

Worship the Lord

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness -Psalm 29:2

Opening worship

Begin your study of God's word by reading together **Psalm 29**. The psalm declares the wonder and majesty of God, revealed in his glory and his grace, proclaimed in what he has done.

Opening prayer

The leader will offer a prayer to the Lord, asking for his presence, guidance and blessing.

Introduction

There is a great deal of discussion in Lutheran circles today about worship. What is worship? What style is appropriate for worship? Whom are we trying to reach with our worship?

Many advocate the use of contemporary forms and modern instruments and feel that if the Lutheran church is remain to relevant for new generations it must adapt its style to changing times. Others maintain that a liturgical service is the only acceptable form of worship and anything that feels contemporary is worldly and less than divine. Is either of these perspectives valid?

These are the challenging issues we'll be exploring in our Bible study. As we understand correctly the focus, purpose and power of worship, many of the questions and controversies are easily resolved.

Whom do we worship?

Read the following Bible passages and respond to the questions:

Psalm 29:2 **Psalm 96:9** **Matthew 4:10**

Who is the focus of our worship? (The word for this is _____.)

Our American culture is strongly influenced by a consumer mindset. When we shop or make lifestyle choices we ask, "What is in this for me? How will I benefit from this?"

How might this mindset impact our attitude toward worship?

When we approach worship with a consumer mindset, what is the focus of our worship? Whom are we really worshipping? (The word for this is _____.)

How is God worshiped?

If God is to be the focus and object of our worship, then it follows naturally that God is the one who should determine *how* he is to be worshiped and what worship is pleasing to him.

Read the following Bible passages and consider how God wants us to worship him:

John 4:23,24 **Psalm 100:2** **Hebrews 12:28** **Isaiah 66:2**

What consequence follows when our worship strays from the guidelines laid down by God in his word?

An important element of worship is praise. **Read Psalm 47** as an example of a psalm of praise. Select and identify other psalms and hymns of praise in the Bible. There is a very key element that consistently forms an integral part of praise that is acceptable and pleasing to the Lord. Can you identify it? Complete the following sentence:

God is praised when _____ .

This key element of praise to the Lord is consistent in the songs of praise found throughout Scripture. For further reference see: Exodus 15; Isaiah 12; Luke 1:46-55; Luke 1:68-79; Luke 2:29-32; Revelation 5:9-14; Revelation 7:9-17; etc.

For discussion:

Many songs used in worship are called “praise songs.” It has been said, “Preaching belongs in the sermon; praising belongs in the songs and music.” Evaluate this statement in the light of the scriptural examples above.

Consider the texts below. Identify those which might more rightly be called “praise songs” according to the biblical pattern?

Clap Your Hands

Clap your hands, all you people.
Shout unto God with a voice of triumph!
Clap your hands, all you people.
Shout unto God with a voice of praise!
Hosanna! Hosanna!
Shout unto God with a voice of triumph!
Praise him! Raise him!
Shout unto God with a voice of praise!

Text and tune: Jimmy Owens. © 1972 Bud John Songs.

Lamb of God

Your only Son no sin to hide,
But you have sent him from your side
To walk upon this guilty sod
And to become the Lamb of God.
Refrain: O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,
I love the holy Lamb of God.
Oh, wash me in his precious blood,
My Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.
Your gift of love they crucified;
They laughed and scorned him as he died;
The humble King they named a fraud
And sacrificed the Lamb of God.

Refrain

I was so lost I should have died,
But you have brought me to your side
To be led by your staff and rod
And to be called a lamb of God.

Refrain

Text, tune, setting by Twila Paris © 1985 Straightaway Music and Mountain Spring Music

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice!

The Son obeyed his Father’s will,
Was born of virgin mother,
And, God’s good pleasure to fulfill,
He came to be my brother.
No garb of pomp or pow’r he wore;
A servant’s form like mine he bore
To lead the devil captive.

*Text: Martin Luther, 1483-1546. Tune: Etlich Cristlich Lider, Wittenberg, 1524.
Christian Worship hymn 377, stanza 6.*

Majesty

Majesty, worship his majesty.
Unto Jesus be all glory, honor, and praise.
Majesty, kingdom authority—
Flow from his throne unto his own; his anthem raise.
So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus the King.
Majesty, worship his majesty,
Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all kings.

Text and tune: Jack Hayford. © 1981 Rocksmith Music c/o Trust Music Management.

Oh, that I Had a Thousand Voices

Oh, that I had a thousand voices
To praise my God with thousand tongues!
My heart, which in the Lord rejoices,
Would then proclaim in grateful songs
To all, wherever I might be,
What great things God has done for me.
O forest leaves, so green and tender,
That dance for joy in summer air,
O meadow grasses, bright and slender,
O flow’rs, so wondrous sweet and fair,
You live to show his praise alone;
With me now make his glory known.
Lord, I will tell, while I am living,
Your love and grace with ev’ry breath
And greet each morning with thanksgiving
Until my heart is still in death,
and, when at last my lips grow cold,
Your praise shall in my sighs be told.

*Text: Johann Mentzer, 1658-1734. Tune: Johann B. König, 1691-1758.
Christian Worship hymn 242.*

Lord to You I Make Confession

For your Son has suffered for me,
Giv’n himself to rescue me,
Died to save me and restore me,
Reconciled and set me free.
Jesus’ cross alone can vanquish
These dark fears and soothe this anguish.

*Text: Johann Franck, 1618-77. Tune: Johann Crüger, 1598-1662.
Christian Worship hymn 302, stanza 3.*