

Worship Begins at the Altar

Big Idea:

Throughout the Old Testament worship experiences began at an altar. This was true for Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and many others. The altar has often been seen as a place of sacrifice, which it is, but it was that sacrifice that often created the pathway to authentic worship. This is still true for us today, especially when considered in the light of Romans 12:1

Icebreaker:

Open your small group meeting with this simple question: When you think of worship what is the first thing that comes to mind?

THINK and EXAMINE:

1. Read Romans 12:1 in the following translation versions, and answer the following questions:

NIV- Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

NLT- And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

MSG- So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering.

YLT- I call upon you, therefore, brethren, through the compassions of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice -- living, sanctified, acceptable to God -- your intelligent service.

2. What common elements do you see in these different translations? What slight differences?

3. According to Paul, what is the sacrifice that we bring to the altar/offer?

4. How could placing your life- your whole self- before God as a sacrifice bring you to a place of true worship? In what way is this sacrifice actually what worship is really about?

THIS WEEK: Take some time daily to ask this important question: have I allowed myself to limit what qualifies as worship- in other words, is worship what takes place on a Sunday morning, or is it more than this? Focus on ways in which you can offer your whole self to God as an act of worship.