

Small Group Guide



Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by inviting God's presence and asking Him to help you worship in spirit and truth.

Ice Breaker

Share one word that describes your typical experience of corporate worship. Why did you choose that word?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Worship mirrors heaven** - When we gather, our voices join together like the creatures, elders, and angels in Revelation 4, declaring God's worth.
 2. **Worship is about Him, not us** - True worship focuses on God's pleasure, not our preferences or comfort.
 3. **Worship means surrender** - The Hebrew words for worship mean "to bow down" and "to serve," requiring us to offer our whole lives.
 4. **Worship without surrender is offensive to God** - Amos 5 reminds us that God rejects worship that isn't accompanied by transformed lives and justice.
 5. **We are each responsible for our part** - As Ephesians 4:16 says, the body grows "as each part does its work."
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Discussion Questions

Understanding Worship

1. **Read Revelation 4:6-11 together.** What stands out to you about the worship happening in heaven? What surprises you?
2. The sermon mentioned that the 24 elders "lay their crowns before the throne." What "crowns" (achievements, status, recognition) might you need to lay down when you come to worship?
3. How would you explain the difference between worship that is "about us" versus worship that is "about Him"?

Personal Reflection

4. The pastor mentioned that many Christians come to worship "dragging in after a long, hard week of ignoring God" expecting to be filled up. How does this resonate with your own experience? How might this perspective need to change?
5. **Read Romans 12:1.** What does it mean practically to offer your body as a "living sacrifice"? What areas of your life (behavior, thoughts, politics, values, beliefs) are hardest to surrender in worship?
6. The sermon stated: "To come to worship without offering our behavior, our thoughts, our politics, our values, our beliefs, is not to worship Him. It is to provoke Him." How does this challenge you?

Corporate Worship

7. How does understanding that "heaven and earth are joined together" when we worship corporately change the way you think about Sunday gatherings?
8. The pastor asked: "When you walk out of here today, will God say he was pleased with your worship?" How would you honestly answer that question about your recent worship experiences?
9. **Read Amos 5:21-24.** Why do you think God responds so strongly to worship that isn't connected to justice and righteousness? What might this mean for us today?

Moving Forward

10. What would it look like for you to come to worship next Sunday with a posture of surrender rather than evaluation or critique?
11. The sermon mentioned that neglecting these practices doesn't just affect us—it affects the whole body. How does your participation (or lack thereof) in corporate worship impact others?

Practical Applications

Choose one or two of these to commit to this week:

Before Sunday

- ☐ **Prepare your heart:** Spend 10 minutes Saturday evening or Sunday morning praying, asking God to help you worship Him with surrender
- ☐ **Identify your crowns:** Write down the achievements, status, or recognition you need to lay before God
- ☐ **Confess areas of resistance:** Ask God to reveal where you've been holding back in worship

During Worship

- ☐ **Sing intentionally:** Even if you don't like to sing, offer your voice as an act of obedience and love
- ☐ **Listen actively:** Take notes during the message with the question, "What is God saying to me?" rather than "Do I agree with this?"
- ☐ **Participate fully:** Engage in every element—greeting, singing, giving, listening—as an act of worship to God
- ☐ **Lay down your critique:** Resist the urge to evaluate and instead focus on honoring God

After Worship

- ☐ **Respond in obedience:** Identify one specific way God spoke to you and commit to acting on it this week
- ☐ **Extend worship:** Choose one area of your life (work, relationships, entertainment) to consciously surrender to God's lordship
- ☐ **Practice justice:** Based on Amos 5, identify one concrete way you can pursue justice or righteousness this week

Membership Commitment

- ☐ **Pray about membership:** If you're not a member, prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to commit to this church family

- [] **Renew your commitment:** If you are a member, evaluate whether you're fulfilling your commitment to worship with this body
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Closing Reflection

Silent Reflection (2-3 minutes): Sit quietly and ask yourself: "Is there a quality of surrender in my worship? Is there a bit of trembling when I enter God's presence?"

Group Prayer:

- Pray for hearts that are surrendered to God in worship
 - Pray for your corporate worship services—that they would mirror the worship of heaven
 - Pray for each person to faithfully do their part in the body
 - Pray for wisdom regarding membership commitments
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Memory Verse

"From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." - Ephesians 4:16

Looking Ahead

Next week we'll explore the second practice for thriving at real life. Come prepared to discuss how your worship went this week and what God taught you through surrendering to Him.