

# worship

## introduction

**FACILITATOR:** *Worship is an integral part of our cell and community life. Prayer is an essential part of our worship to God. John wrote, we love because God first loved us. By understanding more of the love of God we will be led deeper into prayer. Paul exhorted us to live a prayerful life or to pray continually. When we realize more fully the power prayer has to transform the world around us we can grasp what an integral part of our lifestyle it is. We need to discover how we can worship God through prayer in all areas of our lives.*

## 1: prayer

### welcome

**FACILITATOR:** *Go around the room and give people one minute to answer, "What was the last prayer God answered for you?"*

### worship

**FACILITATOR:** *Spend this session focusing on the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). Stand together. Read it out, a line at a time, stopping after each line and letting the group pray into it: ex. 'Our father in heaven'- pray into God being our father, thanking him for making us his children. Do the same for each line, being as creative as possible in opening up the theme or content of the prayer.*

### word

**FACILITATOR:** *What is Prayer?*

*Have people share something that characterizes prayer for them or a way of praying that they have experienced. Allow this to be a time of conversing and open discussion about prayer.*

*Here are some ideas for the person leading the word section to read out to the group if things go slowly and to help summarize at the end.*

-Communication (1Thess. 5:17-18) - Simply talking to God about everyday things, at any time, in any place and being ready to hear what God is saying to us.

-Worship - Recognizing the worth and value of God; expressing our love, thanks and adoration to him.

-Friendship (John 10:27, Matt. 7:7-11) - Best friends talk, share their problems and are there for each other. We talk to God and share our concerns with him and he talks to us and lets us know his concerns for our lives and the society around us.

-Intercession (1Tim. 2:1) - Where God shares his burdens with us and we respond by crying out to God for breakthrough on behalf of a person or situation. Intercession draws us into God's heart for justice and righteousness. Spiritual warfare is a part of this.

-Tongues (1Cor. 14:4, Rom. 8:26) - Speaking in tongues edifies us and helps us to pray when we are not sure what or how we are supposed to pray.

-Fasting (Matt. 6:16) - Abstaining from food or TV in order to focus on our friendship with God. Fasting adds an extra impetus and dynamic to our prayers.

-Lifestyle (Heb. 13:15-16) - Prayer is more than words – it involves our actions and means that we have to live out God's values and not just talk about them.

**FACILITATOR:** After discussing, ask the group to think for a moment, which of the above are their preferred or most common ways of praying. Ask the group to reflect on which of these areas they would like their prayer life to develop in?

Encourage people to be accountable in developing the weaker/newer areas they would like mature in.

Further discussion which may be helpful to your group is outlined below. Prayer is something that many of us struggle with. Use some of the questions below to open up the discussion and to create an open atmosphere:

- Why at times does prayer seem like such a struggle?
- How can we bring prayer more into our lifestyle?
- Where does our motivation for prayer come from?

You can use this discussion at the start of this section and leave it open ended. If however you use it after people have shared about their prayer life and goals, don't let it be too open ended – have people be specific and accountable.

### **witness**

**FACILITATOR:** Goal setting and reviewing is vital if we are to pray for our friends or family and see breakthrough. You will need to decide which of the two following outlines to use for this review depending on where your group is right now.

**Use Outline A...**if individuals have not identified 2 or 3 unsaved friends or co-workers which the cell is aware of and joins in praying for:

You will need enough sheets of paper for everyone in the group to have one. Pass them around and give people 5 minutes to think of three people they have regular contact with who are unsaved, unchurched or backslidden. Ask them to divide the paper into 3 columns.

In the first column, have everyone write the names of the persons and a couple of details to give a bit of background info. [i.e. are they a roommate, classmate, how old, current view of God or church]

In the middle column have them write down one prayer they would pray which would bless each person in a way that would show that God is real and interested in their daily life. [Success on course, enough money to live on, sleep well at night if they aren't sleeping]

In the third column write down one thing which they believe needs to change for each person to get saved. It could be bad experience of church, seeing God as hard and unfair, or complacency.

Finish off by standing together and praying for the list of unsaved friends that the cell is taking responsibility to pray for.

**Use Outline B...**if you have identified and have been praying into a group of friends for a while as outlined above:

Use this time to review. Ask people to share who they have been praying for. What has changed in that situation? Share ways in which the cell group has also helped to 'own' this person. Finish by standing together and praying for these friends that the cell is taking responsibility to pray for.

### **what now?**

**CELL:** We've discussed as a cell the different aspects of communing with Jesus in prayer. Set aside time this week to allow your prayer time to flourish (using communication, worship, intercession, etc.).

## 2: giving

### introduction

**FACILITATOR:** *God's love for us led him to giving us the most precious gift he could - the life of his Son Jesus - to win us back to him. As we respond to this act of giving and grow in our love for God, so we should increasingly be aiming at giving the best that we have back to him.*

### welcome

**CELL:** The way I am generous with others is...

### worship

**FACILITATOR:** *Read John 3:16 together as a group.*

*Reflect in silence on this verse - God will speak! Ask people to say one thing that God has spoken to them about. Which aspects of God's character or nature were highlighted for each person? What is God saying about sending Jesus to die for us?*

### word

**FACILITATOR:** *God has been generous to us in giving us many things. Ask the group to share what things we can give back to God as part of our worship lifestyle.*

*These will come under a few broad headings.*

[a] Our time

[c] Our possessions

[b] Our choices

[d] Our relationships

*Divide into 4 subgroups. The person leading this section will need to write down or copy on 4 pieces of paper the following scriptures and the discussion points. After 10 minutes regroup and get someone from each group to read the verse[s] out and give their conclusions about the major challenges facing students in each area.*

#### CELL ACTIVITY:

##### **Group 1: Read Luke 10:38-42 - TIME**

- Are you more like Martha or Mary?
- What are the major demands on our time?
- How do students spend most of their time [both Christians and non-Christians]?
- What does this show about priorities?
- Could the group offer helpful tips on how to put Jesus at the center of our daily lives in the midst of these other demands?

##### **Group 2: Read Matthew 26:36-39 - CHOICES**

Jesus had to make a difficult choice. He submitted himself to his Father for our sake.

- What are the areas of conflict for us as students?
- In what areas are you currently struggling to obey God?
- What tips can the group offer so that we can make right choices?

##### **Group 3: Read Matthew 6:24, Matthew 19:21, Luke 12:15, Luke 16:9 - POSSESSIONS**

Jesus made many radical statements about both money and possessions.

- Why do you think Jesus particularly warned against acquiring money and possessions?
- How can we guard against the pressures of society to accumulate money and possessions?
- What are some key insights into how we can live a life of worship with our possessions?

##### **Group 4: Read John 13:35, Luke 5:27-29 - RELATIONSHIPS**

- What are the challenges facing us in our relationships with fellow believers and with others in society?
- What are the majority of students looking for in relationships and how are relationships characterized?
- What suggestions can you make to the cell about how to live a more worshipful life in this area?

**FACILITATOR:** *To conclude the section, give the group 5 minutes. Ask them to reflect on the above areas and which they have most difficulty with giving to God. When people have had sufficient time to think, have the group share with a view to praying for one another.*

**CELL:** Pray for one another in these areas in pairs or threes. Make a commitment to review this in the coming weeks.

### **witness**

**FACILITATOR:** *Ask everyone to share what they feel is holding their friends back from hearing about God's love for them. Once everyone has contributed, pray for each unsaved person named. Be specific about the issues. Declare that God wants them to be saved and pray that every blockage be removed. This will help the whole cell to own other people's friends.*

### **what now?**

**CELL:** Take time this week to consider further if, as a part of your worship lifestyle, there are areas you are not fully giving to the Lord; maybe in these areas of TIME, CHOICES, POSSESSIONS or RELATIONSHIPS. Or maybe you have been giving in these areas but the Lord is asking you to "turn it up a notch"! If God has shown you things through this lesson or as he shows you things this week, consider what action you need to take!

# 3: worship

## introduction

**FACILITATOR:** Here we come to a crucial part of our worship as Christians. So often, people accuse Christians of being hypocritical. Part of what will make us stand out is that we are more than just Sunday Christians, but are people who live out our beliefs everyday, even when under pressure and when it would just be easier to conform. In our discussion, let's look at how questions of lifestyle involve our attitude towards money, the poor, the environment and so on.

## welcome

**CELL:** Think of someone or something that is really important to you. Why is it/are they so important? What do you get from it/them? What would it be like to lose this person/thing? Go around the room taking 1 minute each.

## word

**FACILITATOR:** Let's look at four chapters from the book of Romans from the perspective of a life of worship. Romans 12:1 is like a heading with the word 'therefore' linking the previous chapters to the following ones. These chapters now unpack what it means to offer up our bodies as sacrifices which is our spiritual act of worship.

Divide into four groups and assign each one chapter from Romans 12 – 15 to read. Look at what a lifestyle of worship involves. Each group nominates a spokesperson who will give a summary of the main points when the group comes back together.

**CELL:** When looking at these chapters, focus on what it means to worship God: in our homes, at college, in our Christian community, in our world, etc.?

## worship

**FACILITATOR:** In the light of all the above discussion, use this worship section as an opportunity for people to respond. Are there areas in our lives in which we are not worshipping God? What are our attitudes towards money, possessions, and global issues? Are there any decisions we can make as a group and any action we can take? Spend time talking together and then praying.

## witness

**FACILITATOR:** Divide back into the same four groups from earlier in this meeting. Ask each person to share in their small groups how their friends have reacted to finding out they are a Christian. Pray for one friend per person around the group. Pray that their image of what a Christian is like and what they feel Christianity is about will be changed. Pray that the true nature of God will be revealed to them.

## what now?

**CELL:** As a group, you have just prayed for one of your friends. Is there some action you could take this week to reach out to this individual? (i.e. send a note of encouragement, hangout together, etc.) Make time to do this.

This week, read Romans 12-15 again. Give further consideration to what it means for you to worship God in your home, at school and in your Christian community. Maybe use "The Daily 7-up" structure (see Fusion Manual) for your study.

# 4: creativity

## introduction

**FACILITATOR:** *A suggestion for this meeting is that you do the word section before the worship section and use the idea at the end of this material for your worship. We have seen that creativity has to do with lifestyle, including prayer and giving. However, when it comes to our set times of worship (either individually or corporately) expression is very important as it provides a release for our worship and a demonstration to God of our love for Him. The type of expression we see in our worship is very often a matter of culture. To express our worship freely and fully we will need to press in and through our cultural inhibitions (although there will always be cultural distinctives and characteristics of course).*

## welcome

**CELL:** If you were to describe your life to someone in terms of an amusement park ride, which ride would depict your life as it is right now and why?

**FACILITATOR:** *As each person answers, have them be specific. (i.e. if they say a rollercoaster, which kind would it be...one you stand in, one where your feet dangle, one that goes upside down, etc.)*

## word

**FACILITATOR:** *Brainstorm together various expressions of worship which are found in scripture. Allow people to share and then give the group a summary from the headings below.*

*Divide the group into pairs or threes and give each small group paper with a worship expression and a verse/some verses to look up. Ask each group to share what expression they had and what it expresses. (Don't give all the information here – use this if you want to add more info or more examples.)*

### [a.] Raised hands

Psalm 63:3-5 (David in the desert - the richest of foods)  
Exodus 17:12 (Israelites v. Amalekites, Moses, Aaron and Hur)  
1 Tim. 2:8  
Child reaching for a parent

### [b.] Clapping and shouting

Psalm 47:1 (context of psalm, God is a king who is awesome, puts things under our feet, gives us inheritance)  
Psalm 100:1 (extravagant praise, our response to an extravagant God)

### [c.] Song

Psalm 89:1  
Psalm 96:1 and 98:1  
Col. 3:16b  
Eph. 5:18-20

### [d.] Declaration

What comes out of our mouths is important and powerful.  
At creation God spoke and the world and humanity came into being.  
James 3:9-10, Romans 10:10

### [e.] Music

Powerful - 1Sam.16 (Saul tormented by an evil spirit, when David played his harp he would feel at peace)  
1 Chron. 25-28 (musicians in temple band!)  
There are 50 references to musicians in the OT and even more to percussion.

[f.] Dance

2Sam. 6:14 (King David was prepared to lose his credibility in people's eyes as he danced before God)  
Exodus 15 (Miriam leading the women in praise and dance before God - dance of victory and thanks to God for getting them through the Red Sea without getting wet and for dealing with their enemies)

[g.] Kneeling, bowing, prostration

2Chron. 7:3 (Israelites knelt on the pavement with their faces to the floor)  
Genesis 24:52 (Abraham's servant bowed down to the ground before the Lord)  
Revelation 1:17

**FACILITATOR:** *After regrouping, discuss these different expressions - how do we feel about them? Which do we practice most readily? Which would we not get into very easily?*

*Ask the cell members these questions...*

- What do you think it means and does not mean to be creative in worship?*
- What are the usual ways in which we worship, both on our own and together?*
- What has shaped our worship patterns?*
- Why do we worship in this way?*

## **worship**

**FACILITATOR:** *You will need to ask the person who leads this section to do some preparation.*

*They need to bring a bag full of everyday objects which people pick out with their eyes closed. Give everyone 2 or 3 minutes to think about how this symbol represents something to do with God, his nature, our relationship to him, etc. Encourage everyone to find a scripture verse that would also relate to the specific area their symbol represents. When everyone is ready, spend time worshipping God using the different symbols by going around the room with each person praying out. The rest of the group can add their 'amen' or agreement. (If needed, break into small groups and allow the groups to work together on this...one small object per small group.)*

*A couple of simple examples are using a bar of soap to express our desire to live holy lives of integrity, maybe reading out Psalm 51 at the same time, or using a can of oil to represent the anointing of the Holy Spirit.*

## **witness**

**CELL:** Part of the idea of cell evangelism is that our non-Christian friends are naturally getting to know the others in our cell through socializing together. This is an important part of the way people belong before they believe and helps build a bridge from non-Christian to cell member. How is this progressing? Is there an upcoming friendship event on the calendar? If not brainstorm ideas for what you can do as a group- whether this is putting on a specific event to inviting people to or joining in things that are already happening in the college and going together.

## **what now?**

**CELL:** Decide this week to express your worship to God in creative ways. Relationship with the Father is not meant to be mundane. Allow yourself to be free in your expression.