

Kingdom Rise

What is Our Story?

Leader Check-in

Begin your group time with a brainstorm. What words or phrases come to mind when you think about *worship*? Use the words from your brainstorm to create a group definition of worship, and then save it for later.

Discover

When did your story first intersect with God's bigger story? How did this encounter change your life?

Divide into groups of 2-3 in order to read the following passages and discuss the corresponding questions:

Read Psalm 96. According to the psalmist, why is God worthy of worship? What perspective does this worship song give us about the world?

Read Colossians 1:15-23. What story does this passage tell? What is our place in that story?

Choose a spokesperson to share your answers with the entire Life Group.

Fully Own

Is your perspective on life based more on your previous experiences or your personal beliefs? How might your perspective be affecting your worship, for better or worse?

Read Romans 12:1-2. Has God ever given you a new perspective in a time of worship? How does the "true and proper" worship transform our minds?

Consider the following quote:

When we come to worship God, we generally feel as though the preacher and other ministers are the performers and God is the subject of the performance and we as the congregation are merely the audience... Authentic Christian worship is just the opposite. We, the congregation, are the performers. The preachers and other ministers are the directors of the performance and God is the audience.

- Soren Kierkegaard

Reflect on this past weekend. When you attended service at Central, was God the subject of your worship or the audience of your worship?

Challenge

Pray each day this week that God would give you a fresh perspective on worship. Pay attention to how this affects your worship experience during worship services this weekend.

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What is Worship?

Leader Check-in

What new perspective did God give you this week as you prayed?

Discover

Read Psalm 95. What does worship look like, according to this passage?

Consider the following quote. Do you agree or disagree? Support your answer.

Everyone is a worshipper. Whether we realize it or not, we all worship something or someone.

Read Exodus 20:2-6. What do you know about idol worship in the Bible? How well did the people of Israel do at following this command?

Read Colossians 3:1-11. Compare the Old Testament understanding of idolatry to the New Testament definition. What similarities and differences can you discern?

Why do you think God takes the sin of idolatry so seriously?

Fully Own

According to your understanding of **Colossians 3**, have you ever been guilty of idolatry? Why do you think it is so easy to fall into these patterns of false worship?

Be honest. What “loves” in your life have the potential to become the object of your worship? How can you tell?

Read Colossians 3:12-17. According to this passage, what is the antidote to idolatry? What practices can we integrate into our lives to become true worshippers?

Why do you think Central has chosen “Gather to Grow” as a Mark of Ownership? How can regularly attending weekend services help ensure that you are giving your worship to God, and not to other people or things?

Recall Romans 12:1-2. How is your understanding of “true and proper worship” developing?

Challenge

Reflect on the elements of worship you studied this week (shout, bow, kneel, teach, admonish, sing, etc.) and then choose one worship practice to try out this weekend during the worship service. Choose something that pushes you out of your comfort zone, and come back to group next week ready to share about your experience.

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We are Worship

Leader Check-in

What worship practice did you try for the first time this week?

Discover

Consider the following quote:

Worship has been misunderstood as something that arises from a feeling which 'comes upon you,' but it is vital that we understand that it is rooted in a conscious act of the will, to serve and obey the Lord Jesus Christ. —Graham Kendrick

What connections are you making between these words and Paul's words in Romans 12:1-2?

Read James 1:26-27 and Micah 6:6-8. According to this passage, what kind of life is pleasing to God?

What do you think it means to "worship God with your life?"

Fully Own

Think for a moment about how you spend your time, how you spend your money, and the company you keep. Do your choices in these areas reflect God's heart? Why or why not?

How have busyness and convenience kept you from worshiping God with your life?

Read Galatians 2:20. How should this truth re-organize your life? Your priorities? Your community?

Reflect on the lyrics from the worship song, *Hosanna*:

*Heal my heart and make it clean
Open up my eyes to the things unseen
Show me how to love like You have loved me
Break my heart for what breaks Yours
Everything I am for Your Kingdom's cause
As I walk from earth into eternity*

Has God opened your eyes to a person or an issue? How is God challenging you to live differently in order to bring His Kingdom into that relationship or situation?

Challenge

During worship services this weekend, pay special attention to the lyrics in each song. How is God speaking to you through those words? What is He asking you to do in response?

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Life Before Death: Kingdom Living

Leader Check-in

How did God speak to you through the worship service this weekend? How did you respond?

Discover

Read Isaiah 9:2-7. What kind of king is Jesus? What kind of kingdom does He lead?

Read the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) in the NIV and MSG versions and underline the words or phrases that stand out to you. Why might Jesus have taught His disciples to pray this way?

New International Version	The Message
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.	Our Father in heaven, Reveal who you are. Set the world right; Do what's best— as above, so below. Keep us alive with three square meals. Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others. Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil. You're in charge! You can do anything you want! You're ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.

What do you notice about the focus (or priorities) of the Lord's Prayer?

Reread Isaiah 9:2-7. Can you imagine a world where this prophecy has been completely fulfilled? How would your community look in a world where the reign of Jesus has fully come?

Have you ever considered that Jesus has called you to partner with Him in making this kind of world possible?

Fully Own

If God answered every single prayer you have prayed this month, would the whole world be different, or just *your* world? Do you have a kingdom perspective?

Read Romans 12:1-2 one final time. How does worship help us to live in God's kingdom?

Challenge

Before you leave, create a new group definition of the word "worship" with your group. How has your understanding changed since the beginning of the study?