

Series - Better Together!

Date/s - 23 July 2017

Topic - Worship – Our Divine Privilege

Speaker/s - Pastor Ernie Song

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < [go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS](#) >

Worship [15 min]

Suggested songs: You Are Good (Bethel), What A Beautiful Name, Here I Bow, Be Enthroned, You Alone

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand that God is the reason for worship
2. Worship God in reverence and love.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Ernie Song started by stating the Christian worship is very different from any other. A proper understanding of worship is essential for our walk with God. The key principles are:

1. Worship matters to God because He is the One ultimately worthy and He is the One ultimately receiving it. We are the temple of the Living God. Worship is about God - to bless and exalt Him.
2. It matters to us because worshipping God is the reason for which we were created.
3. We must not offer unto God what we think He wants of us. We must remind ourselves what matters to God, and not rely on our own strength to earn God's favour.
4. We must seek God to know what He requires of us as worship unto Him.
5. Therefore, God is the One who defines worship, not us; which comes from His Word and Rhema.

God's definition of worship comes from two sources:

1. God's Word. This is general and applicable to everyone.
2. God's Rhema - His spoken Word through the Holy Spirit. This is specific and applicable to the individual. Pastor Ernie asked us to reflect on God's Rhema so as to highlight issues pertaining to our personal conduct, especially with regards to relationships with our spouses, children and co-workers, rather than focusing on giving a word to others about their conduct.

From Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we learn what worship is according to the Scripture. We should worship God with all our heart (mind), all our soul and all our strength. If we have only heart (mind) and strength, we will be legalistic, leading to the rigid statement "It must be done this way." If only strength and soul, we will get confused, asking the question "Why am I doing it?" If only heart (mind) and soul, we will be "overly emotional", leading to not knowing why we are crying! We need actions leading to a transformed life to back up our worship. We must come before the Lord first and have intimacy with God. This then drives our service and gives the reason for our service.

What drives our worship? Worship involves emotions and requires focusing on and being released emotionally to feel God's presence. Pastor Ernie asked what the difference is between a Coldplay concert and worship. Both are similar in many aspects on the surface. Our emotions can be triggered by the performer, music, atmosphere and stage leadership. Tommy Tenney cautioned that "The Lord doesn't want us to be infatuated with His hands and the blessings they bring to spirit, soul and body. He wants us to fall head over heels in love with Him! The addicted however, are just consumed with the next anointing *fix*." Authentic Christian worship is built on the foundation of the knowledge and experience of God. Worship should lead to the revelation of God, which in turn should lead the Christian to further and a deeper worship. The Bible reveals God to us as we read His Word, and makes the revelation personally relevant to us through His "Rhema Whispers" to our hearts.

Pastor Ernie elaborated on our theological foundations for worship. They are:

1. God is so great. We are so insignificant. (1 Chronicles 29:11, Psalm 103:14-16)
2. God is so holy. We are so sinful. (Isaiah 6:2-5)
3. In spite of our sinfulness, God has chosen to love us as a perfect Father. (Psalm 8:3-4, 1 John 4:9-10)
4. In spite of unworthiness, God has chosen to use us. (John 15:16)

How should we approach God in worship?

1. With all our mind, all our soul and all our strength.
2. With a bow and a kiss. God is our King and we honour Him as a divine privilege; we love God as His child, we give of our best unto the Lord. Just as a father is pleased by the love expressed by his children, God is blessed by our worship!

Discussion Questions

1. **Pastor Ernie outlined key principles of Christian worship. Why do we worship God? What does worshipping God mean?** [10 min]

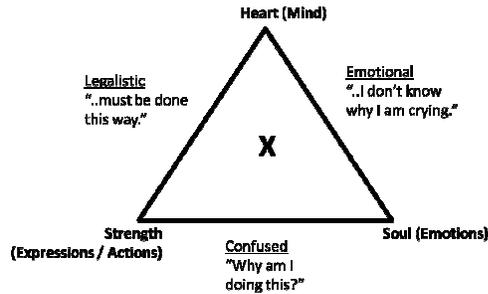
Leader's Notes: A recap question. Leaders can invite members to define what worship means to them. What do they observe from the way pre-believers worship God and from what we understand as Christian worship? Worship generally refers to the reverence and adoration of a deity or a person. From the sermon, what is one thing you learnt about the way our worship matters to God. Leaders can refer to the 5 key principles outlined in the synopsis and reiterate that our God is worthy of our worship – see Psalm 29 and 1 Chronicles 16:25-27; God values obedience than sacrifice – see 1 Samuel 15:22; God values worship from the heart and not rituals – see Isaiah 29:13.

2. **Pastor Ernie elaborated on the theological foundations for worship. While all are important, share with the cell on which of these truths you most relate to when you worship together in the church or cell and why.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: A relate question. Leaders can invite members to share on one specific truth that resonates with them. Members may talk from their personal experience on which of the four foundational points (see reproduced below) that they most relate to when they come into God's presence.

1. God is so great. We are so insignificant. [Standing in awe of God!]
2. God is so holy. We are so sinful. [God saves us from eternal damnation!]
3. In spite of our sinfulness, God has chosen to love us as a perfect Father. [We have a loving and perfect Father!]

4. In spite of unworthiness, God has chosen to use us. [We can partner with God on His plan!]
3. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Pastor Ernie shared on the traps of legalism, confusion and being overly emotional in our worship of God. Share what triggers you to worship God? How can we avoid those traps? [10 min]



Leader's Notes: A reflect question. Firstly, worship encompasses all the 3 faculties in the diagram. It involves both the doing (expressions/actions) as well as the being (mind & emotions). God desires our worship for him to come from the knowing that He loves us very much (1 John 4:18 – there is no fear in His perfect love). In turn, our response to His love is that recorded for us in verse 5 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with your soul and with all your strength.” As such, worship is not limited to the Sunday services; it will include our lifestyle – our choices, how we live and relate to others are reflective of whether and how we honour God in our moments.

Have members share practical steps on how to avoid staying trapped in being:

- legalistic: to allow more room for emotions to be expressed in his/her worship;
- emotional: to understand what God is conveying to him through worship;
- confused: to understand why God deserves worship for who He is & not ‘the feel’.

4. How should we approach God in worship? Share one / two steps you want to take up to live out a life of worship. [10 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a response question. The Biblical response can be found in Deuteronomy 6:5. The aim of the question is for each member to identify and commit to specific steps in the areas of heart (mind), soul and strength that they can take up to have a deeper experience and/or knowledge of God. Quoting from Bob Kauflin “...there is no authentic worship of God without a right knowledge of God”. Leaders can then get members to pray for each other and keep each other accountable. Psalm 25:14 says “The Lord confides in those who fear Him; He makes His covenant known to them.” Our God wants to be intimate with us (with a kiss) and He is worthy to be treated with honour like a King (with a bow).

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. We always have a right understanding/ knowledge of God, worshipping Him involving our entire being.

Announcements

1. **Marriage Preparation Course**

Sat, 19 Aug | 9am-5.30pm & Sundays, 27 Aug, 3, 10, 17 & 24 Sep | 1.45pm-5pm
 \$260 Per Couple | Classrooms 214/ 215, RiverLife Church

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 13 Aug.

For enquiries, please contact Christine Tan at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg or 65114141

2. **Joining The Family**

Sat, 12 Aug | 2-5pm | Victory Chapel

Sign up online at bit.ly/rlcjoiningthefamily or at the Information Counter by Sun, 6 Aug. For more information, please contact Karen Koh at 65114142, or email her at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg

3. **Precept**

1. Amos: Prepared To Meet Your God

2. Fatal Distractions: Conquering Destructive Temptations

Register at the Information Counter or online at <http://bit.ly/rlcprecept-aug2017> by Sun, 30 Jul (Amos Book Study) or Sun, 6 Aug (Fatal Distractions).

For more information, please contact Karen Koh at 65114142, or email her at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg.