



WORSHIP

Based on and adapted from an original idea written by Matt Macaulay published in YouthWork Magazine October 2007.

This session can be used in its entirety or as a series of sessions. Some parts of the session are clearly aimed at a church based group but there are parts which could be adapted for more fringe groups.

(For un-churched young people ... This guide would be difficult to adapt for un-churched groups. Instead, discuss the effect that music has on them, how it makes them feel. What do they understand by the term 'worship'. What things do they 'worship'. Are there things in nature that make them feel in awe? Why might this be? Link the discussion to the fact that God is the ultimate creator of everything good in the world.)

AIMS AND OUTCOMES

- To understand that the Holy, all-consuming God of the Old Testament is the same God that we worship today.
- To discover how we can worship and bring a pleasing offering to Him.
- To consider the things which stop us bringing 'wholehearted' worship to God.
- To explore the plight of persecuted Christians and pray for them.

PART ONE

RESOURCES

- Large sheets of paper and marker pens.
- Worship quote below written on another large sheet or as hand-outs.

“A person will worship something, have no doubt about that. We may think our tribute is paid in secret in the dark recesses of our hearts, but it will out. That which dominates our imaginations and our thoughts will determine our lives, and our character. Therefore, it behoves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshipping we are becoming.” *[Ralph Waldo]*

Worship, what's the point? (15- 20 mins)

- Ask the YP to write on the sheets of paper, things that they value ie things they spend their time, effort and money on.
- On another sheet of paper ask the YP to write the word WORSHIP at the top and underneath to write words or phrases that describe what worship is.
- Display the sheet with the quote written on it and ask the YP their views on it. Ask them to review their previous comments on the 2 sheets and to try to come up with a sentence that might sum up WORSHIP in their own words.
(Try to help them understand that, worship in its simplest form, means to bring worth or value to something and that there is often a correlation between time, effort and money spent and their worth to us.).

If you are leading a **church based group** spend time finding out your group's understanding of worship in general, in church or within the group and ask each person:

- Why they worship; what they feel?
- How they respond when they worship?
- What do they think about when they worship?
- Is worship something they just do when they gather for meetings?

(You may want to do this as written answers rather than verbal to begin with, these sorts of questions can feel quite threatening. They can use their answers as part of the discussion as and when they feel comfortable.)

PART 2

RESOURCES

- Outside space or kitchen.
- Oven, barbeque, a disposable one will be ok.
- A chicken breast.
- Bibles.

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

The burnt offering (15 mins)

- Having done the usual risk assessments and making sure that this is going to be a safe exercise! Place the chicken breast on the hot barbecue and leave it to cook and burn.
- Read Leviticus Chapter 1 together.



Hopefully the chicken is smelling and looking rather burnt by now.

- Talk about the different provisions of animals for sacrifice depending on wealth i.e. Bull, ram, goat, dove/ pigeon and the expectation that you would sacrifice the best that was costly to you, not the cheapest option!
- Get people to talk about the aroma of the burning meat again and whether or not they would find doing this exercise a little annoying if they had to do it every time they wanted to worship God?
- Ask the YP how much this 'mini sacrifice' has cost.
- Have a guess at the cost of a male goat today ...

Answer: Today a pedigree male goat can cost around £400-£500. Imagine having to pay for that every time we worshipped God!

Would we be bothered to do it?

Would you be tempted to substitute the lame goat knowing that it was just going to be burnt on the altar? (Knowing that you were going to burn the chicken breast on the barbecue, how much did you spend on it? - probably as little as possible.)

KEY POINT: We should not be giving God second best, but the very best we can in terms of time, money, thoughts and service. How could you change the way you live to give God your very best?

Bible Study (10- 20 mins)

Read or refer back to Leviticus 1. Explain that this passage lays out the theme for the book of Leviticus: the Holiness of God.

So how can an unholy people approach a Holy God? Explain that in the Old Testament you couldn't just wander into God's presence, it would get you killed because of a problem called sin. These days we don't have to find a goat that is 'without defect' and then take it to church and burn it on the communion table in front of the congregation so that we can approach God without getting killed.

- What do the YP feel that it is necessary to do before we worship so that we are right before God?

Read Hebrews 9:12-27 (using the CEV or similar) together and ask the YP what these verses are saying?



Try to discover from them why the Israelites made burnt offerings? (Their sin was transferred onto that pure, spotless animal that was then killed in their place.)

- How is it possible for us to now come into the presence of God?
- Who has been killed in place of us; who has paid for our sin?

(Make the point that Jesus atoned for our sin once and for all. When Jesus died, a way was made into God's presence and all that is required is that we confess our sins before God and then we are made righteous, right in his sight and Holy (Lev 11:44) just like him. So we can experience an intimate and loving Father as well and an awesome and Holy God!)

KEY POINT: Sin separates us from a holy God, but Jesus made a way for us into God's presence.

(You can douse the BBQ or turn off oven now if you have not done so before.)

Easy worship? (10 mins)

RESOURCES

- Leaflets and articles about the persecuted church from Open Doors, Release Int. etc.
- Highlighter pens.
- Sheets of paper and pens.
- Bibles

As a group, read 1 Chronicles 21:24:

'But King David replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing".

- Divide into small groups and distribute the leaflets or news items you have gathered equally among them along with marker pens and sheets of plain paper.
- Using the information get the young people to highlight issues that surround worship for Christians in other places. Ask them to identify the cost involved to each ethnic group.



- Share the highlighted issues and discuss the contrasts with our own experiences.

- Ask the YP to consider what 'Costly Worship' might mean to them personally.
Spend some time in quiet reflection.

- Pray together, setting aside time for repentance for the things that have stopped any of the group from worshipping God with all their heart recently. To praise and thank God for Jesus costly sacrifice that enables us you bring our worship moment by moment to God the Father.

- Now spend some time praying for those Christians who worship God in spite of what it may cost them.