33b-35 _____

DOES NOT SPEAKING IN AN ASSEMBLY MAKE SOMEONE LESS VALUABLE TO THE BODY?

WHY DO WE SOMETIMES FEEL LIKE WE HAVE TO BE HEARD? WHAT SHOULD BE OUR FOCUS IN WORSHIP?

WITH REVERENCE AND AWE

In contrast to “what may be touched” under the Law of Moses, Hebrews pulls back the curtain on the spiritual, especially what it means to be a part of “the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven.” Read **Hebrews 12:18-29**.

HOW DOES THIS REFRAME HOW WE SEE WORSHIP AND EACH OTHER?

WHAT SPECIFICALLY CAN WE DO TO ENSURE THAT WE PERSONALLY WORSHIP GOD WITH REVERENCE AND AWE?

Our worship assemblies should glorify the Father, be focused on the Son, and promote us bearing the fruit of the Spirit. We need both the right actions and the right attitudes to truly worship according to the New Testament.

LESSON 4. THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

Objective: Demonstrate the important role of Scripture in worship. Engage students in a discussion of how this is most helpful. Provide a safe place to practice reading and receive encouragement and constructive feedback.

THE HOLY SPIRIT SPOKE

As the Apostles taught and led, they viewed Scripture as spoken by the Holy Spirit and sought this divine authority for every decision they made.

- In **Acts 1:15-26**, Peter cited Psalms in explaining the fall of _____ and the need for another to “_____” before appointing Matthias to join the Twelve Apostles.
- In **Acts 15:12-21**, James cited the prophet Amos in deciding whether the _____ who became disciples needed to keep the Law of Moses.

Peter would later explain that the things about Jesus that the apostles taught and that Scripture foretold did not come from “**someone’s own interpretation**” but that “**men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit**” (**II Peter 1:16-21**).

When the Apostles couldn’t be present in-person to teach and lead, they wrote! In **II Corinthians 10:11**, Paul said that those who criticized his forceful writing should know “**that what we say by letter when absent, we do when present.**” The churches were commanded to publicly read these writings (**I Thessalonians 5:27, Colossians 4:16**). Reading the New Testament is how we are still taught and led by Jesus’ Apostles, who were themselves led by the Holy Spirit!

When discussing Paul’s writings in **II Peter 3:14-18**, Peter said that some try to twist them, “**as they do the other Scriptures.**” In this way, he shows us that the first Christians considered the apostles’ writings to be Scripture! Read **II Thessalonians 3:13-18**.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT WE FOLLOW SCRIPTURE? WHY?

WHAT ARE WE GUIDED BY IF NOT BY SCRIPTURE?

John would pronounce a blessing on the one who “**reads aloud**” and on “**those who hear, and who keep**” what he wrote in **Revelation 1:3**.

WHEN WAS A TIME YOU WERE BLESSED BY THE READING OF SCRIPTURE IN AN ASSEMBLY? WHY DOES THAT TIME STAND OUT?

BREATHED OUT AND PROFITABLE

After Christ's resurrection, Jesus opened His disciples' minds to understand the Scriptures. Read **Luke 24:44-53**.

ACCORDING TO JESUS, WHAT IS SCRIPTURE ALL ABOUT? HOW DO DISCIPLES WHO UNDERSTAND THIS RESPOND?

Paul would give a beautiful description of both God's inspiration of Scripture and its role in the life of the Christian in **II Timothy 3:10-17**.

WHAT MAKES THE WORDS IN THE BIBLE SPECIAL? WHAT ARE THOSE WORDS INTENDED TO DO?

WHAT CAN HOLD US BACK FROM EXPERIENCING THIS?

In **Colossians 3:16**, Paul wrote, “**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.**” Our assemblies play a critical role in helping this to happen.

WHAT ARE WAYS SCRIPTURE PLAYS A ROLE IN OUR ASSEMBLIES?

HOW CAN OUR ASSEMBLIES BECOME “MORE SCRIPTURAL”?

LET'S PRACTICE: Select a passage to **read aloud**. Choose one of your favorites, one from this lesson, or one from the list below. Consider how to incorporate **context** (what the Spirit meant when He inspired it) and how to read **dynamically** (pausing at punctuation, reading with inflection) to help the word **dwell richly** and **teach one another**.

How is reading each of the following different?

- **Luke 19:10** vs. **Luke 19:1-10**
- **John 3:16** vs. **John 3:16-21**
- **Romans 8:28** vs. **Romans 8:26-30**
- **Philippians 4:13** vs. **Philippians 4:10-13**

LESSON 5. PREACH THE WORD!

Objective: Define the object of a good gospel message from God’s perspective. Engage students in a discussion of messages that have been most personally helpful. Identify students who will take a turn preparing a 5-minute devotional to deliver in the coming weeks.

THE APOSTLES’ TEACHING

When the church began in Jerusalem, what did they “devote themselves to” according to **Acts 2:42**?

When the apostles and early Christian leaders publicly taught audiences familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament books of Genesis through Malachi), they showed how the details of Jesus’ life, death, burial, resurrection, and coming judgment fulfill those Scriptures.

- _____ cited Abraham, Moses, and all the prophets to show Jesus is the “**Christ appointed for you**” in **Acts 3:17-26**.
- _____ showed the Ethiopian how Christ fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53) in **Acts 8:30-35**.
- **Acts 17:1-4** shows _____ was accustomed to going to the local synagogue to reason from the Scriptures “**that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and rise from the dead**” and that Jesus is that Christ.

IN THESE THREE EXAMPLES AND OTHERS LIKE THEM, WHO WERE THE APOSTLES TEACHING, WHERE, AND WHY?

Beyond this public witness that Jesus is the Christ, we see the apostles’ teaching was also for “**strengthening the souls of the disciples**”. Read **Acts 14:21-23**.

WHEN PAUL AND BARNABAS SPOKE TO AN ESTABLISHED CHURCH, WHAT WAS THEIR FOCUS?

The Apostle Paul made a point of participating in such gatherings, as we see with the church in Troas (**Acts 20:5-7**) and the Ephesian elders (**Acts 20:17-38**). In every instance, we see the apostles were focused on **Jesus**. Read **Titus 2:1-15**.

HOW DO WE KNOW IF TEACHING “ACCORDS WITH SOUND DOCTRINE”?

PREACH THE WORD!

Timothy was a young disciple who Paul brought with him and Silas to help on their second missionary journey (**Acts 16:1-5**). In time, Paul would send Silas and Timothy to places he was unable to go himself (**Acts 17:14-15**). Over the next 10-15 years, Timothy grew into one of Paul's most trusted co-workers (**Philippians 2:19-24**). He could leave Timothy to deal with even the most difficult issues, like combatting false teachers in Ephesus (**I Timothy 1:3**).

As Paul continued mentoring Timothy from afar – and in preparation for his own imminent death – the apostle of Christ Jesus told his beloved child what it means to be an evangelist. Read **II Timothy 4:1-5**.

WHO IS THE PREACHER RESPONSIBLE TO?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “BE READY IN AND OUT OF SEASON”?

WHAT DOES TRULY PREACHING THE WORD DO FOR ITS HEARERS?

WHEN WAS A TIME YOU EXPERIENCED THIS? WHY DOES THAT MESSAGE STAND OUT IN YOUR MIND?

WHAT KEEPS US FROM EXPERIENCING THIS WHEN WE HEAR PREACHING? HOW CAN WE EXPERIENCE IT MORE?

WHAT SHOULD THE ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR OF THE PREACHER BE? WHAT DOES HE NEED TO BE PREPARED TO ENDURE?

LET'S PRACTICE: Which brothers are willing to “preach the word” through a brief 5-minute or less message for our class? This would consist of:

- Selecting a single passage that is meaningful to you;
- Studying to understand what God is saying through it;
- Considering how we need to apply it to our lives as Christians; and,
- Clearly presenting it to our class sometime from Lesson 7 through 13.

LESSON 6. "I'VE EARNESTLY DESIRED TO EAT THIS PASSOVER"

Objective: Demonstrate the roots of the Lord's Supper in the Old Testament observance of the Passover and Jesus' observance on the night He was betrayed. Practice baking bread and setting up trays.

IT IS THE LORD'S PASSOVER

Over 1200 years before the birth of Jesus, Israel was subjected to harsh slavery in Egypt. God raised up Moses to lead the people to freedom, humbling the Egyptian Pharaoh through a series of ten dramatic plagues. It was just before the final plague – the death of every firstborn in the land of Egypt – that Israel's most important holy day was established: the Passover. Read **Exodus 12:1-50**.

WHAT WAS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE PASSOVER WHEN IT FIRST TOOK PLACE?

WHAT PURPOSE DID THE ONGOING MEMORIAL DAY OF THE PASSOVER SERVE?

HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE PASSOVER AND THE EVENTS SURROUNDING IT IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY? HOW CAN YOU TELL?

"WHERE I MAY EAT THE PASSOVER WITH MY DISCIPLES"

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus observed the Passover with His disciples. Within that observance, He instituted another very special memorial. Read **Luke 22:7-23**.

WHAT CAN THE PASSOVER TEACH US ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER?

WHAT PURPOSE DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER SERVE?

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER TO CHRISTIANS? HOW CAN YOU TELL?

PREPARING & SERVING COMMUNION

Homemade Communion Bread recipe

By Joyce Deem

Makes 6-8 squares

Ingredients

2 tablespoons of olive oil

2 teaspoons of water

3 heaping tablespoons of flour (enough to make a ball)

Preparation

Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees.

Mix the ingredients, roll thin, and cut into squares.

Make holes in each with a fork.

Bake at 350 degrees until lightly brown, about 10 minutes. Watch carefully.

Preparing Communion at the Georgetown church of Christ

AM Worship Service

Prepare 6 trays with enough bread to serve 20-25 people in each tray.

Prepare 6 trays with cups half full of 100% grape juice:

- *Outer Ring:* 1 cup every third circle
- *Middle Ring:* 1 cup every other circle
- *Inner Ring:* 1 cup in every circle except the center

Refrigerate until ready to serve to prevent the juice from becoming bitter.

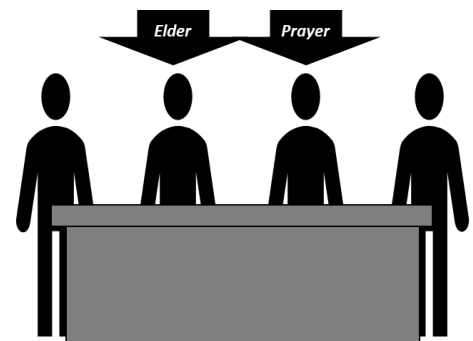
PM Worship Service

Upon cleaning up from the AM service, the remaining bread and juice will be used to prepare two trays each as specified above. (Currently, this is completed by the usher.)

If supplies of pre-made bread, juice, or cups are running low, please let our church secretary Debbie Justice know so more may be ordered.

Serving Communion at the Georgetown church of Christ

Each month, one of our elders presides over the Lord's Supper. He will ask at least three brothers to assist in serving. The elder stands in the center of the table facing the congregation, with one brother to his immediate right and two brothers to his left. The brother to his immediate left customarily leads the blessing on that part of the service (though the elder may say that blessing himself if the brother serving is uncomfortable doing so). After the blessing, one brother serves from the outer aisle and one from the center aisle for the side of the building on which they are standing. The men will rotate their order in between each part of the service so that the brother leading the next blessing will be on the elder's immediate left when facing the congregation.



LESSON 7. PROCLAIMING THE LORD'S DEATH

Objective: Explain the significance of the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper as practiced by the first Christians. Engage students in a discussion of ways to "eat and drink" in a worthy manner. Provide a safe place for a student to give a 5-minute devotional, read a Scripture, lead a song, or pray and receive encouragement and constructive feedback.

BREAKING BREAD

Remember from Lesson 6 how the month of the Passover and the Exodus became the beginning of Israel's year (**Exodus 12:1-2**)? Read **Acts 20:5-7**.

On what day did the early Christians observe the Lord's Supper ("break bread")?

WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT ABOUT THAT DAY?

Notice that Paul "**gathered together to break bread**" with the Christians in Troas "**after the days of Unleavened Bread**" (the weeklong festival that followed the Passover), and then another 12 days after that. This was well after what we call "Easter", demonstrating that the Lord's Supper was something the first Christians participated in every week. (Paul used the phrase "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup" in **I Corinthians 11:26**, suggesting frequency.)

Paul made clear to the church in Corinth that the Lord's Supper was about much more than consuming food. For Gentile Christians who struggled to make a total break with their former idol-worshiping way of life, he explained the profound spiritual meaning and practical significance of the Lord's Supper, which transforms what we do for the rest of the week. Read **I Corinthians 10:14-22**.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF WE PARTICIPATE IN THE LORD'S SUPPER?
WHO ARE WE COMMUNING WITH?

WHAT DOES FREQUENT PARTICIPATION DO FOR US AS DISCIPLES?

"DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

Even within the first few decades of the church's history, the Lord's Supper was misunderstood and abused in some places. Read **I Corinthians 11:17-22**.

WHAT DOES THIS TELL US ABOUT THE SETTING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER THEN? HOW WAS IT DIFFERENT THAN TODAY?

WHAT ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS WERE THE CORINTHIANS EXHIBITING?

WHAT ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS MIGHT WE STRUGGLE WITH TODAY?

Paul addresses these issues head-on by reminding the Corinthians of the significance of the Lord's Supper (as given by Jesus Himself) and the grave implications if we fail to "examine ourselves". Read **I Corinthians 11:23-34**.

WHO SHOULD WE BE FOCUSED ON IN THE LORD'S SUPPER?

WHEN WAS A TIME YOU EXPERIENCED THIS THE MOST?

HOW CAN WE BECOME MORE CONSISTENTLY FOCUSED?

UNTIL HE COMES

Paul said that, when we participate in the Lord's Supper, we "**proclaim the Lord's death until He comes**" (I Corinthians 11:26). John shows us the unseen reality of the Lord's Supper that will one day be revealed. Read **Revelation 19:6-9**.

WHAT IS THE MOOD AT THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB?

HOW MIGHT WE EXPERIENCE THIS IN OUR PARTICIPATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

LESSON 8. EARNEST PRAYER

Objective: Explain the function of prayer in the assemblies of the early church.

Emphasize our need for public prayers that embolden, amaze, and send. Provide a safe place for a student to give a 5-minute devotional, read a Scripture, lead a song, or pray and receive encouragement and constructive feedback.

DEVOTED

Just as prayer was an important part of Jesus' daily life, we see it playing a major role in the assemblies of His followers.

Who gathered in the upper room to pray immediately following Jesus' ascension according to **Acts 1:12-14**?

About how many people were there according to **Acts 1:15**? _____

When the church began in Jerusalem after the gospel was preached on Pentecost, what did they "devote themselves to" according to **Acts 2:42**?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO BE DEVOTED TO PRAYER?

WHEN OUR CHURCH PRAYS TOGETHER, WHERE ARE WE, WHAT DO WE PRAY ABOUT, AND WHY?

BOLD

In Acts 4, Luke records an example of a prayer of the early church. It follows the release of _____ and _____, who had been arrested for preaching the gospel after healing a man on the temple grounds (Acts 3:1, 14). Read **Acts 4:23-31**.

WHY DID THEY PRAY? WHAT DID THEIR PRAYER CONSIST OF?

WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THEIR PRAYER?

AMAZED

Later, _____ is killed and _____ is arrested as a result of persecution, **“but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church”** (Acts 12:1-5). Read **Acts 12:12-17**.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE CHURCH’S RESPONSE TO THE VIOLENCE AND TO THE RESCUE?

WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THEIR PRAYER?

SENT

Barnabas and Saul were already working as missionaries in Antioch when the Holy Spirit set them apart for another work. Read **Acts 13:1-3**.

WHAT WERE THEY DOING WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT CHOSE THEM?
WHAT DID THE CHURCH DO BEFORE SENDING THEM OUT?

HOW DOES PRAYER AFFECT DECISIONS LIKE THESE?

Think back over these examples and the ways we said our church prays together.

WHAT ARE WAYS WE ALREADY PRAY LIKE THE EARLY CHURCH?
WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM THEM?

WHAT CAN OUR PRAYERS TOGETHER AS A CHURCH DO FOR US?

LESSON 9. PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

Objective: Demonstrate the role of mutual praying in dealing with illness and sin. Engage students in a discussion as to why we hold back in participating in this and how to open up. Provide a safe place for a student to give a 5-minute devotional, read a Scripture, lead a song, or pray and receive encouragement and constructive feedback.

LET HIM PRAY

James was the half-brother of Jesus and an early leader in the church in _____ (Matthew 13:55, Acts 21:17-18). A participant in the early church's own devotion to prayer, he encouraged the Christians to whom he wrote to pray. In what may have been the first New Testament writing chronologically, James shows us that worship plays an important part in how we navigate life's successes and challenges. Read **James 5:13-14**.

WHY SHOULD WORSHIP BE A PART OF OUR RESPONSE TO LIFE?

WHEN HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED WHAT JAMES TAUGHT HERE?

WHEN WE DON'T RESPOND THIS WAY, WHAT GETS IN THE WAY?

GREAT POWER

As is always true with Scripture, the instructions that James gave served an important purpose. Read **James 5:15-20**.

WHAT SPECIFIC THINGS DID JAMES SAY WE EXPERIENCE WHEN WE PRAY TOGETHER?

HOW DOES "THE PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS PERSON" HAVE "GREAT POWER AS IT IS WORKING"?

In Lesson 8, we saw how the church experienced boldness in **Acts 4** and amazement in **Acts 12** after God delivered the apostles. Sharing our concerns – and how God helps us – bring us closer to Him individually and as a church!

WHAT KEEPS US FROM SHARING IN THIS WAY? HOW CAN WE BECOME BETTER AT IT?

BRING BACK A SINNER

Notice that the power of prayer is not limited to physical illness. It is part of God's design that the assemblies of His people deal with sin. Read **I Corinthians 5:1-5**.

WHY DID THE MAN'S CONDUCT WARRANT THE CHURCH'S ATTENTION, AND WHEN WAS IT TO BE ADDRESSED?

WHY WAS IT IN THE MAN'S INTEREST THAT THE CHURCH DO THIS?

WHAT NEEDS TO BE TRUE ABOUT US AND OUR ASSEMBLIES FOR SIN TO BE ADDRESSED?

CONFIDENT

The Apostle John also included strong encouragement to pray in one of his letters. Similar to James, he highlighted the power of mutual prayer, especially in dealing with sin. Read **I John 5:13-21**.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ASK "ACCORDING TO HIS WILL"?

WHY DO WE SOMETIMES LACK CONFIDENCE IN PRAYING? WHAT DOES JOHN REMIND US OF TO GIVE US CONFIDENCE?

HOW CAN WE GROW IN PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER?

LESSON 10. ADDRESSING ONE ANOTHER AND SINGING TO THE LORD

Objective: Demonstrate the role of congregational singing in helping us be filled with the Spirit and teaching one another. Engage students in a discussion of ways singing has personally impacted them. Provide a safe place for a student to give a 5-minute devotional, read a Scripture, lead a song, or pray and receive encouragement and constructive feedback.

SING!

Singing has always been important to God's people.

_____	Sang in Exodus 15 to praise God for His victory over Pharaoh's army.
_____	Sang in Psalms 7 to lament being unjustly treated.
_____	Wrote 1,005 songs by the wisdom God gave him according to I Kings 4:32 .
_____	Sang before entering the Mount of Olives in Matthew 26:30 .

Composed over many centuries, **Psalms** is the songbook of ancient Israel and the early church. This is what Paul meant when he said to be filled with the Spirit by "addressing one another in _____ and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart" (**Ephesians 5:19**).

Jesus regarded the Psalms as inspired: "everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and **the Psalms** must be fulfilled" (**Luke 24:44**, emphasis added). The Hebrews writer identified **Psalms 95** as being said by the Holy Spirit through David (**Hebrews 3:7, 4:7**).

WITH YOUR HEART

The Psalms encapsulate the entirety of human experience living in God's presence. We can learn a lot from the Psalms about our singing in worship. In fact, you will likely be blessed by reading these entire psalms outside of class.

Some psalms express praise or thanks to God:

- "Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm!" (**47:6-7**)
- "Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!" (**95:1-2**)

What does **James 5:13** tell the cheerful to do? _____

Some psalms teach about God, His historical deeds, or how to live righteously.

- “Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever...Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea” (106:1, 7).
- “Blessed is the one who considers the poor! In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him” (41:1).

Many psalms express sadness over hardship, persecution, sin, and life itself.

- “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?” (22:1)
- “O Lord, God of my salvation, I cry out day and night before you; incline your ear to my cry! For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to Sheol” (88:1-3).

Psalm 45 is even a love song! “You are the most handsome of the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore God has blessed you forever” (45:2).

KNOWING THE PSALMS ARE INSPIRED, WHY DOES IT MATTER THAT WE SING DIFFERENT TYPES OF SONGS?

WHAT ARE SONGS WE SING THAT EXPRESS SIMILAR SENTIMENTS?
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN MOVED BY SINGING IN WORSHIP?

TO THE LORD

All singing **expresses emotion** but singing psalms **shapes emotion**. Some psalms are even called prayers. “By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life...Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God” (42:8, 11).

HOW IS SINGING LIKE PRAYING?

This distinguishes our singing in worship to God from other forms of musical entertainment: it expresses something to God, fills us with the Spirit, and shapes how we deal with all of life’s circumstances. How did Paul say we are to let “the word of Christ” dwell in us richly in **Colossians 3:16**?

WHY SHOULD WE SING? WHY DOES IT MATTER THAT THE WORDS WE SING REFLECT “SOUND DOCTRINE”?

LESSON 11. SINGING WITH THE UNDERSTANDING

Objective: Introduce the very basics of musical composition and four-part harmony while emphasizing the priority of singing from the heart. Provide a safe place for a student to give a 5-minute devotional, read a Scripture, lead a song, or pray and receive encouragement and constructive feedback.

SING AND MAKE MELODY

As the “songbook” of ancient Israel and the early church, the Psalms often included musical instruction for how the songs were to be sang in the heading.

Psalm 32 A _____ OF DAVID.

Psalm 57 TO THE CHOIRMASTER: ACCORDING TO _____
_____. A _____ OF DAVID.

While these terms would have meant something to their original writers, their meaning has been lost to us now.

WHAT DOES IT SAY ABOUT GOD’S PRIORITY THAT HE PRESERVED THE WORDS’ MEANING BUT NOT THE MUSICAL ARRANGEMENTS?

SPIRIT AND MIND

“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (**I Corinthians 3:16**). As Paul addressed problems in the Corinthians’ assemblies, he laid out what matters most. Read **I Corinthians 14:13-19**.

IN PAUL’S EXAMPLE OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES, WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SPIRIT AND MIND?

WHAT DID PAUL SAY MATTERED MOST?

“Singing with the mind” includes having songs that people connect with in terms of content and style. *Be Thou My Vision* (6th century), *Amazing Grace* (18th century), and *How Great Thou Art* (19th century) all reflect the popular music styles of their times. *Farther Along*, *This World is Not My Home*, and *Victory in Jesus* recall both 1930s music and the struggles of that time. Contemporary songs like *Oceans* similarly resonate with today’s young Christians.

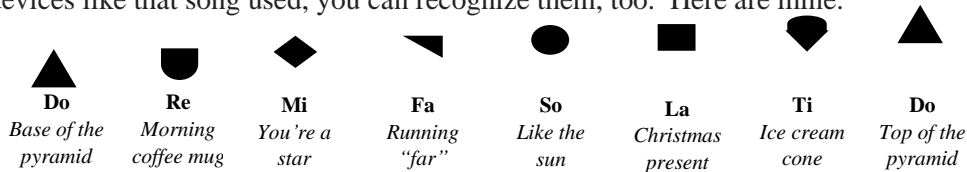
HOW SHOULD WE RECONCILE OUR DIFFERENT MUSIC TASTES?

MANY PARTS, ONE BODY

“Make a _____ to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with _____!” (Psalm 100:1-2).

Singing plays an important role in how we come into God’s presence in worship. This isn’t limited to the most musically gifted: it is for those who are and who want to be even more “**filled with the Spirit**” (Ephesians 5:18-21)! Once that is true, a basic understanding of music can heighten our ability to “sing with the mind” as it expresses and shapes our hearts!

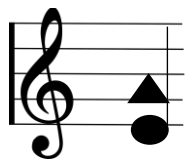
Are you familiar with the song “Do-Re-Mi” from *The Sound of Music*? That’s what the shape notes on our slides and songbooks represent! With little memory devices like that song used, you can recognize them, too. Here are mine:



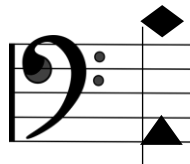
Can you recognize these notes on a familiar worship song? That’s the sound it should make. Even a basic understanding is helpful, especially for those leading singing: what happens if a song starting with the low “Do” is sang high?

HOW HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF SINGING IN WORSHIP BEEN AFFECTED BY HOW SONGS WERE PITCHED?

Paul observed of the church as Christ’s body that “there are many _____, yet one _____” (I Corinthians 12:20). This is also true of our voices! Our worship music is organized in *four-part harmony*, where each part contributes something special to make a beautiful whole.



The **ladies’ parts** are written *above* the words (in *treble clef*). The top note is the **soprano** part for high voices. It is the *melody*. The bottom note is the **alto** part for low voices. *Can you name the shape notes shown here?*



The **men’s parts** are written *below* the words (in *bass clef*). The top note is the **tenor** part for high voices. The bottom note is the **bass** part for low voices. *Can you name the shape notes shown here?*

Song leaders will (almost) always sing *the melody*. This is the most familiar tune from the song: if in doubt, sing that part! God will be glorified, and we will come into His presence with singing. After that, learning our parts only deepens our experience as we sing with our spirit and mind and hear how the different parts form the one body. We may even cause outsiders to say “Amen!”

Most of us *learn by ear* how to sing parts. Try sitting near a strong singer who sings your part and mimic them! There are also resources like *Praise & Harmony* to learn four-part harmony.

LESSON 12. CHEERFUL GIVERS

Objective: Demonstrate the Scriptural basis and intended purposes for the collection. Highlight the heart God instructs us to have in giving. Provide a safe place for a student to give a 5-minute devotional, read a Scripture, lead a song, or pray and receive encouragement and constructive feedback.

AS ANY HAD NEED

From the very beginning of the church in Jerusalem, providing for the needs of the poor was an important part of their lives together. Read **Acts 2:42-47**.

HOW DID THE CHURCH PROVIDE FOR THE POOR?

HOW MIGHT THEIR “DEVOTION” MENTIONED IN 2:42 AFFECT THEIR BENEVOLENCE IN 2:44-45?

WHAT WAS THE TOTAL RESULT OF THE CHURCH’S LIFE TOGETHER?

James made the importance of such benevolence in the Christian life clear when he wrote, “If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without _____ them the things _____ for the _____, what good is that? So also _____ by itself, if it does not have _____, is dead” (**James 2:15-17**).

The Apostle John made a similar point: “But if anyone has the _____ and sees his brother in _____, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in _____ or _____ but in _____ and in _____” (**I John 3:17-18**).

THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS

Such a collection played an important role in Paul’s ministry, too. His first trip back to Jerusalem after joining the mission work at Antioch was to “send relief to the brothers living in Judea” (**Acts 11:27-30, 12:25**). When recounting what the “pillars” of the church asked of him, he said it was only “to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do” (**Galatians 2:9-10**).

Paul was so eager, he would make such a collection a major project, with plans to deliver it at the end of his third missionary journey. Read **Romans 15:22-29**.

WHAT WAS THE COLLECTION FOR?

Practically every church Paul worked with would get involved in some way. His most specific instructions on this collection were given to the Corinthians, one of those churches in Achaia he referenced. Read **I Corinthians 16:1-4**.

WHY WOULD THIS COLLECTION OCCUR “ON THE FIRST DAY OF EVERY WEEK”?

EXCELLING IN EVERYTHING

Paul would go into even greater detail about the nature of this collection in his next letter. Read **II Corinthians 8:1-9:15**.

WHY GIVE? WHAT IS NOT A REASON TO GIVE?

WHAT DOES SUCH GIVING ACCOMPLISH: FOR THE INDIVIDUAL? FOR THE WORK OF THE CHURCH?

The Philippians were one of those Macedonian churches whose “abundance of joy and their extreme poverty overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part”, not only for the relief aid but also for supporting Paul’s ministry. Read **Philippians 4:14-20**.

WHAT DID THE PHILIPPIANS’ GIFT GO TOWARD? WHY DID PAUL WANT THEM TO GIVE?

WHY SHOULD WE GIVE? HOW DOES IT BRING US MORE INTO GOD’S PRESENCE?

WHAT WOULD WE NEED TO DO TO EXCEL IN GIVING?

LESSON 13. ENTERING THE HOLY PLACES

Objective: Demonstrate the mindset of confidence in Christ, encouraging others, and anticipating eternity that should motivate us in assembling as a church. Review key concepts from the quarter.

TRUE FORM OF THESE REALITIES

The Hebrews writer develops a contrast between the “regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness” under the Law of Moses and the new covenant Jesus brought into effect by His sacrificial death (**Hebrews 9:1, 15**). Read **Hebrews 9:23-10:18**.

WHAT HAS CHANGED BETWEEN NOW AND THE LAW OF MOSES?

HOW DO THOSE CHANGES AFFECT HOW WE LIVE AND WORSHIP?

CONFIDENCE TO ENTER

Much like we see the arrival of the Lamb who was Slain changing the scene in Revelation 5, the Hebrews writer shows how Jesus’ sacrifice is a critical turning point for us. Read **Hebrews 10:19-25**.

WHY DO WE ASSEMBLE TO WORSHIP?

WHAT SHOULD BE OUR ATTITUDE IN ASSEMBLING TO WORSHIP?

WHAT KEEPS US FROM THIS? HOW CAN WE REFOCUS?

The Hebrews writer showed how the coming of Jesus replaced the “shadow of good things to come” with the “true form of these realities” (**Hebrews 10:1**). We no longer “come to what may be touched” but to “Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant” (**Hebrews 12:18, 22-24**).

The implication of all of this for us is clear: “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire” (**Hebrews 12:28-29**).

WORSHIP GOD

Throughout this class, we have seen how the symbolic pictures of worship around God’s throne in Revelation are reflected in our own worship. We’ve been challenged to embody the heartfelt emotion they depict. As we close our class, let us look at how Revelation concludes, when Death and the Grave are defeated at Christ’s coming and “the dwelling place of God is with man” (Revelation 21:3). Read **Revelation 21:22-22:9**.

WHAT WAS THE FUNCTION OF THE TEMPLE?

WHAT BECAME THE TEMPLE AFTER CHRIST CAME?

WHAT WILL BE THE TEMPLE AFTER CHRIST COMES AGAIN?

WHY DOES WORSHIP MATTER? WHAT DOES IT DO FOR US?

WHAT WAS A MAJOR TAKEAWAY FROM THIS QUARTER FOR YOU?

HOW WILL YOU WORSHIP DIFFERENTLY?