



Read Article about Mother Teresa

(www.americancatholic.org/Features/Teresa/WhoWasTeresa.aspx)

When we read stories like Mother Teresa's we do not usually think of worship. We think of service, social-justice, humility, and extreme generosity. Despite these adjectives that accurately describe some of her commitments and passions, Mother Teresa's life was founded on something far greater than mere words and ideas. The life of this

Missionary of Charity was rooted in the worship of the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Her life was an act of worship. Mother Teresa was one of the greatest testimonies of the Gospel and an obedient follower of The Way.

(Questions in red should be answered on the Student Reflection Page at the end of this lesson and brought with you to your next small group)

Q1: Who was Mother Teresa? What was the purpose of her life and mission?

Q2: Why can it be said that Mother Teresa's life was a form of worship?

When we think of worship, a lot of ideas come to mind. Some of these ideas are helpful, others are more of a product of our culture and the particular way our church has decided to organize, gather together, and communicate.

Q3: Define worship in your own words. What are some of the ways we worship? Where can/do we worship? Do you have a favorite way to worship?

When I think of worship, the first thing that typically comes to mind is a song or music. The Christian community has worshipped through this medium for centuries. The Psalms are even a collection of worship songs. The rhythm and lyrics of these songs, including contemporary and ancient pieces, are composed in a way that is supposed to connect our minds, hearts, and sentiments (i.e. emotional feelings) to God. We can meditate on them individually, hear them through headphones, or sing them corporately in church. Some songs we like and others we do not. Some like them played on a guitar, others like them as traditional hymns. Sometimes we enjoy worship. Other times we just go through the motions and recite the lyrics without any connection.

There has got to be more to worship.

Worship is about so much more.

Read Romans 12:1-8

Q4: How does Paul in this passage describe worship? How do we worship?

Worship through music is beautiful and biblical. We have done it this way as Christians for a long time. Yet, worship through music is only a small portion of what it means to worship. Worship is more of a way of life. We become like what or who we worship. Worship shapes how we think, who/what we follow, and what we value and consider good. Worship of God, made known in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, transforms or *renews* all these things...

...be transformed by the renewing of your minds (*how you think*)...
...so you can discern the will of God (*who you follow*)...
...what is good and acceptable and perfect (*what we value*)...

Paul says that our worship is a living sacrifice.¹ We are to come alive in the worship of God and to pursue His dreams for the world in creative ways. We can sing songs- yes. But God calls us to so much more than that. He calls us to a new way of being human, a new way of thinking about the world, and a new way of sacrifice. Christian worship is living and active in the world.

I think that's why Mother Teresa did what she did. She was worshipping.

Worship is not only difficult to define, but also difficult to limit to one thing, person, or movement. We worship a lot of things and a lot of people- *other than God*. Our lives are modeled by the trends and patterns of the world set by people, the media, television, and corporations. They determine what we should view as *good, acceptable, and perfect*. The culture around us demands our worship. This can make it difficult to follow and worship God alone. Yet Paul says, "Do not be conformed to this world."

Q5: What do the media, popular icons (people), and culture say is good, acceptable, and perfect? How do they influence how we think, who we follow, and what we value? (ex. Consumption- have to have the most and the newest cell phone, computer, iPod, etc.)

We can even worship our own abilities. We may be great at soccer, skilled in the piano, or accomplished as an artist or dancer and so we exhaust ourselves in order to make the best team, receive the best score, and win the highest award. This is often done in order to impress people other than ourselves. However, our worship is to transform even our gifts and abilities. God has created us and blessed us with amazing talents, including those mentioned above, all which can be used to worship as a living sacrifice. Yet we often worship the skill instead of the *giver* of the skill- God.

Mother Teresa worshipped through her gift of compassion, prophetic voice, and creative spirit by serving the poor, afflicted, and sick. She used her gifts and transformed the lives of others.

Be a living sacrifice. Make the worship of God your lifestyle. You might not be called to move to Calcutta (or maybe you will be – who knows!) but you can use your gifts and talents, your life, for worship wherever you are.

Q6: What gifts, talents, and /or abilities do you have? What are you really good at?

Q7: How can you use these gifts for worship?

¹ This must have been really strange to hear as a first-century Christian, many who were Jewish. After all, they were used to sacrificing and killing animals as a part of their worship. Paul now says worship is a *living sacrifice*. That's transformational!

Q1: Who was Mother Teresa? What was the purpose of her life and mission?

Q2: Why can it be said that Mother Teresa's life was a form of worship?

Q3: Define worship in your own words. What are some of the ways we worship? Where can/do we worship? Do you have a favorite way to worship?

Q4: How does Paul in this passage describe worship? How do we worship?

Q5: What are some of the activities, trends, fashions, and popular icons (people) that often determine what is *good, acceptable, and perfect*? (ex. Consumerism- the need to purchase and possess the newest, most, and best stuff).

Q6: What gifts, talents, and /or abilities do you have? What are you really good at?

Q7: How can you use this gift as a form of worship?



The Apostle's Creed was adopted by the early church in efforts to convey what they believed about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the church, and other elements of the faith. It is a *creed*, or confession of faith, which we still recite today. Throughout the year we will work on understanding this beautiful tradition within the community of Christian faith.

Read begin to memorize the Apostles Creeds which describes what the church believes about God.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.