



## Go! Worship

### Session 1 – Worship God

#### Revelation 5:1-11

**Key Verse:** *They sing a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation,”* Revelation 5:9 (New Revised Standard Version, NRSV).

### Introduction

Worship is an expression of respect, of reverence and of awe. In the New Testament worship is directed to God and associated with the Greek word “proskyneō,” which means to bow down. When one worships he or she shows honor, pays deference, exalts, praises, pray to, lauds or extols. The antonyms are to blaspheme, loathe, despise.

Worship can be reflected in song, meditation, study of the Scriptures, giving and receiving of offerings, preaching, celebration of the Lord’s Supper and many other components of a public gathering. Informal groups may form for devotions, prayer and fasting. But worship can take place with one person opening their heart to the Holy Spirit’s promptings, being available to God on a personal Sabbath. Worship is to come into agreement with the Psalmist who said, “Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture,” Psalm 100:3 (NRSV).

- *What are some other ways you have experienced worship?*
- *How would you describe your most recent worship experience?*
- *What expectation did you have in coming to that worship event? Was it realized?*

In The Revelation of Jesus Christ the Apostle John is given a unique opportunity to see worship in the throne room of God. He witnesses things that confuse and startle, but he also receives great insight into the wonderful story of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He describes four incredible flying creatures that day and night sing, “Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come,” Revelation 4:8 (NRSV). He also records the song that the twenty-four elders sing, “You are worthy, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created,” Revelation 4:11 (NRSV). They never grow weary of exalting God. Our worship need never be dull or dated if we remember that worship is foremost about honoring God for what God has done for us.

### READ Revelation 5:1-4

In the ancient world books weren’t bound in the same methods in use today. It was typical for writings to be recorded on roll of papyrus or parchment or animal skin. Documents of critical value or subject matter would have a seal of clay or wax to ensure that prying eyes did not read and/or tamper with the message.

- *What are your impressions/feelings about the throne room of God?*
- *Why does John weep bitterly when no one is found to open the scroll? (Time is at an impasse. God's redemptive plan for all creation is awaiting someone to open the document.)*
- *Over what do we weep bitterly? What troubles our waking hours?*

**READ** Revelation 5:5-8

But there is good news! The Lamb is identified as the Lion of the tribe of Judah (see Genesis 49:9-10) and the Root of David (see Isaiah 11:1,10 and Romans 15:12). David is Jesse's son (Ruth 4:22). The Lamb is described as having been slaughtered or slain. Lambs were used for sacrifice at the Passover and for the daily sacrifices. This Lamb is unique in that it has seven horns and seven eyes, and further explained as the seven spirits of God (Revelation 1:4 and Isaiah 11:2-3). The horns represent power and strength, while the eyes allude to God's ability to see everything, everywhere, every time.

- *What happens in this scene? (Someone worthy has come to receive the scroll.)*
- *What statement do the living creatures and the twenty-four elders make with their action? (They recognize the deity of the Lamb, which was slain but is now very much alive.)*

**READ** Revelation 5:9-14

- *What is the new song that is being sung? (They are singing of the redemptive work of Jesus. "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us," Ephesians 1:7-8a (NRSV).)*
- *Who is blessed by the Lamb's sacrifice? (Saints from every tribe and language and people and nation. God loves people, all kinds.)*
- *Who is singing these new songs? (An ever-increasing group from the four living creatures to all living beings throughout creation.)*
- *Why are these songs important? (They affirm the great sacrifice of Jesus in restoring what was broken through sin. God wins and we can be glad we belong to God.)*

**READ** Colossians 1:13-14, Titus 2:11-14, and 1 Peter 1:18-21

- *How might one of the aforementioned passages from the New Testament influence your attitude about private worship? About worship in the faith community?*

**PRAYER:** Holy God, you give us forgiveness of sins through Jesus and welcome us into your family. We belong to you! How amazing is your kindness. May our zeal for you be seen in our prayers, our singing, our attentiveness to your Holy Spirit and our service to one another. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen.