

Icebreaker:

What is the most moving band or choir concert or stage performance you have ever seen? How did it make you feel? Why was it so moving?

Read this week's scripture and discuss the following:

1. What is one thing we do in church or you do at home which helps you to worship God?
2. What are some obstacles to worship?
3. Have you experienced worship similar to that of Revelation 5? When and what was that like? How are we to prepare for worship and what are we to offer?
4. The churches in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) that John writes to in Revelation were in the midst of persecution because of their faith in Jesus. What would John's vision in Revelation 5 have meant to these persecuted Christians? Do you think this vision has anything to say to us today?
5. What is significant that though John was expecting to see a lion, he saw a lamb instead (verses 5-6)?
6. What is significant about the golden bowls and their contents found in verse 8? Is that a helpful image for you?
7. In verse 11, there was a growing contingent of those worshiping God. How might our worship of God (orienting our lives around God) draw others to Christ?
8. In what ways, if any, do you see worship connected to what goes on the rest of the week?

Prayer:

As you pray for one another, please pray for the following needs in our church family:

prayer requests

> Prayers of comfort for Brian and Rachel Dysert in the death of Brian's father and for family and friends of Damon Auble (Nancy Baker's uncle), who passed away at age 98 this week.

> Prayers of healing for Regina Franks and Gary Ball.

[The following are from ZPC's prayer calendar, which is available at the Welcome Center or at zpc.org/prayer.]

> Pray for the women in Bible Study Fellowship, which meets at ZPC on Monday nights. May their hearts be changed as truths of scripture are applied to their daily lives.

> Prayers of thanks for the ZPC elders, who provide leadership to our church. May they be blessed as they guide, direct, and lead our church.

Worship is the most visible activity we do together at church and it is also something we do in our everyday lives. Worship can help us reorient our lives around God during the week. This week, discuss openly and explore the role of worship as seen in John's vision in Revelation chapter 5, and how it relates to our everyday lives – even this upcoming week!

1. Ask about worship at church. Then, push your group to share some things they do at home to help them worship. Some examples might be: quietly reading and meditating on scripture, praying, listening to or singing worship music, or doing things like helping others, walking in nature, working or cleaning house or doing dishes. What else helps people to worship?
2. Some obstacles to worship might be: too busy, too much noise, screen time (cell phone, TV, computer, social media), selfishness, work, focus on family or worldly success. What else?
3. Ask your group to share a worship experience that was more profound than normal. Was it similar to Revelation 5? How so? Perhaps it ushered them into God's presence somehow. Did they desire to fall down, or bow down before God? We can prepare for worship by meditating or reflecting on what God has done for us; and we can offer our thoughts, our time, our very hearts to God.
4. Most scholars believe that the seven churches of Asia Minor were being persecuted under the reign of Roman Emperor Domitian (A.D. 90-95). John was exiled on the island of Patmos in the Mediterranean and saw this vision of worship there. For both John and the churches, it must have been comforting and encouraging to see that God was God, King of Kings, sitting on a throne in Heaven, and that they were not alone in worshiping God. For us, we realize we are not alone in worshiping God. We place our trust in a living God, who is in control, worthy of worship.
5. The lion is the king of the jungle, powerful and possibly terrifying. The lamb is vulnerable; John even says the lamb was slaughtered. Jesus is humble, vulnerable, gave his life for us – that we might live! This is the upside down kingdom of Jesus that we are seeking.
6. The golden bowls are full of incense (they smell good and inspire worship). The bowls are full of the prayers of the saints. This helps us to see that our prayers are presented to God, they are important, they are holy. That's good news for us!
7. If we are a worshiping people (joyful, focused on Jesus, worshiping God with passion, living for God in our daily lives), then people will see. We will look different and hopefully others will be drawn to that and want to join us in worship – both on Sundays and Monday-Saturday.
8. When we put God first (literally by worshiping God on Sunday) it can help us to think differently, and have different priorities the rest of the week. We begin to give all of our days to Jesus, or at least part of our week, part of our days, as we go about our lives, living for God.