

Meaningful Worship

To the Leader:

Weeks four through ten will explore each of seven characteristics in kid-friendly language. These traits depict what should characterize every local Nazarene church.

Our Mission of Worship from *Nazarene Essentials*: “The mission of the Church in the world begins in worship. As we are gathered together before God in worship – singing, hearing the public reading of the Bible, giving our tithes and offerings, praying, hearing the preached Word, baptizing, and sharing the Lord’s Supper – we know most clearly what it means to be the people of God. Our belief that the work of God in the world is accomplished primarily through worshipping congregations leads us to understand that our mission includes the receiving of new members into the fellowship of the church and the organizing of new worshipping congregations. Worship is the highest expression of our love for God. It is God-centered adoration honoring the One who in grace and mercy redeems us. The primary context for worship is the local church where God’s people gather, not in self-centered experience or for self-glorification but rather in self-surrender and self-offering. Worship is the church in loving, obedient service to God.”

Objective: Children will explore: What is meaningful worship? How do we worship? Where do we worship? How can I worship?

Material Needed:

- Paper towel rolls
- Toilet paper rolls
- Paper plates
- Streamers, ribbons
- Crayons, markers, stickers
- Rubber bands
- Stapler
- Wax paper
- Dry pinto beans
- Paper or Cardstock

Early Arrival Activity (10-15 minutes):

Children will use the supplies listed above to create their own musical instruments.

Getting Started Game (5 minutes):

Play a few rounds of “Simon Says.” Afterward ask students how they think the game is like worshipping God.

Digging In (15 minutes):

Ask: Why do we worship God? (Because he is our Creator, Savior, because he loves us, etc...)

How do we worship God?

Scripture Verse: Psalm 95:1-7a says:

“Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods.

In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him.
 The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.
 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;
 for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.”
 —Psalm 95: 1-7a

Bible Story with Discussion:

God is honored when I participate.

Say: We worship God in many ways here at Church. We worship with songs and music. We worship in prayer, reading the Bible, listening to our teachers and pastors, and by giving our tithes and offerings, baptizing, and sharing the Lord’s Supper. Did you know that spending time talking to each other and loving the people in our church is worship too? We worship God by taking care of the needs of our community and doing the work in our church as well.

Psalm 95:1-7 uses music as an example of how we worship our God, but it also helps us to know that our worship is an attitude of our heart and we can express it to God in MANY ways outside of church as well.

When we do what the Bible says and give our time, treasure, and talents to LOVE God and LOVE others, we are worshiping our God. When we choose to listen to what God says, trust Him, and obey Him, we are worshiping our GOD.

Sometimes we think that worship is only about singing songs and doing the fun or silly motions in our children’s church. Then when we get older it doesn’t seem to be as “cool” as it was when we were younger, so we stand in the back and watch. Music and motions *are* great ways to express our worship to God, but it is perfectly acceptable not to do the motions if you don’t want to. But as Christ followers we are called to *participate* in worship and give Him our attention and praise. So, if you don’t want to do the motions, that is okay! As long as you stay engaged in the words of the songs and focus on giving God praise and letting Him speak to you, you are worshiping!! Maybe you can worship God by running the sound, lights, or projection! Maybe you can worship God by helping the little ones sit still or play a game! Maybe you can worship God by helping welcome visitors or collecting the offerings. There are many ways that we can worship!

Where do we worship?

We come to church to worship together as God’s people, but we also take what we learn in church and go out into our worlds to live lives of worship as well. We worship God at home, at school, on our bus, and in our neighborhoods. We worship God by being a good friend and telling our friends about Jesus. We can read our Bible at home or look at the verse of the day on a Bible app on our phones or electronics. We worship God when we sing songs and listen to music that honors God. We worship God when we are generous with our money to help people in need or when we give them our time to show them God’s love. We can write in a journal, color pictures, write stories, and make up games with our friends about what it means to follow Jesus. Any time we use the gifts that God has given us to show others who He is, we are worshiping. Any time we think about God’s love and focus on who Jesus is, we are worshiping. We can worship ANYWHERE and at ANY TIME.

Worship is obedience

Do you know the story of Joshua and the battle of Jericho? In the story in Joshua 6:1-16, God’s angel gives Joshua a plan for defeating a very strong city. The plan seemed silly at first and didn’t make any sense to the men who knew how to fight battles. However, because Joshua listened to God and obeyed, he

was choosing to give God worship. The battle plan did not include catapults or battering rams, flaming arrows or digging of secret tunnels. God's plan for defeating this city with GIANT walls was too simple. His people would walk around it once a day for seven days in silence. And then on the last day they would walk around the city seven times and then when Joshua gave the signal the priests and *worship leaders* would blow the trumpets really loud, and all of God's people would shout!

That sounds like a perfect battle plan, right? Well, maybe not. But Joshua trusted God, and he led his people to do exactly as God said. And of course, on the seventh day, on the seventh time around, when Joshua gave the signal, the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and the presence of God came just the way He promised, and the walls came tumbling down!!

Joshua led his people to worship God in obedience for six days! The people of Israel worshipped God with their obedience. They worshipped God by walking in silence and waiting for God! They worshiped and prepared their hearts by trusting Him to do what He promised to do! Boys and girls, when we are faithful to God, when we trust and obey, when we participate in HIS plan for our life, our church, and our community, GOD SHOWS UP just like He promises!

Talk it out:

1. What makes worship *meaningful*?

(The attitude of our heart and a desire to participate with Him in what He is doing in us, our church, and community makes our worship meaningful. When we trust and obey God, we are accepting Him as our loving Father, We are happy to be His son/daughter.)

2. Where do we worship?

(Anywhere, give examples)

3. How can I worship?

Think about the things that you really enjoy doing, whether at church, at home, at school, or with your friends. How can you use those things you love to show worship to God? How can you trust God and obey Him in those areas? How can you use them to tell other people about Jesus' love?

Review Activity (10-15 minutes): Begin or finish creating trumpets, shakers, and tambourines. Encourage kids to decorate them to represent their favorite things and to think about to worship God with the instruments. Have children line up and practice walking around the room in silence, just like the Israelites did, and then give them the opportunity to blow their trumpets, shake their noise makers, and SHOUT to GOD their praise!

When you do it the second time – because you know they will want to – ask the kids to think about their favorite things about God while walking in silence. Then, instruct them that when they shout, they should yell out their favorite thing about GOD! (He LOVES ME! HE HEALS PEOPLE! HE MADE EVERYTHING! YOU ARE AWESOME! YOU FORGIVE ME! You are SOOOOOO COOOOOL!)

Personal Challenge (5-10 minutes):

1. Ask: Are there aspects of worship at church that you can get involved in? What would you like to do? Lead songs, dance, help younger children, pass out materials, clean up, collect offerings, run sound/lights/video, or welcome guests?

2. Ask: Which one of these spiritual practices can you do at home to help you worship God more? (Read my Bible. Listen to Christian/worship music. Write in a journal. Pray. Tell others about God through art, writing, music, or other artistic media.)

Print the following on paper or card stock and cut into bookmarks to present to each student:

“God has created me to be in a relationship with Him. One way I honor that relationship is through worship. I give God worship when I pray, sing, give, spend time with his people, and tell others about Him. Worship is not just the songs that I sing, but the life that I live. I worship God with my TIME, TALENT, and TREASURE, as I live in obedience to His Word.”

Close with prayer:

Lead the group in a closing prayer, praising God for His greatness and all He has done in the lives of your kids, your church, and the Church of the Nazarene. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you look for ways to worship Him with your whole life.

