



Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups

Embodied Worship

Preached by Daniel Grothe

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Summary

Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.

This sermon begins a new series called "Come Let Us Worship," focused on what it means to be the worshipping people of God. Pastor Daniel walks through Scripture to show that worship has never been merely internal or intellectual. From the Old Testament through the New Testament, the people of God expressed their worship physically through lifting hands, clapping, dancing, shouting, singing, and bowing. Pastor Daniel connects these practices to the story of Israel's liberation from slavery in Egypt, explaining that physical expressions of worship are a natural response to the freedom God has given us.

He also makes a compelling case that embodied worship is not just emotional but genuinely formational. Drawing on a neuroscience study of London cab drivers, the pastor illustrates how physical practice literally reshapes the brain. In the same way, when we worship God with our whole bodies, it reshapes our hearts, retunes our appetites, and works the reality of God's lordship into us at a

deep level. Worship is not about manufacturing hype or a group experience. It is the truest expression of our humanity, and as we offer our bodies as living sacrifices, we are transformed into the likeness of Jesus.

Key Passages

- Psalm 150:1-6
- Psalm 63:4
- Psalm 134:2
- 2 Samuel 6:14
- Psalm 95:1
- Psalm 47:1

Opening Prayer

Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own

Heavenly Father, we come before you today as your people, grateful for the freedom you have given us. As we open your Word and discuss what it means to worship you with our whole selves, we ask that you open our hearts to receive whatever you want to teach us today. Remove distractions, pride, or walls that might keep us from being honest with one another and with you. Holy Spirit, lead this conversation. May we leave today not just with new information, but with a renewed desire to give you the worship you deserve. In Jesus name, **Amen**.

Getting Going

Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.

What is one moment in your life, inside or outside of church, where you found yourself completely caught up in expressing joy or excitement without even thinking about it?

Discussion Questions

Answer as many of these questions as time and interest allow.

1. Pastor Daniel said that worship in Scripture is not merely internal. It is audible, physical, tangible, disciplined, and emotional. Does that description match how you have typically thought about worship? Why or why not?
2. The sermon connected the act of lifting hands in worship to the image of Israel breaking free from the chains of slavery in Egypt. How does understanding that historical background change the way you think about physical expressions of worship?
3. Pastor Daniel said we freely express ourselves at concerts and sporting events but sometimes hold back in church. Why do you think that is, and what would it look like to bring that same uninhibited energy into worship?

4. Embodied worship is formational, not just emotional. It changes us over time. Have you ever experienced a season of consistent, engaged worship that seemed to shape your character or perspective? What did that look like?
5. The London cab driver study showed that physical practice literally changed the structure of the brain. How does that idea challenge or encourage you when it comes to building habits of worship in your daily life, not just on Sundays?
6. Pastor Daniel encouraged us to clap, dance, kneel, laugh, and move freely in worship. Are there any physical expressions of worship that feel uncomfortable or unfamiliar to you? What do you think is behind that discomfort?
7. When we kneel before God, we are physically declaring that there is one who is Lord over us, and that this act begins to change us from the inside out. How does humility in worship connect to humility in the rest of your life?
8. Worship is the truest expression of our humanity, and when we love someone, we find ways to let that love be expressed through our bodies. Does that idea reshape the way you approach your time with God?

Making It Personal

Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life.

This week, choose one physical expression of worship that is outside your comfort zone. It might be kneeling in prayer before you start your day, lifting your hands during a worship song, or simply singing out loud when you are alone in your car or at home. Practice it intentionally every day this week. At the end of the week, reflect on whether it felt different by day seven than it did on day one.

Key Takeaways

Commit to memory one point from the message before dismissing.

- Worship in Scripture is never purely internal. It is expressed through the whole body, including singing, shouting, clapping, dancing, lifting hands, and kneeling.
- Physical expressions of worship are rooted in the story of God's people being set free. Just as Israel broke free from the chains of Egypt, our worship is a declaration of the freedom we have in Christ.
- Embodied worship is formational, not just emotional. Just as physical training reshapes the brain, consistently worshiping God with our whole bodies reshapes our hearts, appetites, and character over time.

- When we kneel or bow before God, we are physically reinforcing the truth that He is Lord. This act of humility in worship cultivates humility in every other area of our lives.
- Worship is not about manufacturing hype or a group experience. It is the truest expression of our humanity, and offering our bodies as living sacrifices is how the terrain of God's kingdom gets worked into us.

Closing Prayer

Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.

Lord, thank you for this time together. Thank you for the reminder that you are worthy of every part of us, not just our thoughts, but our voices, our hands, our feet, and our whole lives. As we leave today, we ask that you make us a people who worship you with everything we have. Where there is pride or self-consciousness that holds us back, soften it. Where there is weariness or distraction, renew us. May the worship we offer you this week, in this room and in our everyday lives, begin to form us more and more into the image of your Son. We love you, Lord. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
Amen.