

VERTICAL HORIZONS

EMBRACING A LIFESTYLE OF WORSHIP IN OUR EVERYDAY, ORDINARY LIVES



Blessed are the Poor in Spirit | Jen Norton | jennortonartstudio.com



WELCOME!

Whether you've recently begun exploring your faith or have been following Jesus for years, this study is for you. Worship is an integral part of who we are as believers, and if you have ever wondered what it means and why it matters, you're not alone.

In this series, we will journey together to explore not only WHAT worship is, but also WHY we do it. While singing and music are beautiful and biblical expressions of worship, they are only part of a much broader and more diverse expression of worshipping God. Jesus commands us to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength (Mark 12:30). We desire to integrate worship into every part of our lives. In doing so, we will experience Heaven invading our everyday lives, and we will encounter vertical horizons everywhere we go.

As you walk through this study, come with a curious mind and a willing heart to see, hear, and learn what God has for you as we grow together into a more vibrant and holistic worshipping community.

Together, we will:

- ♦ Grow in allowing God to love us better than we believe he does.
- ♦ Invite God to show us anything keeping us from living a holistic life of worship.
- ♦ Learn more about God's holy nature and why a life of worship is the only appropriate response.
- ♦ Gain wisdom and understanding from scripture on how God desires to be worshipped.
- ♦ Become a community that worships God with all we are in every facet of life.

**“For the LORD your God is living among you.
He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you
with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears.
He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.”
— Zephaniah 3:17**



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All human beings carry a deep desire to be loved, forgiven, accepted, and affirmed. In this session, we will explore how worshipping God is the place where those desires are truly met and fulfilled in Jesus. We will also learn to recognize the river of God's grace that flows into our lives, shaping us into vessels of worship.

Session 1: Lenses – Page 8

Together, we will look at God through the lens of how he relates to us. How we SEE him shapes how we respond to Him in worship. We will discover how He invites us into an ever-deepening revelation of His character, which strengthens our ability to worship Him in Spirit and in truth.

Session 2: Past, Present, and Future – Page 10

We worship a God who was, who is, and who is to come. In this session, we will explore the eternal nature of God as one in three persons. A deeper understanding of this reality in our everyday lives awakens awe and wonder in our worship.

Session 3: Worship as Prescribed in Scripture – Page 12

God is holy (set apart) and therefore worthy of our worship. We will take a biblical look at what it means to worship God. What kind of worship does God want from us? What does it look like? How do we do it? What makes our worship acceptable to Him?

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Session 4: Receive: Worship in Submission – Page 16

We will learn the first part of The Chapel Worship Belief Cycle, and its entry point as receiving. We will discuss establishing a lifestyle of worship in submission by receiving “all of God” as the catalyst for everything we do as worshipers, not from the posture of a consumer, but instead from the posture of an heir.

Session 5: Believe: Worship as Remaining – Page 18

We will continue in part two of The Chapel Worship Belief Cycle, focusing on establishing a lifestyle of worship as a way of remaining. What could our lives look like if we slowed down enough to align with God’s heart and desires, grow deep roots, and bear lasting fruit as worshipers? How do we develop a life of worship, with long-lasting obedience, no matter what?

Session 6: Respond: Worship in Expression– Page 20

Part three of The Worship Belief Cycle will focus on establishing a lifestyle of worship through expression. We believe that worshiping a holy and loving God looks like something. The Bible prescribes many ways we do this, not as mere suggestions based on one’s personality, but as liturgical commands that align our bodies and hearts to the Lord for our own sake and in response to God’s worth.

Session 7: Reflect: Worship in Mission- – Page 22

Part four of The Worship Belief Cycle will focus on establishing a lifestyle of worship by reflecting God’s glory to the world through mission. “This Little Light of Mine, I’m Gonna Let It Shine” isn’t just an old catchy hymn, but a simple song that points out the reality that our worship must be expressed in action for the sake of others. This is our mission: to be recipients of God’s glory so that we can reflect it to the world in word and deed.

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Book Recommendations and Chapel Music Fellowship Resources



DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

COME REGULARLY: Building a strong relationship with Jesus and others in your group begins with showing up consistently. Your presence matters—not just for you, but for the entire group. *Be present, not perfect—come as you are and be open to learning, growing, and encouraging one another along the way.*

PARTICIPATE: Your story and experiences reflect the character of God. Sharing what He is doing in your life helps others grow in their faith and deepens relationships within the group. *Listen actively and seek to understand before responding. Honor differences and recognize that everyone brings a unique perspective to the conversation.*

KEEP IT SAFE: We are all responsible for creating a space where everyone feels heard and loved. Give others room to share by listening well and responding with kindness. Avoid quick answers or judgments and focus on offering support and encouragement. *Let's be patient and gracious, understanding that spiritual growth takes time and everyone is on their own journey.*

CONFIDENTIALITY: What's shared in the group stays in the group. Protecting each other's honesty and vulnerability fosters trust and growth. *Respect and honor one another's stories with care and discretion.*

KNOW & BE KNOWN: Take time to listen and truly know one another. As you do, you'll have opportunities to pray, encourage, and see God's Kingdom advance in each other's lives. *Commit to praying for your group members throughout the week, trusting that God is at work in every season of life.*

Note for Group Leaders: *If a serious concern arises—such as harm to a person or a need for further pastoral care—encourage the individual to seek support from a pastor or bring it to a pastor's attention yourself. Ensuring safety and care is a priority for our community.*

STRUCTURE FOR EACH SESSION

KEY TRUTH:

Each session highlights a core truth that shows how Jesus meets us where we are — whether in failure, uncertainty, waiting, or struggle — and calls us forward in faith.

READ:

Engage with the Scripture passages, underline or highlight parts of the passages that you feel the Holy Spirit is bringing to your attention.

REFLECT:

Discuss with your group ways that the passages of Scripture are highlighting aspects of God's nature and share some ways in which it relates to you today.

RESPOND:

Share personal experiences and insights related to the session's theme. Consider practical ways to apply what you've learned and prepare your heart for prayer.

BREAKTHROUGH (Let's Pray Together):

Pray for one another, asking God to meet us where we are. Invite the Holy Spirit to bring encouragement, healing, and boldness as we cast our cares on Him and receive His peace.

NEXT STEPS:

Choose practical ways to apply what you've learned this week — whether through personal reflection, encouraging someone else, or taking a step of faith.

SESSION ONE

Lenses

Key Truth:

“The intensity of your love for God will never outrun the beauty of the God you envision.”

– Greg Boyd

READ :

2 Corinthians 3:1-18

As you read, invite Holy Spirit to open the eyes of your heart. Pay attention to how Paul distinguishes seeing through what God brought through Moses (the Law) vs. seeing through who God poured out through Jesus (the Spirit).

REFLECT:

God’s Word: Imagine you had invested your life into a community, teaching them everything you knew to be true. Things that brought hope, life, joy, and freedom. What if you found out that after you left, others came in and began to undermine what you had taught? Instead of teaching things that would lead the community into a life-giving paradigm, they taught things that brought death. This is part of what the apostle Paul addressed in his second letter to the Corinthian believers.

In chapter three, through Moses, a way of life was prescribed that was holy and good, yet unable to produce life in us. Instead, it exposed our need for God by revealing sin and death. But in Jesus, the Spirit gives life through a personal, redeemed relationship with God, allowing us to see Jesus for who He truly is. And when we see Jesus for who He truly is, we behold a glory that transforms us in ever-increasing measure the longer we behold Him.

Even as Christians, we are susceptible to viewing God through limiting lenses. What if, as children of God, we are on a growing journey of seeing Christ with increasing glory and clarity? What if, as we see Him more clearly, we grow in our ability to receive the fullness of how He desires to relate to us as His beloved?

Jesus’ Invitation: 2 Corinthians 3 contrasts the fading glory of the Law with the surpassing, transforming glory of the Spirit of Jesus, showing that true ministry is not external or legal, but internal and life-giving. Jesus is continually inviting His people to shed partial revelations so they can see Him for who He truly is. This process can feel offensive at times, but as we humbly submit our need to interpret Him, He begins to reveal deeper truths about Himself that shape us more into His glorious character.

RESPOND (Discussion Questions):

1. What do you think the Corinthians were wrestling with that made them return to a law-based way of relating to God?
2. Have you ever experienced a deeper revelation of who God is that changed how you relate to Him? Share that experience with your group.
3. The Lord is always inviting us to grow in our understanding of who He is. What might be a “limiting lens” you view him through that He is asking you to lay down?

BREAKTHROUGH (Let’s Pray Together!)

Take a few minutes to share a belief you have about God that you feel He might be inviting you to grow in or see more clearly.

Pray with those in your group. Leave room for them to invite the Holy Spirit to reveal what He desires.

- Pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal the beauty, glory, majesty, and goodness of Jesus in increasing measures.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal any limiting lenses of viewing God and that He would remove them.

NEXT STEPS:

Revisit: Re-read 2 Corinthians 3 slowly and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what walking in freedom looks like in your life.

Celebrate: Get alone and listen to the song “Quiet Down” by Heart Sound and Vineyard Music and imagine Jesus delighting in you as you do it. Ask him the question, “What do you think about me?”

SESSION TWO

Past, Present, and Future

Key Truth:

Worship is not just a private, momentary expression, but a communal, eternal participation.

READ :

John 17:20–26

As you read, notice the **past**, **present**, and **future** language Jesus uses to describe himself. He invites us to worship him for who He is in all His glory!

REFLECT:

At the center of God's glory is not something abstract and unattainable, but something real and deeply relational. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist in perfect unity, a complete self-giving exchange of love. There is a theological term used to describe this intimate relationship: **perichoresis**, a divine dance in which each Person of the Trinity gives fully to the other without hierarchy or withholding.

In John 17, Jesus reveals that this has always been His desire for us. He prays, "I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one, I in them and you in me." This means that the same glory shared within the Trinity is now extended to us!

We are not invited to observe this reality from a distance, but to immerse ourselves in it. We are invited into unity with God and with one another. This is why the greatest commandment is to love God fully and to love others as ourselves, because love is the very nature of God flowing down to us, so that we might let it flow out to others.

This kind of unity cannot be achieved through strategy or effort alone. It requires daily surrender. As we yield to God's presence, we receive the grace to become people who give ourselves away in love. This can only happen when a community lives with an intentional journey toward self-giving.

Even in our brokenness, as we pursue this kind of unity, God's glory becomes visible among us. A community shaped by selfless love becomes a testimony to the World that Jesus is real.

Worship then becomes not just a private or momentary expression, but instead a communal participation in the life of God, where we receive His love and pour ourselves out in love to Him and to others.

Jesus' Invitation: Jesus' recorded prayer in John 17 is the longest recorded prayer of His in Scripture. We should pay attention to this not only because it was one of His last prayers recorded in the Gospels before He was crucified, but also because, when He prays, He prays for His "future" followers. That's us. He paid for us to be brought into "oneness" with Himself and with each other. We should take Him up on His offer.

RESPOND (Discussion Questions):

1. The relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is marked by complete self-giving love. Where do you see a tendency in your own life to hold back, control, or protect yourself instead of giving yourself away in love?
2. Jesus invites us not just to observe this kind of love, but to participate in it. What do you think it looks like, practically, to receive God's love and then pour yourself out for Him and for others?
3. Worship is not just a private or momentary expression, but a communal participation in the life of God. How might this shift the way you approach worship, both personally and when you gather with others?

BREAKTHROUGH (Let's Pray Together!):

- ♦ Jesus invites us to embrace a "child-like" faith. Part of this means embracing your imagination. Take a few minutes, put on some worship music, and invite God to give you an imagination of what his relationship has been like within the Trinity. Write down at least 3 adjectives that come to mind during this practice.
- ♦ Now do the same practice using your imagination on how God wants to invite you into "oneness" with him and others. What does this look like? Write down what the Holy Spirit is showing you and share with each other.

Prayer prompt: Pray with those in your group. Ask God to give your group increasing measures of revelation into Jesus' invitation into "oneness."

NEXT STEPS:

- Revisit:** Re-read all of John 17. Before you do, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to the beautiful reality of his self-giving nature.
- Worship:** Put on some worship music while being alone and ask Jesus to give you a picture or even more words to reveal or describe his eternal nature. Write a poem, journal, or even draw a picture of what he's revealing to you.

SESSION THREE

Worship as Prescribed in Scripture

Important definitions:

Repentance: To change your mind or direction, to allow God to put you back on His track for your life.

Confession: Bringing hidden sins, fears, doubts, or struggles into the light by telling someone who can be trusted and who will speak wisdom, truth, and love into your life.

Key Truth:

The ultimate joy of worship is to be fully exposed to God and to hear in response, "I love you."

READ :

Psalm 51

Context is super helpful in Psalm 51. This specific Psalm, written by King David to God, is a response to his greatest failure as the leader of God's people and a "Man after God's own heart."

REFLECT:

"Where are you?" These were the first words God spoke after Adam and Eve had sinned. Why? Because they were hiding. Packed into God's question to our first ancestors is not an inquiry about their geographical location, but about their identity and destiny. In essence, God was asking, "What happened to you?" and "What happened to us?"

Hiding from God is anti-communion and, therefore, the antithesis of worship. Before the fall, God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day in perfect harmony. Now a chasm had formed, and hiding wasn't helping.

At the very center of worship, as prescribed throughout scripture, is God's desire for communion with the ones He loves. David communicates this beautifully in the worship song he writes after being confronted by the prophet Nathan for stealing another man's wife, concealing their pregnancy, and then having her husband killed to hide his sin.

David recognizes that the answer to this grievous act could never be religious duty. Animal sacrifices could never cover up his hidden sin. What was needed was a fully exposed and sorrowful heart, a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1). What David discovered pleased God most was an honest act of worship: a contrite person throwing themselves fully on the altar of God's mercy.

In doing this, David became an archetype for us in worship today. On this side of the cross, we recognize that it is only by God's grace that we are rescued from our own folly, not by what we can do for God, but by coming back to God through a lifestyle of repentance. Fully exposed and still discovering that we are fully loved.

We need to reclaim repentance, not as a shameful act, but as a true gift from God that sets us back on the right path. No one is exempt from this. Our songs and good deeds are empty before God if we are living a life hidden from Him.

Jesus' Invitation: It was the joy set before Jesus that He endured the cross (Hebrews 12:2). The joy set before Him was the promise of His people coming out of darkness and back into communion with God. Jesus laid down His life to prove that we don't have to hide anymore, because in Christ, there is now "no condemnation" (Romans 8:1).

There is nothing you can do to make God love you any less than He already does. But when we hide or run from God, we remove ourselves from the ability to receive His healing and forgiving love.

Jesus invites us daily: "Come to me," and trade your shame, self-hatred, fear, anxiety, and depression for streams of living water (John 4:14).

RESPOND (Discussion Questions):

1. There is no fear or shame in love, but God's love casts out fear. Have you ever been afraid of being exposed before God? Was that fear rooted in shame?
2. Have you ever experienced the temptation to pull away from God and community when you had unrepentant sin in your life? How did that work for you?
3. Have you ever seen repentance as an act of worship? How does that reality sit with you?
4. Part of hiding from God is the fear of being "known." Is there someone in your group you trust that you can confess sin to?

BREAKTHROUGH (Let's Pray Together!)

Create space for people in your group to write down the name of someone they need to talk to to confess sin and walk in repentance.

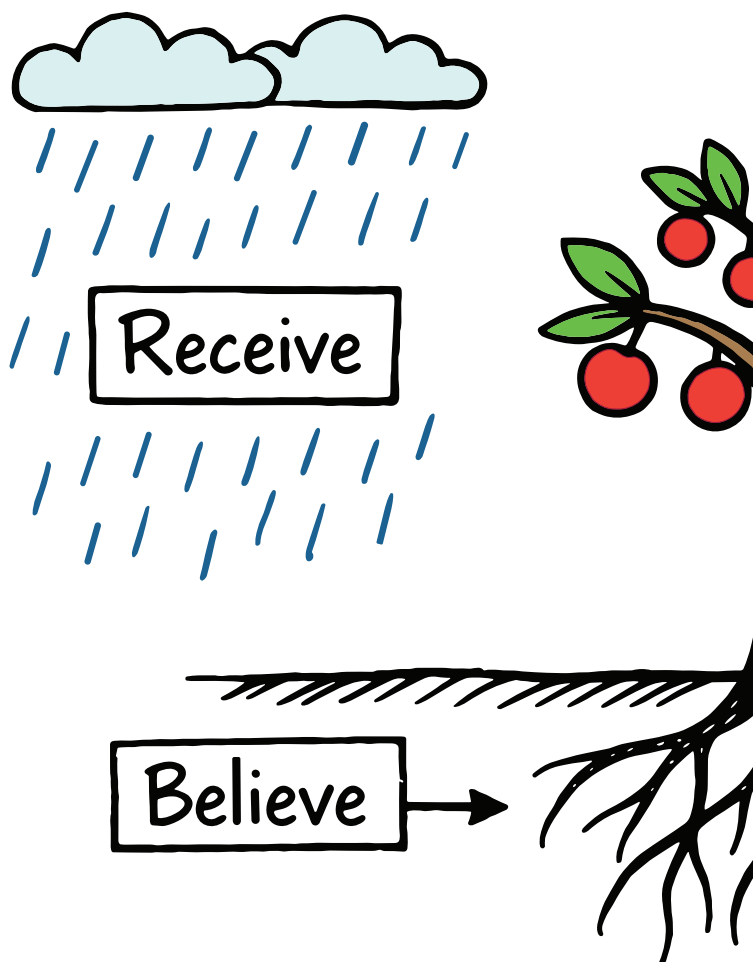
Prayer prompt: Pray with those in your group. Ask God to give your group increasing measures of revelation into Jesus' invitation into "oneness."

NEXT STEPS:

- Read:** The story of the woman at Jesus' feet in Luke 7:36-50. Pay attention to how Jesus responds to this act of worship through repentance.
- Daily:** Try to make your first action in the morning a confession of your need for God's presence and grace. Surrender any burden of that day to Him.
- Confess:** Establish 1-2 people whom you trust and who are mature in their relationship with Jesus that you can confess to regularly.

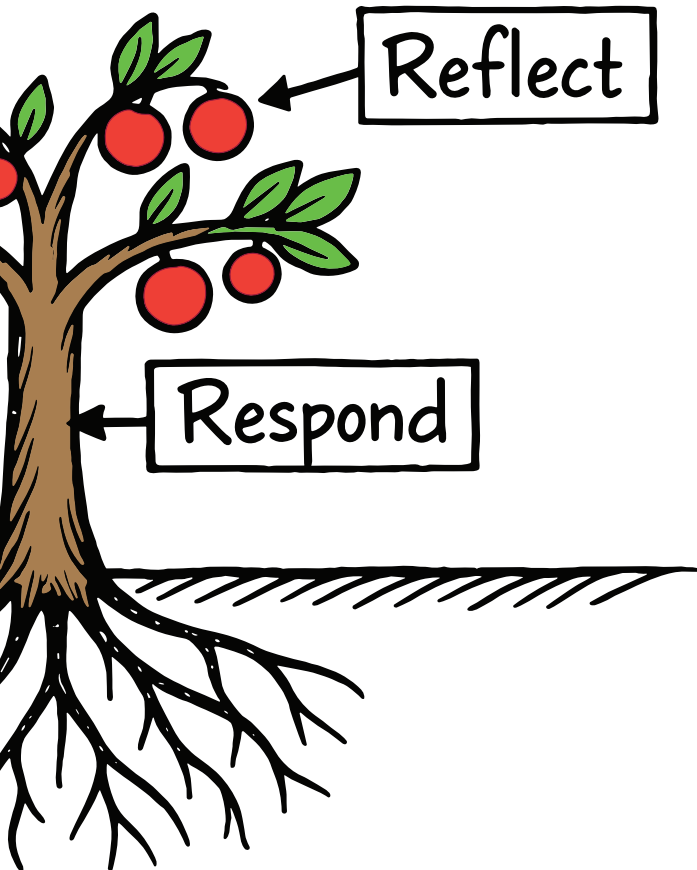
Introduction to the Worship Belief Cycle

The Chapel Worship Belief Cycle is a simple way of understanding where worship comes from and how it flows in our lives. Worship doesn't begin with us; it begins with God. We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19), and He delights over us with singing (Zephaniah 3:17). From that place, worship becomes a response to His grace, not something we strive to earn. The cycle helps give that flow language and clarity so we can grow in intimacy with Him. It begins with receiving all that God is and has done, moves into believing what He says is true, leads us to respond with our whole lives, and ultimately results in reflecting His life to the world around us.



In the following four lessons, we will take a deeper dive into each aspect of the Worship Belief Cycle.

- ◆ **We receive from Him**
(John 7:37–38; James 1:17)
- ◆ **Believe in Him**
(John 6:29; Romans 10:9–10)
- ◆ **Respond to Him with our whole selves**
(Romans 12:1; Psalm 95:6)
- ◆ **Reflect Him to others**
(Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Peter 2:9)



SESSION FOUR

Receive: Worship in Submission

READ :

1 John 4:19, Romans 8:15-17, Luke 15:31

REFLECT:

We are swimming in a culture that promotes and celebrates self-dependency. It's a spirit that says, "I have all I have because of what I did." Or the other side of the same coin: "I don't have because of what I didn't do." Our sense of worth is rooted in our own strength, resources, or ego. If we have something to give, it came from what we did. And if we don't have anything to give, it's because we didn't do the right things.

This influence has always crept into the Church, shaping the way many of us relate to and "worship" God. Worship can become, in many ways, about what we can bring to Him. We can make every effort to ensure that what we do and sing is about God, because we made it about Him. The problem with this model of worship is that when we lose everything, feel we have nothing left to give, or feel unworthy because of our mistakes, we begin to believe we have nothing to offer God at all.

Here is the good news: worship is entirely about God, but not because we make it that way. When we look at scripture, we see that God consistently frames worship in terms of the relationship between Him and us.

For example, the twenty-four elders in Revelation demonstrate a posture of worship by laying down their crowns before Jesus (Revelation 4:10). But is that where worship begins? No, because we must first ask, "Who gave them the crowns in the first place?" Everything we give back to God first came from God.

Therefore, we must allow God to give to us what He desires, so that we can humbly surrender it back to Him in worship. Waters flow from the mountains down to the valleys and the ocean, not the other way around.

We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). We breathe because He first breathed life into us (Genesis 2:7). We sing because He rejoices over us with singing (Zephaniah 3:17). We know because He first knew us (Jeremiah 1:5).

To become the worshipers God desires, we must lay down our self-determination and take up a deep dependence on His revelation, so that we can surrender it all back to Him. The rain must fall before the plants can grow. Then the fruit can come forth and be offered back into God's purposes.

Key Truth:

When God says,
"I want all of you,"
it is because
He has first given
all of Himself.

Jesus' Invitation: Many people struggle to receive Jesus' love because they don't feel worthy of it, failing to realize that it is only because He first loved us that we are made worthy. Jesus invites all of us to simply allow Him to love us well and to receive all that He paid for on the cross. From there, we can begin to live from a place where His presence is our only source of worth.

RESPOND (Discussion Questions):

1. Where in your life do you find yourself relating to God based on what you can bring to Him rather than what He has already given to you?
2. What is one area where you have struggled to receive from God first, whether that is His love, grace, or affirmation? How has that affected your worship?
3. What would it practically look like this week for you to shift from self-dependence to dependence on God, allowing Him to pour into you before you try to give anything back?

BREAKTHROUGH (Let's Pray Together!)

Grab a phone and listen to or sing along with the song "Made to be Loved" by Chapel Music fellowship or "Reckless Love" by Bethel. As you listen as a group, practice surrendering ego, pride, shame, and guilt to God, exchanging them for His kindness, love, goodness, peace, and mercy.

Prayer prompt: Take some time as a group to pray, listen, and discern what the Lord might want to speak in love over different people in your group. Share these encouraging words with one another and then pray for each other to have the humility to receive them.

NEXT STEPS:

- Practice:** Make a daily prayer of receiving from God. It can be as simple as, "Jesus, I receive all that You have from Your heart for me today. Help me to see it and receive it."
- Read:** 1 John 4. Meditate on what God is highlighting to you regarding being a child who can receive all of Him in every part of your life.
- Listen and Worship:** Listen to Chapel Music Fellowship's song "Made to Be Loved" daily. Soak in it and let the lyrics become a confession you return to regularly.

SESSION FIVE

Believe: Worship in Remaining

READ :

Matthew 13:1-23 and John 6:25-71

REFLECT:

“Lord, where else would we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

Jesus often spoke in ways that, at best, confused people and, at worst, offended them. In this session, we will look at two moments in His ministry that are deeply connected. First, Jesus tells a parable about a farmer who sowed seed on different types of soil (Matthew 13:3–9; Mark 4:3–9; Luke 8:5–8). Some seed fell on a path and was eaten by birds. Some fell on shallow, rocky soil, where they sprang up quickly but withered because they had no roots. Some fell among thorns, where it grew but was choked out by surrounding weeds. And some fell on good soil and produced a great harvest. When the disciples ask Jesus to explain the parable, He reveals that the seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11). The seed that failed to grow was hindered by things like deception, trouble, and the cares and distractions of this world (Matthew 13:18–23). But the seed sown on good soil produced a harvest beyond expectation.

The second moment connects directly to the first. In John 6, Jesus tells a large crowd that if they want eternal life, they must “eat His flesh and drink His blood” (John 6:53–56). This teaching was so difficult that many of His followers turned away and stopped following Him (John 6:66). Jesus then turns to the twelve and asks, “Do you want to leave too?” (John 6:67). Simon Peter responds, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

What if the difference between unfruitful soil and fruitful soil is this simple: a life of worship that believes and remains in Jesus no matter what (John 15:4–7)? Peter chose to remain, and it ultimately led to a harvest far greater than he could have imagined, helping catalyze the birth of the early church (Acts 2:14–41).

Key Truth:

“Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading.”
— Oswald Chambers

Jesus' Invitation: Jesus' reference to eating His flesh and drinking His blood isn't as complicated as it may seem. He is inviting us to receive all His life into our lives. He desires a level of communion so intimate that it becomes like true sustenance for us. When we regularly taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8), His presence becomes our source and satisfaction. Then, like Peter, when challenges arise, our response becomes, "Where else would we go?"

So come, eat and drink freely of all that God is. This is worship expressed through a life of faithful obedience.

RESPOND (Discussion Questions):

1. In the parable describing the types of soil, which one do you most relate to right now? What specific things might be hindering God's word from taking deep root in your life?
2. What would it practically look like in your everyday life to "remain" in Jesus, and how might that lead to greater fruit in your worship and witness?

BREAKTHROUGH (Let's Pray Together!)

Part of building our faith in God is sharing a testimony with others about how faithful He has been to us. Take a few moments to share a testimony of God's miraculous work in your life, then lift up a prayer of gratitude to God together.

NEXT STEPS:

- Read:** Take time this week to study and meditate on The Parable of the Sower in Luke 8:1-15.
- Listen:** Listen to the song "My Foundation" by Cultivation Generation. Let the words sink in deep, and let them become a prayer for you.

SESSION SIX

Respond: Worship in Expression

Key Truth:

Good Fathers like hugs from their children.

READ :

Psalm 63:4, Psalm 95:6, Psalm 47:1, Psalm 149:3, Revelation 7:11

REFLECT:

Because we are physical beings, a large part of how we relate to and express our love for one another is through physical touch. We respond out of our affections for friends and family in many different ways. We bro-hug, give the classic Christian side hug, high-five, wave, and blow kisses. In many cultures, friends and family even greet one another with a kiss. In marriage, men and women hold hands, look into each other's eyes, kiss for longer than a millisecond, and share their bodies intimately. Very few people would view this as awkward or out of the ordinary.

But how do we relate physically to a non-physical, invisible God? We know He loves us with a love greater than any earthly love. We know He has given us all of Himself. And we know He is holy and gloriously worthy of our heart, mind, soul, and body.

The Bible is full of examples of how we are commanded to worship God physically. These commands are not mere suggestions but invitations to respond rightly to a good and holy God who desires a physical response to His presence. We respond through singing, shouting, dancing, raising our hands, kneeling in surrender, and even prostrating ourselves in awe, wonder, and honor. But why do these expressions seem relegated to "charismatics" by many?

Jesus once described a generation that would not respond appropriately to what God was doing among them. He said, "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn" (Matthew 11:16–17; see also Luke 7:31–32). The issue was not the music but a heart that refused to respond.

Maybe it is because we are proud. Maybe it is because we are afraid to look foolish. Or maybe it is because we are simply not relating to God in the way He deserves, because we do not understand how He desires to be responded to. Regardless, scripture does not excuse a lack of physical expression in worship based on personality or preference. It is a glorious invitation to surrender fear, ego, and embarrassment through a posture worthy of what Jesus has done in our lives.

What if God did not need our physical response in worship but desired it for our sake? What if it unlocked a fresh freedom in our lives? What if He is a good Father who delights in getting hugs from his children?

Jesus' Invitation: Jesus invites us to respond not out of obligation, but out of love and gratitude for all He has done for us.

RESPOND (Discussion Questions):

1. What would your response be if you were in the presence of an all-knowing, all-powerful, absolutely holy God whose infinite love was aimed right at you? Share your thoughts with your group.
2. What makes it hard to respond physically in worship to God? What do you think might help you overcome whatever holds you back?

BREAKTHROUGH (Let's Pray Together!)

Put on the song "All Eyes on Jesus" by Chapel Music Fellowship on someone's phone and invite people in your group to respond physically in worship.

Pray for your group that they would continue to grow in a deep affection and gratitude for all God has done and is doing, so that they cannot help but celebrate with all their heart, souls, minds, and bodies.

NEXT STEPS:

- Listen:** Put on Chapel Music Fellowship's album "You Are My First Love." Soak in everything God wants to speak to you as you listen, and practice different physical responses to worship at home.
- Journal:** Try writing out five different testimonies of God's goodness and faithfulness in your life. After you finish, respond in worship.
- Church:** At your next church service, during worship, try everything you practiced at home. Then find someone in your group to talk with about your experience.

SESSION SEVEN

Reflect: Worship in Mission

Key Truth:

Bringing God glory is more accurately understood as making His glory known throughout the Earth.

READ :

Amos 5:21-24

REFLECT:

The prophet Amos had a direct word of correction for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Simply put, their worship was empty and vain to God. “I hate all your show and pretense... I will not accept your burnt offerings... Away with your noisy hymns of praise” (Amos 5:21–23, NLT). God had rescued them out of slavery, yet they did not stand for justice. Instead, He says, “Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream” (Amos 5:24).

God had loved them faithfully, yet they had forgotten that His love is a deposit meant to be shared with the rest of the world. Israel’s mandate was to be a blessing to the nations (Genesis 12:2–3), but they had dammed up God’s favor for their own selfish gain.

Similarly, the church is warned not to lose its first love. Jesus says, “You have forsaken the love you had at first” (Revelation 2:4), calling His people back to wholehearted devotion.

Why does this matter so much to God? Because when God deposits Himself into our lives, it is a deposit of glory meant to shine before others. Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Because He has given Himself fully to us, He calls us to give ourselves fully for the sake of others.

Paul writes that “Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing His glory” (Colossians 1:27, NLT). And creation itself is longing for that glory to be revealed through His people: “For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who His children really are” (Romans 8:19, NLT).

We began this series by asking, “Are we damming up God’s river flowing into our lives?” Now we must also ask, “Are we damming up God’s river flowing out of our lives to others?”

Jesus' Invitation: Jesus invites us to receive from Him so that others can receive from Him through us. He is already working in the lives of the people around you. All you have to do is ask Him to show you where to step in and shine your light.

RESPOND (Discussion Questions):

1. Where in your life might your worship look outwardly present but inwardly disconnected from justice, love, or obedience?
2. What has God deposited into your life that may be meant to flow out to others, but has instead stayed contained?
3. What would it look like this week for God's "river" to flow through you in a tangible way to someone else?

BREAKTHROUGH (Let's Pray Together!)

Put on the song "Walk Humbly" by Chapel Music Fellowship. Invite your group to ask God to reveal His heart for the world to them and to give them courage and vision for letting their light shine.

Prayer prompt: Pray with those in your group. Ask God to give your group increasing measures of revelation into Jesus' invitation into "oneness."

NEXT STEPS:

- Ask:** Take time in the morning to ask Jesus to give you a clear opportunity to reveal His glory to someone that day or in general. Revealing God's glory can be as simple as asking a stranger how you can pray for them, or as involved as considering a mission trip.
- Share:** Tell the story you are experiencing to someone in your group as you continue to ask Jesus to help you shine His light.
- Plan:** Ask Jesus to help you make a longer-term plan for giving your life away for the sake of others. This could mean He gives you a vision and greater purpose at your school or job, or it could mean sponsoring a child in a developing country. Listen and let Him lead. A great indicator of what He is doing is to pay attention to what stirs your emotions regarding the people Jesus loves.

APPENDIX

Book Recommendations



Beholding-Deeping our Experience in God

by Strahan Coleman

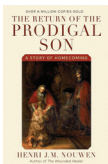
A theologically rich and poetic story of a man growing from glory to glory while beholding Jesus in everyday life.



Thirsting-Quenching our soul's deepest desire

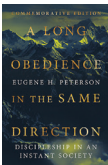
by Strahan Coleman

A book about our souls' eternal longing and finding our greatest thirst met in God.



The Return of the Prodigal Son

by Henri Nouwen
A book about a minister's journey of rediscovering the beautiful meaning of Christ's story of the prodigal son through Rembrandt's famous painting "Return of the Prodigal Son."



A Long Obedience in the Same Direction:

Discipleship in an Instant Society By Eugene H. Peterson



How to Worship a King

by Zach Neese
A great and biblically grounded book on the form and function of worship in music and song.

Chapel Music Fellowship resources:



Scan the QR Code to download music from Chapel Music Fellowship.





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