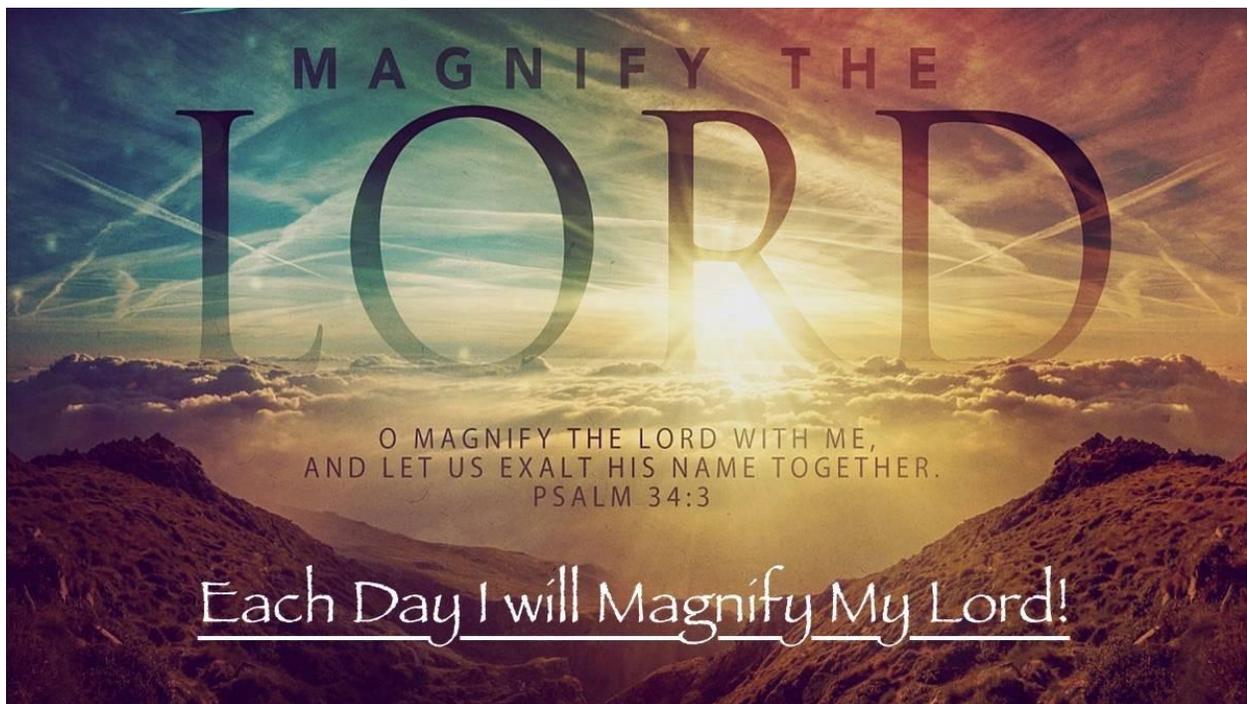

WORSHIPPING WITH INTENSITY & INTENTIONALITY

Sunday: Worship in Revelation



Prepared by Jonathan Caldwell

4th Quarter 2021

www.wearesimplychristians.com

INTRODUCTION

“Each day I’ll magnify my God!” Dave Ramsey says that financial responsibility is 10% knowledge and 90% behavior. I would argue that worship is much the same. We have discussed worship in as many different ways as is possible. But if we do not worship, then it was just an academic exercise. Remember when Jesus entered Jerusalem before His execution and His disciples were praising Him? The religious opponents demanded that He make His disciples stop. Jesus said that if they stopped praising Him, then even the rocks would cry out. God forbid we ever leave the glory and praise due Him to the gravel!

This quarter we will wrap up our discussions of worship. The highlight of the quarter will be a study of Revelation on Sunday mornings. In this study we will see worship in heaven and on earth. We will see worship in suffering and in victory. We will see worship of the beast and worship of the lamb. What better way could we end our yearlong study of worship?

But I do not want to minimize what we will be doing on Wednesday nights. With our initial study of worship, then a systematic look at the Psalms, and a detailed study of the prayers in scripture we have not had time for a few different items related to worship—let’s call them “odds and ends.” So, on Wednesdays we will look at idolatry, private worship, the prophets’ comments on worship, Paul’s prescription for worship, etc. I hope this will provide for well-rounded conclusion to our focus for 2021.

Has your worship changed? Has your appreciation for worship changed? Has your preparation for worship changed? Let’s not allow 2021’s focus to be only an academic exercise. We never want to view our worship as a checklist or allow ourselves just to go through the motions. Let us strive for more **intensity** in our worship—a greater focus on our God and one another. And let us strive for more **intentionality** in our worship—a more purposeful singing, praying, studying, and serving.

Jonathan Caldwell

Worshipping with Intensity and Intentionality

Sunday: Worship in Revelation

Schedule of Lessons

Date	Topic	Passages
Sunday, October 3	1. Introduction to Revelation	Revelation 1
Sunday, October 10	2. The Seven Churches	Revelation 2-3
Sunday, October 17	3. The Throne Room	Revelation 4-5
Sunday, October 24	4. The Six Seals	Revelation 6-7
Sunday, October 31	5. The Seventh Seal and the Trumpets	Revelation 8-9
Sunday, November 7	6. The Angel and the Little Scroll; The Two Witnesses	Revelation 10-11
Sunday, November 14	7. The Dragon, Satan, and the Beasts	Revelation 12-13
Sunday, November 21	8. The Lamb and the 144,000	Revelation 14
Sunday, November 28	9. The Seven Bowls	Revelation 15-16
Sunday, December 5	10. The Fall of Babylon	Revelation 17-18
Sunday, December 12	11. Celebration and the Defeat of Satan	Revelation 19-20
Sunday, December 19	12. A New Heaven and a New Earth	Revelation 21-22
Sunday, December 26	13. Review	Revelation

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION

Text: Revelation 1

- Do some research on Apocalyptic literature. I highly recommend Mark Robert's book *Understanding Apocalyptic Literature*. You can purchase it from the Florida College Bookstore. It should be required reading for everyone studying Revelation.
- When was Revelation written and what impact does this have on the book?
- How does John refer to the three persons of deity?
- What should we expect when we read the phrase "coming with the clouds"?
- Where is John and why is he there?
- Where does the phrase "son of man" come from?
- How or why does Jesus have the keys of "Death and Hades"?
- What are the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE SEVEN CHURCHES

Text: Revelation 2-3

- Each note to the churches follows a pattern. What is it?
- Where do the descriptions of Jesus in the first part of each letter come from?
- What does he mean that Ephesus has “abandoned their first love” or “the love they had at first”?
- Who were the Nicolaitans?
- What is a “synagogue of Satan”?
- What does he mean when he says, “Where Satan’s throne dwells”?
- What was the teaching of Balaam?
- Who is Jezebel?
- What was wrong with the church at Philadelphia?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE THRONE ROOM

Text: Revelation 4-5

- What does the number 24 symbolize?
- What is a theophany?
- What is the Old Testament parallel for these four living creatures?
- What does it mean that the 24 elders cast their crowns down before the throne?
- Why was John weeping?
- What is the symbolism behind the “Lion from the tribe of Judah”?
- What makes Jesus worthy to open the seals of the scroll?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE SIX SEALS

Text: Revelation 6-7

- Describe the first horseman and what he does.
- Describe the second.
- Describe the third.
- Describe the fourth.
- What does John see when the fifth seal is opened?
- What kind of language is John using in 6:12-14?
- Who is sealed in Revelation 7? Where do we see this in the Old Testament?
- What is unusual about the list of tribes?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE 7TH SEAL AND THE TRUMPETS

Text: Revelation 8-9

- What is the seventh seal?
- What is the first trumpet?
- What is the second trumpet?
- What is the third trumpet?
- What is the fourth trumpet?
- What are the last three trumpets called?
- Describe the fifth trumpet.
- Describe the sixth trumpet.
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE ANGEL AND THE LITTLE SCROLL; THE TWO WITNESSES

Text: Revelation 10-11

- How is this angel described? Is this confusing?
- What did John hear and what is he told to do?
- What did John do to the scroll? How is it described?
- What Old Testament character measures the temple?
- How long is 42 months? How long 1,260 days?
- Where in the Old Testament do we read of two olive trees?
- John describes the great city symbolically as Sodom and Egypt. What do Sodom and Egypt symbolize?
- How long are the witnesses left in the street? Then what happens?
- What phenomena do we see when the temple is opened?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE DRAGON, SATAN, AND BEASTS

Text: Revelation 12-13

- Who does this woman symbolize?
- Who is the male child?
- Where does the description of Satan in 12:9 come from?
- Revelation 12:11 says, “they loved not their lives even unto death.” What saying of Jesus is like this?
- What are “time, times, and half a time”?
- Who else speaks of beasts like what we read of the beast from the sea?
- What is the relationship of the second beast to the first?
- Who is marked and what does this cause?
- What does the number “666” mean?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE LAMB AND THE 144,000

Text: Revelation 14

- Who are the 144,000?
- What is the message of the first angel?
- What is the message of the second angel?
- What is the message of the third angel?
- Consider Revelation 2:10 and 14:13. He is not just talking staying faithful while you grow old and then die. What is he talking about?
- Where else do we see the description of 14:14?
- Look up the words to *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Where does this language come from?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE SEVEN BOWLS

Text: Revelation 15-16

- What is the song of Moses?
- What is the connection between the plagues in v. 6 and the bowls in v. 7?
- What happened when the first bowl was poured out?
- The second?
- The third?
- The fourth?
- The fifth?
- The sixth?
- The seventh?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

THE FALL OF BABYLON

Text: Revelation 17-18

- Who is the “Great prostitute who is seated on many waters”?
- What does it mean that the beast “was, is not, and is about to rise”?
- What do the seven mountains of 17:9 represent?
- Who are the kings described in vv. 10-11?
- What city had “dominion over the kings of the earth” in the first century?
- What groups of people will mourn the destruction of Babylon?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

CELEBRATION AND THE DEFEAT OF SATAN

Text: Revelation 19-20

- What is being celebrated in heaven? What Old Testament minor prophet records the celebration of their enemy?
- Who is the lamb? Who is the bride?
- Revelation 19:8 says, “for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.” What does Isaiah say that seems to contradict this statement? What is the explanation?
- How does this rider on a white horse compare to the one of chapter 6?
- What is the relationship between the beast and the false prophet?
- What do the 1,000 years stand for? Are they literal?
- When will Satan be released? Has he already been released?
- When else had John seen the people described in 20:4?
- What or who is Gog and Magog?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

A NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

Text: Revelation 21-22

- “Behold the dwelling place of God is with man.” What is significant about this phrase?
- Where else do we receive an invitation to come drink of water without payment?
- The New Testament contains many lists of sins. How does the one in 21:8 specifically relate to the book of Revelation?
- In the description of the new Jerusalem, why is there an obsession with the number 12?
- Consult other versions and the internet for the precious stones named in 21:19-20.
- Why is there no temple in heaven?
- Why is there no sun or moon in heaven?
- What is the significance of the tree of life being in heaven?
- In what way is Jesus coming soon? It’s been 1900+ years since these words were written?
- To what do the words of 22:18-19 apply?
- What can we apply from this section regarding worship?

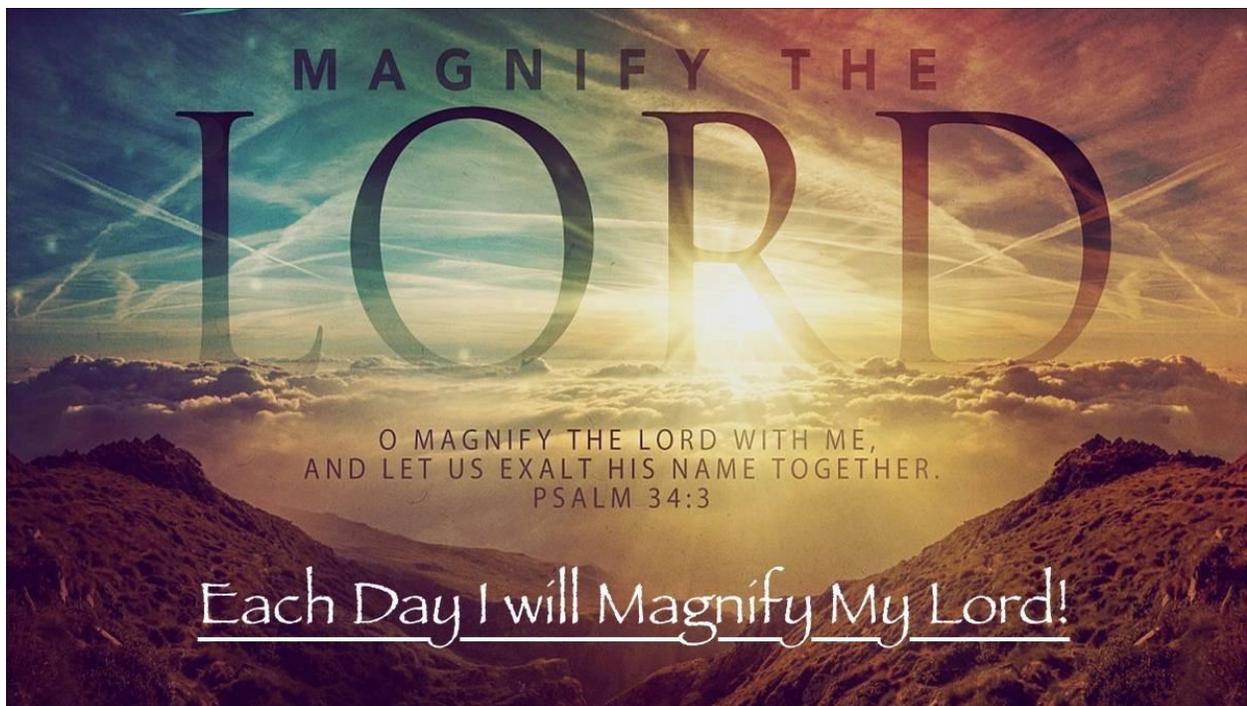
REVIEW

Text: Revelation

- What is apocalyptic literature? Who else writes like John in Revelation?
- Why does John write to these seven specific churches?
- What are the main praises given to God and the Lamb in this book?
- What are the various “sevens” presented in this book?
- What is the hierarchy of wicked power: the land beast, the sea beast, the dragon?
- Why is the great enemy of God referred to as “Babylon”?
- 144,000. 1,000. 12. 7. 666. There are many numbers used in this book. Are they literal or symbolic? What do they mean?
- Does the message of the book change if we say it addresses Rome and emperor worship and was written in the 90s versus the destruction of Jerusalem and was written in the 60s?
- What have you learned about worship studying Revelation?

WORSHIPPING WITH INTENSITY & INTENTIONALITY

Wednesday: Final Thoughts – Odds and Ends



Prepared by Jonathan Caldwell

4th Quarter 2021

www.wearesimplychristians.com

INTRODUCTION

“Each day I’ll magnify my God!” Dave Ramsey says that financial responsibility is 10% knowledge and 90% behavior. I would argue that worship is much the same. We have discussed worship in as many different ways as is possible. But if we do not worship, then it was just an academic exercise. Remember when Jesus entered Jerusalem before His execution and His disciples were praising Him? The religious opponents demanded that He make His disciples stop. Jesus said that if they stopped praising Him, then even the rocks would cry out. God forbid we ever leave the glory and praise due Him to the gravel!

This quarter we will wrap up our discussions of worship. The highlight of the quarter will be a study of Revelation on Sunday mornings. In this study we will see worship in heaven and on earth. We will see worship in suffering and in victory. We will see worship of the beast and worship of the lamb. What better way could we end our yearlong study of worship?

But I do not want to minimize what we will be doing on Wednesday nights. With our initial study of worship, then a systematic look at the Psalms, and a detailed study of the prayers in scripture we have not had time for a few different items related to worship—let’s call them “odds and ends.” So, on Wednesdays we will look at idolatry, private worship, the prophets’ comments on worship, Paul’s prescription for worship, etc. I hope this will provide for well-rounded conclusion to our focus for 2021.

Has your worship changed? Has your appreciation for worship changed? Has your preparation for worship changed? Let’s not allow 2021’s focus to be only an academic exercise. We never want to view our worship as a checklist or allow ourselves just to go through the motions. Let us strive for more **intensity** in our worship—a greater focus on our God and one another. And let us strive for more **intentionality** in our worship—a more purposeful singing, praying, studying, and serving.

Jonathan Caldwell

Worshipping with Intensity and Intentionality

Wednesday: Worshipping with the Prophets

Schedule of Lessons

Date	Topic
Wednesday, October 6	1. Idolatry (Part 1)
Wednesday, October 13	2. Idolatry (Part 2)
Wednesday, October 20	3. Idolatry (Part 3)
Wednesday, October 27	4. Worshipping with the Prophets
Wednesday, November 3	5. Paul's Prescription for Worship
Wednesday, November 10	6. Worship, Entertainment, and Tradition
Wednesday, November 17	7. Prompts for Worship: Creation
Wednesday, November 24	8. Prompts for Worship: Salvation
Wednesday, December 1	9. Prompts for Worship: God's Mighty Acts
Wednesday, December 8	10. Worship as Personally Beneficial
Wednesday, December 15	11. Private Worship
Wednesday, December 22	12. What Makes Worship "Bad"?
Wednesday, December 29	13. What Makes Worship "Good"?

IDOLATRY (PART 1)

Peer pressure is a real thing. It is hard to go the opposite direction from everyone else. Therefore, God told the Israelites to completely wipe out the Canaanite nations. He warned His people, that should the Canaanites remain in the land, they would be thorns in the sides of the Israelites. It did not take long for Canaanite paganism and idolatry to creep in. And, sadly, Solomon opened the door even wider.

- What is the difference between the first and second commandments? Exodus 20:3 and 20:4-6
- Why did God forbid intermarriage with the Canaanites? Deuteronomy 7:1-5
- List some reasons as to why idolatry was so appealing?
- Read Leviticus 19:4. The word for idols in this verse means “worthless, weak, powerless.” It is actually a diminutive of the word *Elohim*. So it carries an insult and could be read as “little gods” or “godlings.” How does this help us better understand the context of this verse?
- Consider Deuteronomy 29:17. The word translated in the ESV as “detestable things” can be translated as “abominations.” It refers to anything out of keeping with the character and nature of the one true God. In Nahum 3:6 it is sometimes translated as “filth.” What is Moses trying to do in these verses?
- Read 1 Kings 15:12. The word translated “idol” in this verse may have originally referred to dung pellets. There is almost nothing more vile and unclean than animal waste. What is the author saying about idolatry?
- Consider 1 Kings 15:12. This word for idol means “vanity” and can be translated as “delusion, emptiness, futility, nothing, useless, and worthless.” What does this say about idolatry?

IDOLATRY (PART 2)

In this class we want to consider some of the main “gods” in Israel’s idolatrous worship and take a quick walk-through of their idolatrous history. You may need to consult a Bible dictionary or the internet to answer some of these questions.

- Who was Baal?

- What was Asherah or Ashtoreth?

- Who was Molech and with what was he associated?

- Who was Milcom?

- Who was Dagon and in what interesting story is he involved?

- Who was Chemosh?

- Open your Bibles and walk through the following passages:
 - Genesis 11:4
 - Genesis 31:19, 30-35
 - Exodus 32:4, 21-24
 - Numbers 25
 - Judges 8:22-27, 33
 - 1 Kings 11:1-8
 - 1 Kings 12:25-33
 - 1 Kings 16:30-33; 21:25-26
 - 1 Kings 16:34
 - 1 Kings 18
 - 2 Kings 1:2, 16
 - 2 Kings 3:1-32
 - 2 Kings 8:27
 - 2 Kings 11:17-18
 - 2 Kings 15:29
 - 2 Kings 16:1-4
 - 2 Kings 17:6-18, 28-33
 - **2 Kings 18:3-4**
 - 2 Kings 21:1-9

IDOLATRY (PART 3)

Lest we fool ourselves into thinking idolatry is an ancient problem, let us consider various forms of modern idolatry.

- Paul says that covetousness is idolatry (Colossians 3:5; Ephesians 5:5). How is this true? How does this help us understand what idolatry is?
- One of the most despicable practice in Canaanite paganism was child sacrifice. The Old Testament speaks of those who give their children to Molech or pass their children “through the fire to Molech.” This is not far off from those who sacrifice their children on the altar of self today through the practice of abortion. How are these two things similar?
- Sometimes idolatry was more subtle. They still worshipped the one true God but they brought in other, foreign aspects. This is called syncretism. How do we worship God while practicing idolatry today?
- One of the best theological definitions for idolatry is anything which takes God’s place:
 - How have careers become idolatrous?
 - How has education become idolatrous?
 - How have sports become idolatrous?
 - How have relationships become idolatrous?
 - How have politics become idolatrous?
 - What else could we list under the category of modern idolatry?

WORSHIPING WITH THE PROPHETS

The prophets were God's spokesmen. In some ways they were like preachers. In other ways they were like lawyers prosecuting the Israelites for their failure to keep the Law. One thing we notice is that they were more concerned with internal reverence than external religion. This is not to say they were accepting of false worship and cheap sacrifice, but that external religion was worthless if you were simply waiting to return to your unrighteous abuse of the innocent. Spend some time with each of these passages.

- Isaiah 1:11-20
- Amos 5:21-24
- Micah 6:6-8
- Malachi 1
- There has been little change in the last 2,500 years. We still try to use religious ritual to cover personal sin. In what way is this done today?
- What is easier: righteous behavior or a Sunday checklist?
- On what does Jesus say we should focus?

PAUL'S PRESCRIPTION FOR WORSHIP

Text: 1 Corinthians 14

Wouldn't it be nice if the Bible contained some clear, detailed instructions about what we should do and how we should behave when we come together for worship?

- What is the main topic of 1 Corinthians 12-14?
- What is the purpose of speaking in tongues and prophesying?
- What is Paul's requirement for speaking in tongues?
- What should be our mutual goal according to v. 26?
- What is the underlying principle of v. 40?
- What are the limitations on speaking in tongues and prophesying? How can we apply this today?
- In contrast to what we often see today among charismatic groups, what does Paul say in vv. 30, 32-33?
- How are women to conduct themselves in worship?

WORSHIP, ENTERTAINMENT, AND TRADITION

I do not have to say much about what has happened in the religious world concerning worship as entertainment, but I will! The bands, the light effects, and the fog machines have turned Sundays into concerts. Pizza parties, comedy shows, sports teams, and carnivals have all been used to lure people (especially, the youth) into “church.” The latest trend involves watching popular movies (Marvel movies are the big draw) and discussing the moral values seen in the film. Is this what God wants in terms of worship?

- How have we changed the object of worship?
- How is this a form of idolatry?
- Consider John 6. When the people started coming to Jesus just for the food, what did Jesus do?
- How is this entertainment worship comparable to Romans 1:21-25?
- But what about traditions? Matthew 15:1-9
- But we have lots of traditions! We have a closing prayer. We offer an invitation at the end of the sermon. We meet at 9:00. We only meet once on Sunday. How are these things different from what Jesus is talking about?
- How could these traditions turn into something dangerous or vain?

PROMPTS FOR WORSHIP: CREATION

When we think about reasons to worship, this is often one of the main reasons we read about in scripture. God's role as creator gives Him the authority over what is created. But as we recognize the beauty of what He has done we should be driven to praise Him!

- With the creation account of Genesis 1 in mind, what can we learn about God's character?
- Consider Isaiah 29:16; 64:8; Jeremiah 18:1-10. What gives God the right to make laws, judge people in relation to those laws, and punish those who break those laws?
- What does Psalm 19 teach us about God as creator?
- According to Romans 1:19-20, why can not honestly claim that there is no God?
- When considering the poetic account of creation in Psalm 104, what is the appropriate response?
- Why is Job forced to come face to face with God as creator (Job 38-41)? What lesson should we learn from this?
- What other passages mention or praise God for His work in creation?

PROMPTS FOR WORSHIP: SALVATION

I would imagine that the gift of salvation and eternal life promotes more worship than anything else. When we consider the depths of our sins and the hopelessness of our condition, how could we help but praise God (Father and Son) for the salvation He offers?

- Consider Philippians 2:1-11. What is the result of Jesus' death on the cross?
- Consider 1 Corinthians 1:18—2:5. "Boasting in the Lord" might be another way of talking about what?
- Read Psalm 22. What is happening at the end of the Psalm?
- Why do the beings around the throne in Revelation 5 worship the Lamb?
- In Ephesians 1-2, Paul describes what God, through Christ, has done for us. To what does this lead in vv. 6, 12, and 14?
- Romans 5 describes the depths from which God saved us. What does it mean to "rejoice in God"?
- We could really read the entirety of 1 Corinthians 15, but at least read vv. 51-58. Can you not hear the worship in Paul's words? What is it that makes this resurrection and worship possible?

PROMPTS FOR WORSHIP: GOD'S MIGHTY ACTS

I want you to write this lesson. Come up with a list of 7-8 things God (Father or Son) has done for which He is to be worshipped. One of the major ones in the Old Testament is the Exodus. Please include book, chapter, and verse(s).

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

WORSHIP AS PERSONALLY BENEFICIAL

We know, believe, and teach that worship should be about and directed towards God. He alone is worthy of our worship and devotion. In Isaiah's polemic against idolatry (Isaiah 40-48), God says that He will not share His glory with anything else. However, that does not mean that there are no personal benefits to worshipping God. There are individual and collective benefits of worshipping God—just another way He blessed His people.

- Psychological studies show that those who attend worship services regularly experience less depression and better handle stress. Why might that be?
- What role might prayer have in this discussion?
- Consider Psalm 8. What happens when we consider God in His glory and grandeur?
- Read 1 Corinthians 14:26 and Hebrews 10:24-25. When we come together for worship, what is one of our major objectives?
- Consider Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. When we worship in song who are we praising?
- What is a purposeful byproduct of our worship in song?
- Thought question: How are you personally benefitted from worship and Bible study?

PRIVATE WORSHIP

I'm afraid that we often view worship as a group activity only. And that could not be farther from the truth. Remember when Abraham entered the promised land? Every new place he camped he first built an altar. As children of God, we should be known as people who worship. Jesus spoke of this with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. The Jews believed one must worship in Jerusalem. The Samaritans believed the correct location was Samaria at Mt. Gerizim. But Jesus said that God wants us to worship Him in spirit and truth—worship that is not confined to four walls or a geographical location.

- Consider a situation in which you receive great news or horrible news. We do not wait till Sunday to worship God. Why wait? We can worship God through prayer, praise, and song in that very moment. What Old Testament character exemplifies praise in hard times?
- While we may enjoy our collective worship on Sundays, it is very pointed towards a particular theme and sermon. Private worship allows us to focus on other aspects of God and our relationship with Him. What is an example of this?
- What do you do in your personal worship?
- How could you incorporate the song book into your regular worship?
- What could you do as a family to worship?
- Let's brainstorm some ideas to bolster our personal worship. What we do. When we do it. How we could do it better.

WHAT MAKES WORSHIP “BAD”?

I want to be careful with this lesson. I don't want this to turn into a hodgepodge of things we don't like (i.e. topics, songs, and such). I am talking about things that take away from worship (i.e. focus, time, intensity).

- What did the prophets regularly lament when it came to worshipping God and their behavior?
- What did Jesus rebuke as He discussed prayer, giving, and fasting in Matthew 6?
- What was Jesus rebuking in Matthew 15:7-9?
- How might our worship become vain?
- What are some distractions that might take away from our worship to God?
- Does bad singing make for bad worship?
- How might bad singing, stuttering prayers, poor preaching, and a low attendance still make for “good” worship?
- What do we mean when we ask or answer the question “How was worship today?”

WHAT MAKES WORSHIP “GOOD”?

This lesson is a bit of a review for the whole year.

- How and where does God want us to worship Him?
- Are the Psalms prayers or songs?
- How can we use the Psalms to learn to praise God in difficult times?
- What do we learn about prayer from Nehemiah?
- What role does authority play in our worship?
- What are some things we can do to make our worship better?
- How does private worship prepare us for more focused collective worship?
- What would make God say, “That was good worship?”