

ELEVATE: Worship – The Most Noble Thing

Session #4: Optional Worship Experience

Session Objective: This session seeks to put into practice the last three sessions on worship by creating or joining a unique worship experience. This session requires both significant preparation and utilizes a different format than small groups.

Extended Prep:

- **Option #1** – Begin and end your session with a time of praise and worship as one group. During the worship time, try to integrate various aspects of the spiritual temperaments from Session #3 (see Worship Idea Sheet on the following page). Another alternative would be to develop worship stations based on the spiritual temperaments and depending on the size of your group and the time you have set aside, invite students to visit all the stations or a set number. Bring the group back together for a time of debriefing and close the night with worship.

Potential debrief questions could include:

- What parts of this experience was meaningful to you?
 - Did you develop a new sense of God's character or discover a new path to connect with Him?
 - What aspects of this experience were new or uncomfortable for you?
 - Are there any elements of this experience that we should integrate more into our group or church?
- **Option #2** – Create and/or participate with other youth ministries in a community worship event. This option may be particularly helpful if your resources for musical worship are limited. Be sure to add into your worship experience some of the unique elements of spiritual temperaments.
- **Option #3** – Visit a Christian worship setting that is significantly different than your local context. The objective is to seek to enter into worship in new ways and to experience different spiritual temperaments. This experience would provide an excellent opportunity for leading your students through a time of reflection and debrief. **Leader Note:** Depending on the size of your group, it may be courteous to contact the leadership of the church you are visiting. Also, it may be helpful to share in advance with your own church leadership and parents why you are visiting another place of worship.

The following are some questions that will help you facilitate debriefing:

- What elements of this worship experience stood out to you?
- Did worship focus around certain spiritual temperaments – which ones?
- Were you able to worship God in this context? Why or why not?
- Was there anything about the experience that you didn't understand or don't agree with?

Leader Note: Contact Rob McAlpine at compass@baptist.ca or author Matt Wilkinson – missionbeyond@yahoo.com with any thoughts, questions or suggestions.

Comments and Feedback:

Leader Note: This is your place each week to record significant sharing or growth in the lives of your students for subsequent follow up. You can also use this space to provide feedback on the material. All suggestions are welcome.

Worship Ideas Based on Spiritual Temperaments

Your creativity and time are really the only limitations to developing this worship experience.

Note: If you are using the concept of worship stations, you would be best to provide written instructions.

Naturalist

- For a night session, set up a telescope. Have students spend a few minutes looking at God's creation in the universe.
- Create a sanctuary demonstrating the wonder of God's creation – this could be in a courtyard on your church property or you could decorate a room with a PowerPoint image or poster of a mountain/water/landscape being the focal point, add in a portable waterfall.
- Conduct a worship service in God's great cathedral – the outdoors.

Sensates

- Integrate the elements of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch.
- Beautiful music or oral reading for sound, incense for smell, objects for touch that relate to the theme – i.e. hold a nail during Easter focus, touch/pray through parts of your body - consecrating them to God, kneel in silence; for sight add artwork – paintings, sculpture, banners, symbols, involve making artwork, carefully decorate the platform, etc., for taste: sweet or bitter tastes bring out different feelings, etc.

Traditionalists

- Integrate some of the annual observances into your programming – Maundy Thursday, important dates in contemporary Christian history, etc.
- Read Scripture aloud, responsive readings or prayer book prayers
- Utilize symbols – crosses, colors, others.
- Sacrifice – i.e. Lent.

Ascetics

- Time alone to reflect.
- Have a "Watch in the Night" prayer night.
- Vows of silence
- Fasting
- Living simply – simplify worship for a night – go unplugged.

Activists

- Public worship, prayer walk, Jesus March or outreach event
- Supporting an activist organization
- Sign a petition, provide information on issues

Caregivers

- Add in an Act of Kindness component – i.e. sandwich run to the poor, deliver meals to the sick or those in need in your church community (new parents, widows/widowers, etc.)
- Join the homeless or mentally/physically challenged in a worship service on their turf.

Enthusiasts

- Create a celebratory atmosphere – look at some of the feasts and celebrations in the Old Testament, if sharing communion, have a ‘party’ to celebrate the joy

Contemplative

- Secret acts of devotion
- Centering prayers – one word focus
- Stations of the cross

Intellectuals

- Include church history, doctrine, creeds