

Rooted In Godly Values

Lesson 4: “Worship Hymn? Worship HIM.”

(Character Trait: *God-Centeredness*)

Objectives:

Students will

- articulate a broad range of activities as worshipful
- brainstorm specific ways that worship can be self-centred or God-focussed

Materials Needed

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ A variety of objects or pictures of objects that can be used for worship
- ☐ Post-it notes or small pieces of paper
- ☐ Scrap paper
- ☐ Pens or pencils for each group of two/three students
- ☐ Various items as needed for different worship stations

Minds On

As students come in, have placed around the room or on a table a variety of objects or pictures of objects. These objects are all items that can be used to worship God. It is important that these objects extend past “traditional” ideas of worship, so suggestions include: an instrument or two of some kind (try using something a little different, like a violin), sheet music from your choir or worship team, a Bible, a cup of juice and/or bread (communion), a shovel or trowel (connected to work that would help someone), ribbons (used in dance), a biblical text book or commentary, a language dictionary (think speaking in tongues!), money (i.e. offering), etc. (Remember worship can include service, helping people, music, learning and teaching about God, giving, etc.) Try to get as large a variety of items as possible. When students enter ask them to come up with the one thing all the items have in common, and wait until they all agree on an answer (it will likely be fun seeing them try to convince each other how certain things fit, and will help with learning). Emphasize that EVERYTHING is connected, so even if they guess “worship,” ask them to explain how certain items fit. If they cannot guess, tell them the connection and then one by one go through the items and allow the youth to share how each of them can be a part of worshipping God. They may have some creative ideas!

When they have finished with these, ask students to brainstorm even more ways that they know people worship at other churches or they’ve seen on T.V. They may not understand or even agree with some of them. Be sure to help them include gifts of the spirit like speaking in tongues, prophesying, etc. Also have some specifics that may mean a lot to teens such as “singing contemporary songs” as well as “singing hymns.” Write each of the ideas down separately on post-it notes or pieces of paper that you can put up where everyone can see them.

Actions

Before turning to Scripture, ask the students to go to the wall with the post-its and remove two pieces of paper: one that they like to do when they worship and one that they do not like or want to do. Go around the room and ask each student to share why they have selected one of their

items – as they do this NO ONE IS TO COMMENT on their choice. After each person shares, ask the students to consider: why is it hard for people to sometimes agree about how we should worship? (You may feel comfortable hear allowing them to share some of their feelings about worship in their own church; however, this could be a hot topic, and you don't want to get bogged down in it).

Say something like: In the Corinthian church, something that many people thought was very important in worship were the gifts of the spirit, such as speaking in tongues (you may need to explain what this is to some students). Let's see what Paul writes to the church about this issue (1 Corinthians 14: 1-33).

Break the students into groups of two or three. Tell each group that as they read, they should look for:

- a problem (something going wrong in Corinth),
- a solution (something they can do to improve it), and
- a question (a question they have about what is going on)

This is an interesting passage, because at issue here is the focus of the believers' worship. They so wanted to enjoy speaking in tongues that they often did so without thinking of how it affected the whole church. In this way their worship had become self-centred, instead of God-centred. You may find as the students read however that they have many other questions about speaking in tongues or gifts of the spirit. It is fine to explore a discussion on this topic.

When they have finished, go through each category and invite students to share what their groups thought. Spend time talking about the problems they see, the solutions, and then discussing questions they have. When you get to the questions, try to hold back from providing answers; instead let the students try to help each other sort through things they may be wondering about. When they have finished, ask the students to consider, what might tongue speaking be compared to in our church (ie. what is something that people want to do so much in their own way that they forget to focus on God)? What might a solution be? Note: this is a great chance for youth to

discuss both their own feelings of possibly being “excluded” in worship experiences, but also to see the importance of not focussing on their own wants to the detriment of other people.

Ask them to look at the post-it or paper they chose before. Get everyone to hold up the one they chose that they enjoy in worship. Ask them: how can these things be God-centred in worship? How could they become self-centred? Then invite them to do the same with the things they did not like in worship: How might these things have a positive place in worship? How could ignoring them be self-centred? Remind the students each time to look around and see the different cards people chose – sometimes people worship differently, but the important thing is that the worship be focussed on God. A godly-value is to be “God-Centred” in worship.

Consolidate/Debrief

Before the session, set up several worship “stations.” Each station should reflect a very distinct and different way of worship (you can have as many as you want). Try to customize to your context as you are able.

For example, you could set up three stations:

1. One could have a CD player with a contemporary Christian CD (ask a youth bring one of their favourites ahead of time). At this station, play a particular (slow) song on repeat that students will sit and listen to as they pray to God.
2. At a second station, you may have something more traditional. You can go to your church’s hymnal or online to find a traditional liturgical responsive reading. At this station, students would go in pairs and read through the reading together.
3. At another station, you might have something that involves giving to others. At this station, have pictures of situations where there is need. Students would select a picture to hold as they pray to God about how to help in that situation.

You may have many of your own ideas. The point is that at each station students would see worship in a different way. At the end of the lesson, explain the stations to the students and tell them to go to one that is different than how they often like to worship. Tell them to spend time

at that station worshipping God in a new way. If time allows, they may go to one, or they could even cycle through all of them. Remind the students that this is a worshipful experience and to be considerate of others in terms of noise.