

UNIT 1

**GRADE
10**

LESSON 4

Aim & Objectives:

To introduce students to the nature, development and content of Christian worship

Worship

Theme:
Creation worships The Creator

Teacher's Preparation:

1. Study of worship based on biblical understanding.
2. Characteristics of Christian worship. Invocation is to invoke and arouse one's whole self, body mind and spirit to worship the Divine Lord. Physical Supplication is submitting to the will of God through the act of worship.
3. Mar Thoma tradition of worship vs. other styles of worship.

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Isaiah 6:1-8 (NRSV)

¹In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple.²Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.³And one called to another and said:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’

⁴The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke.⁵And I said: ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’

⁶Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.⁷The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: ‘Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.’⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’

Acts 2:42-47 (NRSV)

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad



and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Other references—Deuteronomy 6:4-14, Isaiah 1:11-17, Matthew 22:37-40 & Revelation 4:8-11

Student's Introduction to the Lesson:

Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!

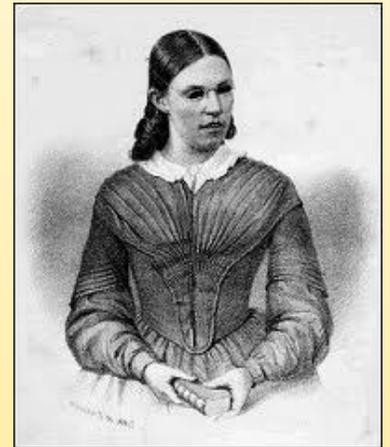
Frances Jane Crosby born March 24, 1820, known as the "Queen of Gospel Song Writers" is not only the author of this famous hymn, but almost 8000 total hymns. Frances was born in Webster, New York to a Puritan family. At the age of 6 weeks, Frances had become sick and developed inflammation of her eyes. She was taken to a physician who was believed by the family to have treated her condition incorrectly and ultimately led to blindness.

Crosby was raised by her mother Mercy Crosby and maternal grandmother, Eunice Paddock Crosby. These women grounded Frances in Protestant Christian principles, helping her to memorize long passages from the Bible. Frances became an active member of the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City.

Crosby never allowed the tragedy to interfere with her worship of God. Instead she allowed her situation to help her focus more on her responsibility to worship God.

Crosby remarked: "It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me."

*This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long;*



Bible Exposition:

People of all ages have tried to discover the Creator of this universe whose work they saw, but whom they did not know. Creation responds to the creator in different ways. As human beings, we are responding to God through our worship based on our understanding of Him through the Bible and traditions. We continue the worship which has been passed along to us by the generations and revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.

1. Different aspects of worship

A. What is worship?

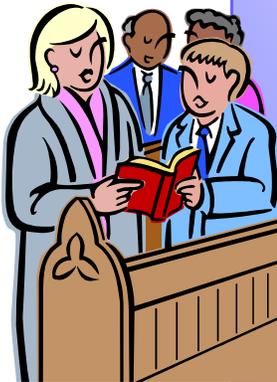
The word “worship” originates from the Old English word “worth-ship”. Worship means worthiness, respect or reverence paid to the Divine Being. This means giving God His value; God is really worthy of our total self-offering. In worship believers communicate with God almighty. Christian worship is the human response to the revelatory work of God in the past, present and future. It is the offering of adoration and thanksgiving for His awesome intervention into human history.

B. Purpose of Worship

Worship is the highest spiritual activity of humans as it is a bridge of fellowship with the Divine. It is the mystical union of creation with the Creator that ushers renewal and revelation. It is to recall the salvation offered to us by God in Christ. Worship encourages the believers to experience God, speak to Him and receive his commission. Worship is to fulfill God’s purpose of creation.

C. Elements of Worship

Worship is not a chaotic compilation of prayers, songs, and rituals. It is an orderly symphony of invocations, music and physical supplications. Wherein the essential elements of symbolism, mystery, music, prostration, etc are common to all religious traditions. In Christian worship the important elements are adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication (intercession) and dedication. The word of God and the sacraments are at the heart of our worship. The Holy Communion is the most distinguishing mark of Christian worship which encompasses all these elements together.



2. Biblical Understanding of Worship

A. Old Testament

In the light of the Old Testament (OT), we get a historical and chronological development of worship in the Israelite nation. In the earlier community they worshipped God as their response to the revelation of God in their daily life experience.

They had some OT scriptures and psalms used in their worship. As a part of their worship, they had “sacrifices” of different types. For a certain period, worship was centered on the Ark of the Covenant/Ark of the Testimony. (This was a chest containing the Tablets of Stone on which the Ten Commandments were inscribed, Aaron’s rod, a jar of manna and the first Torah scroll as written by Moses which was accepted as the presence of God, Ref. Exodus 25:22; 2 Chronicles

35:3; 1 Kings 8:9.) They used different types of instruments in their worship. They had priests, prophets, and leaders and specific laws to conduct these offerings of sacrifices as and when they needed it.

In the OT, people worshipped in a disciplined manner according to the laws of worship. Jesus attended this type of worship in the synagogue. Through the life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the meaning of synagogue worship was transformed while maintaining the aspects of worship.

B. New Testament:

In the New Testament, the reformative developments of worship centered on the person of Christ, His teachings, resurrection, ascension and second coming. New Testament affirms that God's grace cannot be achieved by offering sacrifices of any kind. The sacrifice of Christ makes God's grace effective once and for all. The early Christian church refined a new form of worship guided by the apostles, who were the eyewitnesses of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Here worship is offered in the name of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Worship in spirit and truth is our relationship to God by Jesus Christ who is the truth, through the Holy Spirit. This worship is not limited to church service alone but to every aspect of our life.

This is what Jesus taught in His public ministry written in the Gospel according to St. John 4: 24, "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

3. Characteristics of Christian worship.

A. Individual & Corporate worship:

Christian faith and worship is founded in community. It is the divine experience of the mystical and corporate body of the faithful redeemed, reconciled and united. The church is a worshiping community. Jesus says "where two or three are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them" (Mt. 18:20). Extension of corporate worship has to be revealed in our individual lives.

B. Expression of Faith:

- Prayer
- Bible reading
- Obedience
- Giving of resources (time, finances, skills & talents)
- Serving and helping others
- Mission (Sharing Faith & Witnessing)
- Building relationships



God driven life

4. Mar Thoma Tradition of Worship

The philosophical and rational quest of western world has significantly impacted the spirituality and doctrines of the Church. The many reform movements within the Western Church gave birth to numerous denominations bringing about alternative styles of worship.

In a similar manner The Mar Thoma Syrian Church follows the Eastern Christian Tradition in its worship pattern. The Mar Thoma Church is rich in its heritage. The worship services which are filled with **biblically sound prayers** and at the same time gestures and symbols, has an important role to formulate and strengthen the worshipper's faith.

Some examples are the Cross & Candle, censor/incense, kiss of peace, vestments, bread and wine.

Symbols and signs in worship is the mere human attempt to comprehend the immense truths of God and faith and the virtues of love, sacrifice and hope that elude the linguistic parameters. This makes worship a more personal, relevant & powerful experience.

Group Discussion:

Think of all the different styles of Christian worship. Analyze the similarities and differences with the styles compared to the style of worship Jesus participated in.



Values For Life

Christian worship is a personal and corporate witness of God's faithfulness. According to J.G Davies, a famous theologian, "worship is the breathing in and mission is the breathing out". This inherent relationship thrusts the faithful into the world for service and sacrifice as the completion to the worship experience.

Life Response

Some people are called to lead worship. Others are called to assist in the worship and still a congregation is called to sing praises and worship God. One major responsibility of the congregation is to earnestly pray for those who lead the worship, who speak from the Word of God, and for all the worshippers. We should also ask God to focus our minds and hearts so that we may be able to offer sacrifices that

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Memory Verse:

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

Romans 12:1

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us through your son Jesus. Give us your grace and mercy to live a life pleasing to you. Help us to offer the sacrifice of praise and thanks giving. Help us to love you and love one another in worship to you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Lesson Review:

Short Answers

1. The uniqueness of Christianity and our Order of Worship
2. The importance of individual and corporate worship
3. How Christianity is different from other religions.
4. Trace the Jewish roots of Christianity – (Jesus a Jew and authors of Bible mostly Jews)

Essay

Discuss how worship in Old Testament times evolved into worship in New Testament times.

Discuss how New Testament worship embodies the teachings of Christ.