**This Thing We Call Worship—Week 3 (Praise and Worship)**

**2/19/17**

Hey everyone! We’re in Week 2 of our new worship series and today we are going to be focusing on “Praise and Worship.” We are specifically going to talk about praising and worshiping God in a group setting like this one.

**Take Home Point (THP): Praise is an outward expression of how much we love God!**

Here’s how the dictionary defines “worship”—*the act of showing respect and love for a god especially by praying with other people who believe in the same god; the act of worshipping God or a god;* ***excessive admiration for someone***

That last part that says “excessive admiration for someone” really stands out to me. Everyone worships someone or something. It might be God but it also may be something or someone else. In fact, I think we sometimes worship multiple things. A good indicator of what or who we worship is this the answer to these questions: **what consumes our thoughts? What do we think about? What do we get excited about? What brings us the most joy?**

**(Leaders Note: Share a light-hearted or humorous example of a time when you were infatuated with something or someone. It could be a celebrity, band, athlete, TV show, etc.**

Now, I know it might seem silly to think that I was worshiping in that situation…BUT…I definitely had “excessive admiration.” Sometimes, we allow other things, even GOOD things, to distract us or serve as SUBSTITUTES for actually worshiping God. It may not be an athlete, celebrity, or band…but it could be your favorite sport, getting good grades, or being the most popular kid in your class.

My question for you is…**WHAT ARE YOU WORSHIPING?**

Psalm 95:6 says, *“Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.”* This is a very important verse because we are worshiping God, who is the Maker. He is the one who created us. He created us to worship Him!

When we gather here each week, we spend time worshiping and PRAISING God through music. The dictionary defines the word “praise” as—*to comment; to applaud; to express approval of someone or something; to celebrate in words or in song; to magnify; to glorify.*

We also express praise through reading the Bible, prayer, and having conversations about God with our friends and leaders. We get to share stories about the cool stuff He is doing in our life. These are all ways to praise God!

The book of Psalms, which we just read from, also has some great Scriptures about praise. Check out what these verses say about the word “praise.”

*Psalm 150:1—“Praise the Lord, Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.”*

*Psalm 92:1—It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to the Most High.*

When we praise God, we are thanking him. We are expressing joy and excitement for all that He has done for us. We are asking for help. We are telling Him that He is so awesome! Now, there will be times where we’ve had a good week or good day and this will come naturally to us. However, there will be other times when we haven’t had a good day or a good week…and we WON’T feel like praising God.

**We praise God because He is always good…not just when we’re good.**

**If praising and worshiping God completely depended upon our emotions, I think we would praise Him less often. Our emotions are real and we should pay attention to them…even if they are reflected at God (when we feel sad, hurt, or we’re mad at Him). However, we cannot allow our emotions to stop us from worshiping.**

**What are you worshiping in your life? What or who are you praising in your life? As a follower of Jesus Christ, we must recognize how important of a role that praise and worship has in our life. Let’s pray!**