

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

May 14th

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. Last week was teacher appreciation week. Who was one teacher who made a positive impact on you and why?

Bible Study Questions

1. What is the first thing that you think of when you hear the word “worship”? How do you think most people would answer that question?
2. Read John 12:1-11
 - How do you think you would have reacted if you had been at that gathering when Mary poured oil on Jesus?
 - How does Jesus react? What does Jesus’ reaction teach you about worship?
3. How would you define genuine worship to God?
4. Pastor Michael talked about worship being an outpouring of sacrificial love to God. It ends up becoming a dance of both God and us expressing extravagant love to each other. When was a time in your life when you found yourself overwhelmed with a love for God? How did you express that love?
5. What would it look like if we were able to orient our lives around a genuine daily worship of God? Is there something in your life that needs to change in order to grow in that area?
6. What would it look like if our church was marked by a genuine worship of God? What is your role in making that happen?

May 14th Extravagant Worship

One of the greatest examples that we have of worship in the Bible is from Mary in John 12.

- I. **Mary: Demonstrates extravagant sacrifice:** In John 12, a party is thrown in the honor of Jesus in the home of Lazarus. When a home would receive a special guest, the custom was to greet them with a kiss and then to wash their feet with water and olive oil. For Mary, this wasn't enough. Jesus had recently raised Lazarus from the dead and this likely motivated her. She chose to wash Jesus' feet with a pint of nard, an expensive oil worth a year's wages, and then wipe his feet with her hair.
- II. **Judas: Viewed worship as a waste of what he could use for personal consumption:** Judas objects to this sacrifice, saying that the money could have been used for the poor. His real motivation is that he wanted to collect the money and skim off some of it for himself. For Judas, possessions existed for our consumption.
- III. **Jesus' response**
 - a. **Lavished an even more extravagant gift:** Jesus relates her gift to his upcoming death. She had given him a gift, but Jesus was about to sacrifice his life for her.
 - b. **His presence is an experience to not be wasted:** Jesus states that the poor will always be there, but not Jesus. The point is that a moment with the creator is something truly special. The oil was not a waste, but time with Jesus could be wasted.
- IV. **God honoring worship is an expression of self sacrificial love to God:** Mary gives us a powerful illustration of worship. Out of gratitude to Jesus, she gave up something of great value. Her act was an extravagant outpouring of love. As for us, whenever we pour out love to God, either by singing a song of adoration or serving him, we are engaging in true worship.

Conclusion

It has been said that the modern American church struggles with true worship. However, God has lavished extravagant blessings on us. True outpourings of love should be our regular response. Here are some action steps to help.

- Make a list of ways that God has blessed us
- Take advantage of Bible reading or worship music to set a worshipful mood.

- Spend time learning from great worshippers. Read the book of Psalms.