

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a paved road that curves through a dry, hilly landscape. The road is light-colored and leads towards a distant, hazy horizon. The hills are covered in sparse, dry vegetation. The overall color palette is muted, with various shades of brown and tan.

firstmbchurch

# my **PATH**

A discipleship plan for developing  
**fully devoted followers of Christ.**

**Group Study Guide**

**3 VALUES | 1 MISSION | 6 PRIORITIES**

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## LESSON 3

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# LIVE A LIFE OF WORSHIP

*... because we owe God our best.*

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### THIS SHOULD LOOK FAMILIAR.

We have three values, one mission, and six priorities.

**Our mission:** First MB Church exists to help people find and follow Jesus.

**Our values:** We aim to be real people, with a real faith, making a real impact.

**Our priorities:** To fulfill our mission and values, we believe we should:

- 1) Connect with a few, 2) Spend time with God, 3) Live a life of worship,  
4) Engage in missions, 5) Serve somewhere, and 6) Share somehow.

Sunday morning has finally arrived. You get up, get ready, put on your Sunday best, and head off to church.

For those who have young children this can be an agonizing time.

Realizing you are five minutes late, you speed a little on your way. You frantically park the car and run into the building. Someone greets you at the door with a friendly, “Hello! How are you?” You respond with, “Blessed and highly favored!” even though you feel worn out and stressed.

You walk into the service with the music already playing. Worship is in full swing. The words are on the screen and people are singing. As the music plays you slowly begin to join in. Is this what it means to worship?

## Why?

Why do we worship? In part **we worship because we are wired to**. We are created to worship. It is part of who we are.

We are all worshipping *something*. The question—and the choice in front of us—is *who or what will we worship?*

Scripture teaches that we are to CHOOSE to give our worship to God, and to nothing, and no one, else (see Exodus 20:2-4). To help us with this, the entire Bible is full of worship. Passages throughout all of Scripture refer to worship. Worship is not an option even though there can be different expressions of it. The Psalms are a good example: Psalms 66:4 says, “All the earth will worship You and sing praise to You. They will sing praise to Your name.”

Louie Giglio states: “Worship is our response, both personal and corporate, to God for who He is, and what He has done; expressed in and by the things we say and the way we live.”<sup>1</sup>

Worship is a response. Worship helps you keep perspective to who you are in relationship to who God is. It is something you do both privately and corporately.

The ‘corporate’—or community—expression of worship is what we do together every Sunday. During this gathered time, praise is being offered to God in many different ways.

Music is the most obvious tool we use in worship. In Scripture, singing isn’t given as an ‘option,’ it’s *assumed* to be an expression of praise. There is power in the use of music that transcends simple spoken language, and *you* didn’t invent that power. When we gather and sing, we aren’t prepping each other for a message or doing karaoke; we are inviting each other to re-dial our focus. We are taking the ‘playlist’ away from the enemy for a minute. We are building faith, illuminating God’s faithfulness, underscoring theology, and announcing God is alive!

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1 Louie Giglio, *The Air I Breathe* (p. 53). 2003. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books.

## But That's Not All.

But singing isn't the only expression of worship. During our community church gatherings, prayers are offered on behalf of the group. Gifts and offerings are shared. Stories are told about what God is doing. Truth from the Bible is taught. We express adoration, praise, submission, thankfulness, joy, reverence... all of it.

And there is something that happens spiritually when we do this that cannot be replicated when we are alone. The Spirit of God moves powerfully through His children when we set aside these times to be together. **The goal of**

**corporate worship is to proclaim truth about God as beautifully and effectively as possible and follow God's voice.**

Sometimes when life is rough and your own sense of worship is waning you need to be surrounded by worshipping believers. Corporate worship can lift you up when you cannot lift up yourself. Think of a time when life was particularly hard. What does it do for your spirit to be actively engaged in corporate worship?

## Private, Too.

What about private worship? Remember: *worship is not an option*. If you have breath in your lungs, you have a purpose. **You are made to worship**. This may mean broadening your definition of worship from Sunday mornings to a way of life.

In John 4 the Samaritan woman was questioning Jesus about

### Reasons for Corporate Worship

1. **We need encouragement** as we live out our faith. We aren't alone.
2. **God values community** over "lone-rangers."
3. **We can rejoice** with those who rejoice and **grieve** with those who grieve.
4. **Recalibrate** our view of God.
5. **Redirects** and **refocuses** each of us.
6. **Builds our faith** as we experience God.
7. Gives us a vision of **heaven**.

the location to practice true worship. Jesus responds in John 4:23-24 by saying,

“But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

It is interesting in this passage the true worshipers are ones who worship in spirit and truth. This is who God is looking for.

**You don't have to be a Biblical scholar.**

**You don't have to perform some mighty act of faith.**

God is searching for people who worship Him internally with their spirits. The very core of a worshiper is to bring praise to God.

Through the act of worship you become attached to God. This can be done in a wide variety of ways. You can be bowing down in reverence, adoration, and submission. You can be expressing joy, thankfulness, and praise. You can be listening for God to open a door to serve someone, and then take the risk and do it!

However the act of worship is displayed, it is important to remember **this is a lifestyle to be lived, not an activity to be done.** Living a life of worship means arranging your life so you can cultivate the space where you connect with God AND regularly gather to worship God with a community of Jesus-followers.

## Why Not?

What keeps you from worshipping?

**Pride.**

You forget you are worshipping for an audience of one. It doesn't matter what the person beside you or behind you thinks. You are not seeking their approval. When you are worshipping in spirit and truth, it doesn't matter what people around you think. Too often more credence is given to people's opinion than about what God seeks.

### **Hardness of heart can prevent worship.**

Life can be tough. Rejection, disappointment, and loss of a loved one all can harden a heart. Instead of lifting up hands of praise, you lift up fists of frustration. You seek to worship God on your terms. It seems a lot easier to shut your heart off than to possibly have it hurt again.

### **Often times worship is tied to tradition.**

You tend to be the most comfortable worshipping with the way you grew up. This can be taken a step further. Some think their personal tradition of worship is the only correct form, and somehow all the others ways of worshipping have fallen short. Worship is all about drawing closer to God. This can be done in a variety of ways. At the end of this lesson there will be a list of different ways people connect with God. Read over the list and figure out which one resonates with you.

## **Two Worshipers**

Luke 7:36-50 records a story of a woman who washes Jesus' feet with her tears. Jesus had gone to eat at the house of a local Pharisee. While there this woman came in and poured out her alabaster jar of perfume on Jesus' feet.

During this time period an alabaster jar of perfume was more than likely a family heirloom. The Pharisee starts judging not only the woman, but Jesus. The Pharisee thought if Jesus were a prophet He would know who is touching Him. She was a sinner.

This could be titled the story of two worshipers. The Pharisee is sitting back with his arms crossed judging how people come to Jesus. The woman pours out her most valuable possession and uses her hair and tears to wash Jesus' feet. The Pharisee should have known how to worship, but didn't. The woman just recognized who she was in perspective to who Jesus is and what He has done. Only one was worshipping in spirit and truth. Which side of the story do you find yourself on?

It is possible to worship externally and not internally. The Pharisees mastered this type of worship. Matthew 15:8-9 (NIV)

reads, “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.”

When you worship, **where is your heart?** Are you living a life of worship or are you just honoring God with your lips?

There are three characters in the story of the woman with perfume: Jesus, who is to be worshiped; the Pharisee, who should have been worshiping; and the sinful woman, who poured her heart out to God.

**All of us worship something.** It is a reflection of where you spend your time and money. Where are *you* in this story?



## Nine Types of Worshipers

For further study, read the book *Sacred Pathways* by Gary Thomas to learn how you most easily connect with God. Out of these seven types, which do you identify with the most?

- 1. Naturalists: Loving God Outdoors.**  
These people are moved by God's creation.
- 2. Sensates: Loving God with the Senses.**  
These want to be filled with signs, sounds, and smells that overwhelm them during worship.
- 3. Traditionalists: Loving God through Ritual and Symbolism.** They are fed by the “historic” aspects of faith.
- 4. Ascetics: Loving God in Solitude and Simplicity.**  
Leave them alone to pray in silence and simplicity.
- 5. Activists: Loving God Through Confrontation.**  
They worship by standing against evil and injustice.
- 6. Caregivers: Loving God by Loving Others.**  
Their faith is built by interacting with others.
- 7. Enthusiasts: Loving God with Mystery and Celebration.**  
These want to experience, feel, and celebrate joyful worship.
- 8. Contemplatives: Loving God through Adoration.**  
They seek to love God with pure, deep, and bright praise.
- 9. Intellectuals: Loving God with the Mind.**  
“Faith” is to be understood as much as experienced.

## Discussion Questions

1. How would you define worship?
2. What does it mean to live a life of worship?
3. What are some obstacles to worship in your life? How do you overcome them?
4. Read Luke 7:36-50. What is the main difference between the ways the Pharisee and the sinful woman approach Jesus?
5. Read Psalm 148. All of creation was made to worship. In what ways can you look at creation and see it was made to worship?
6. How have different worship styles affected the church?
7. Which comes more easily to you: participating in corporate worship, or worshipping God on your own? Why do you think that is?
8. Why do you think God wants us to prioritize worshipping Him?





 firstmbchurch

real people | real faith | real impact  
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