

“The Posture of Praise”

INTRODUCTION

This week we are concluding a year of transition as we prepare to welcome our new lead pastor to the church. When we reflect on God’s faithfulness and His provision to New Life during this time, it is only right that we pause to offer God praise. This week we will study the essence of worship and the various expressions of praise found in the Bible in order to better understand and offer to God our sacrifice of praise.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

What is your favorite praise song?

Study Questions (45 MIN)

The essence of worship

Q1. Read Philippians 2:8; Mark 1:7

The words used for worship in the Old and New Testaments convey the concept of both reverence and affection. For the believer, the object of our worship is God Himself. Have each member of your group share one word that describes God. Consider the various ways we see God. Worship flows from our recognition of who God is. How does Jesus’ response to God in Philippians 2:8 serve as an example to us? How did John the Baptist express an attitude of worship in Mark 1:7? What are some ways that you can prepare yourself to be in an attitude of worship?

The expressions of worship

Q2. Read Gen 29:35; Psalm 22:3; Psalm 95:6

There are many words translated as “praise” in the Bible. Three describe the posture of our bodies, and four describe how we use our voice. Which do you use to praise God most often, the posture of your body or the sounds of your voice? *Yadah* (Gen 29:35) means to shoot out the hand, much as you would at a sporting event and *towdah* (Psalm 22:3) indicates extending the hand in agreement. The word *barak* (Psalm 95:6) is to kneel in adoration. Share with your group a time in your life when you expressed your worship to God in one of these ways.

Q3 Read Psalm 92:1; 1 Chron 23:5; Psalm 63:3-4; 1 Chronicles 15:29; 2 Samuel 6:21-22

Our weekend services feature a worship team that leads us in various expressions of worship through music. This is perhaps our most common association with the term “worship”, and would be an example of *Zamar* (Psalm 92:1) meaning to sing with instruments. But there are other ways we can use our voices to express worship. *Halal* (1 Chron 23:5) means to

rave about the Lord, being clamorously foolish. Similarly *Shabach* (Psalm 63:3-4) is to shout, putting your whole being into it, totally uninhibited. Why do you think it is acceptable in today’s culture to shout and rave over teams at sports events but not about God in church? Have you had experience in a church setting where such worship is acceptable? If you are not familiar with these expressions of worship, you might feel uncomfortable with it. How did Michal react when she observed David’s uninhibited worship? (1 Chronicles 15:29) What was David’s response to her criticism? Who is the only observer of your worship that really matters?

The encounter of worship

Q4. Read 1 Samuel 16:23; 2 Chronicles 20:15, 18-19, 21-22

Worship enriches the encounter of the worshiper with God. When we see God for who He is, and bring Him praise and reverence, we find it impacts our lives. How did David’s worship music impact Saul in 1 Samuel 16:23? How did Jehoshaphat’s decision to have the musicians lead the army influence the course of the battle in 2 Chronicles 20? Close your group time in prayer, preceded by worship (music optional).

Wrap-Up

When we recognize God for who He is, our natural response is both reverence and affection reflected through worship. The expression of our worship may take many forms, from the posture of our bodies to our vocalization. But regardless of the means by which we praise God, our worship can result in powerful encounters with the God who inhabits our praises.

Memory Verse

Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
Psalm 95:6 ESV

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life:

Challenge: *Tehillah* (Psalm 92:1) is a spontaneous, unrehearsed song. By its very nature, a spontaneous song springs forth as an overflow from the heart. As you spend time alone worshipping God this week, allow yourself to find expression in song, perhaps spontaneously.

