

Worship the Fuel of Discipleship

Worship and Community – Romans 12:1-8

Week of March 17, 2019 – Bay Park LifeGroups (Leader's Guide)

Objective: To grow our understanding of why worship is not an individual activity (head) while creating a hunger for greater church community engagement (heart & hands).

So far in this series we've seen that:

1. Worship begins and ends with Jesus because all of history, humanity is moving towards Jesus as he is moving towards us.
2. We were made to worship, but ever since the fall the human heart has become an idol producing factory. The question is not *if* we worship but *what* we worship.
3. Worship is not defined by a place or event but by the pursuit of a person, Jesus, and in response to God's unfathomable grace.
4. Worship is measured by transformation, not solely sensation. It's not about what makes us feel good, it's all about what makes us more like Jesus.
5. Worship cannot be divorced from the corporate because it is only in community that we reflect the glory of God, and grow to be more like Jesus.

1. Pick one of the following:

- a. My biggest aha moment so far in this series has been?
- b. The one thing about worship I still don't get is?
- c. The one teaching I need more time to process is?
- d. My biggest take away from this past Sunday was?

(Leaders: The introverts in your group might need a bit more time to process before sharing so be sure to show some grace. Also be sure to note your groups responses and email them to Randy anonymously. Your groups feedback is important to us. It helps us know where God is working and how we can improve.)

Meeting together is an event to look forward to as well as preparation for the rest of the week. In a continual cycle of the church gathering, then scattering, we find the relentless grace of God empowering us to live all of life for the glory of God.

2. Read Romans 12:1-13 together. It's interesting to note that Paul goes from worship that transforms (vv 1-2) to examples of church community engagement (vv 3-13). Everything from being humble to loving, serving to sharing, honouring to being hospitable are not only qualities that Jesus exuded, but likewise only learned in community. Note also that Paul didn't consider church engagement optional, *For by the grace given me I say to everyone of you* (v 3).
- a. Why is corporate engagement not an option for any would be follower of Jesus?
 - b. The qualities and activities Paul listed were not meant to be exhaustive. But it still begs the question, how are the ones listed in vv 3-13 critical to our growth and to the church?

(Leader Notes: True worship leads to transformation and to community because the transformation God wants to bring about in us cannot happen without community. We'll never learn to be humble like Jesus, serve like Jesus, give like Jesus and love like Jesus in isolation. For transformation we need to be fully engaged with the body of Christ, the church.)

God intends us to be in community with one another because it's in community, in being together as fellow believers in Jesus, caring for one another, serving one another, loving one another, teaching one another that we reflect the God who made us, and in so doing God is glorified.

Kevin Stieva - Sunday Sermon

3. For most Christians, the first thought that comes to mind when they hear “worship” is music. Music is a great God given expression of worship. Yet when Paul speaks of worship in Romans 12, he doesn't even mention singing. Take some time and imagine what would happen if we saw worship as loving, serving, sharing, honouring and being hospitable? How might that transform our Sunday morning gathering? How might it impact your Monday to Saturday? How might it impact our witness?

(Leaders: Be careful to keep people from driving into the ditch of, if we all did these things we would have a perfect church. The problem with a perfect church is that it doesn't exist, and even if it did we wouldn't grow. Help people focus on what it means to be a healthy church, not a perfect church. Healthy churches are where growth is taking place. Growth only happens in the furnace of challenges, tensions, problems and brokenness. Jesus adopted us into his church so that we would have a place to belong and grow. This is a critical lesson. The sooner we stop wishing for the perfect church, and start contributing to a healthy church, the sooner we will grow.)

4. God never asks us to live in ways contrary to His nature. He himself lives and dwells in perfect community. Thinking back on John 4 and Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman regarding worship, the exchange is anchored in the truth of the trinity.

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth . . . God is spirit . . . The woman said, “I know that the Messiah is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you - I am he.” John 4:23-26

The trinity is a hard concept for us to grasp, yet it is the reason why God calls us to worship and to community. Watch this video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=489&v=eAvYmE2YYIU How does this video help you understand God and the importance of church community?

5. Last Sunday, we saw that we can give greater glory to God when we're together than any of us could on our own.

- a. What is one thing that you believe God is calling you to do in response to what we have been learning together?
- b. (If you are ready for it...) How can you as a life group help each other grow these characteristics? Begin thinking through how to pray Romans 12 for each other.

Spend some time in prayer beginning with praise and awe for the beautiful community in the trinity, and the way Jesus perfectly exemplifies all of the characteristics in Romans 12. Spend some time praying for each other as we grow to look more like Jesus.