

THE LIFE

EMBRACING THE LIFE OF A CHRIST-FOLLOWER

Part 2: The Picture Of A Disciple
Unit 5: A Disciple Has A Desire To Worship God
Lesson 40: Worshipping God Through Song

What we want students to learn: That as Christ-followers, we were created to worship God through singing and music.

What we want students to do with what they've learned: To consider how singing praise and worship to God impacts them and their faith.

Scripture Focus: Psalm 96:1-6

Supporting Scripture: Psalm 33:1-3

Overview: One of the main ways we were created to bring worship to the Lord is through song. This is probably a fact not lost on your students as it is the primary way in which we think about worship. While you'll have the chance to broaden their horizons on worship in a later lesson, this lesson is designed to allow them to think about how they relate to God in singing praise and worship to Him, and what it does to their faith to do so.

Teacher Prep Video

Each *LIFE* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your *LIFE* lesson 40 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 40, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

Bible Background

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book. *The Setting* informs you of what's happening in and around the passage. *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible Study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the *Bible Background* to help summarize the context.

The Details

- **Author:** God inspired various authors to write a majority of the Psalms in their era, including seventy-three by David, twelve by Asaph, eleven by the Korahites and two by Solomon. Heman, Ethan and Moses each wrote one, while the authorship of fifty other Psalms remain unknown.
- **Time frame:** The Psalms were written during different eras of Israel's history, spanning from 1100 BC (i.e Psalm 29, 68) to 400 BC (i.e. Psalm 119).
- **Purpose:** The Psalms are inspired by God to poetically reflect humanity's journey with Him. Each psalm serves a different purpose, such as a personal or communal lament, hymn, song, reflection or declaration. Many of these were set to music and intended to be shared publicly, even when sharing a revealing confession (i.e. Psalm 51).

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The Setting

The Psalms are known for their emphasis on worship and praise. Not only do they emphasize the importance of worship in every season of life, but they expound central truths which lay the foundations for the use of musical worship in the church and the life of the believer. In Psalm 96 this can be clearly seen in the praise and adoration of the psalmist. Psalm 96, one which was used by David in his procession in 1 Chronicles 16:8-36 at the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, is a song which emphasizes God's hand in anointing Israel as His people. It proclaims the kingship of God above all other supposed gods of neighboring nations by using musical songs to sing of His faithfulness and strength. Such is the purpose of musical worship in the church today as well.

The Main Point

The main point we want to make is that as Christ-followers, we were created to worship God through singing and music. Musical ability and melody are important gifts that God has given to humanity so that His greatness and grace can be recognized and worshipped in the church. When we use the abilities that God has given us to recount His faithfulness and greatness to us, it helps those realities come to life in our hearts so that we respond in giving God glory for our salvation in Jesus. This lesson will help your students to consider how singing praise and worship to God impacts them and their faith.

Lesson Plan

The *Lesson Plan* contains three elements: an introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible Study section called *The Main Event*; and an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

The Lead In

- **Goal:** To help students begin to understand that music and song are central tools in helping them to worship God.
- **Set-Up:** You will want to make sure you have the necessary technology required to preview and view a YouTube video. Watch the following video and then facilitate a discussion about views of musical worship in the church:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-NOZU2iPA8>

FIRST, tell your students that in your lesson today you are going to be looking at the role of music and song in worship. Tell them to watch the video in the link above and be prepared to share their thoughts about the "worship" they see.

NEXT, play the clip included from the link above. (This clip is meant to shine a light on how many teenagers view music in the church today. It is meant to be funny; so laugh!)

THEN, explain that although this video is comical, the truth is that many teenagers view musical worship in the church through a similar lens. Say something like:

- **Now most of us in here can say that worship music today isn't that ridiculous . . . but the truth for many teenagers is that they are disconnected from musical worship because they think it's irrelevant and not their "style" of music. There are many different styles of worship music in the Christian church today, and it begs the question: "How did God intend for us to use music in worship"? Is it really needed?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **In what ways do you think music should be used in the church? Why or why not?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **Do you think that we need music is more of a help or a distraction from worshipping God? Why or why not?**
 - Answers will vary.

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FINALLY, explain that this discussion was simply a way to get them thinking about their views and understanding about the role of music in worship. Help them to understand that there are many different viewpoints on this topic, but God's Word provides a clear answer for us when it comes to the use and benefits of utilizing music in the worship of God as Christ-followers. Explain that in today's lesson, they will be looking at passages of Scripture to understand that they were created to worship through music and that this worship enhances their relationship with Jesus.

Transition into *The Main Event* portion of the lesson.

The Main Event

- **Goal:** To help your students understand that as Christ-followers, we were created to worship God through singing and music.
- **Set Up:** You may benefit from a dry-erase board, but it's not critical. Make sure students have a Bible or that they are able to look along with a friend.

FIRST, ask each of your students why they think music is used so frequently in worship. As they consider the reasons why it's important, write down their reasons on the board. (Many of these would include: musical worship is in Scripture, music is culturally relevant, music allows us to sing to God as a church body, etc.)

THEN, explain that Scripture gives us several examples wherein music is used specifically for the purpose of worshipping God. Say something like:

- **The Bible is full of examples from the Old Testament and the New Testament of people using music to worship God and sing songs about His greatness. Music is not just another way that we were able to worship God but a gift given specifically to humans by God for the purpose of worshipping Him.**

NEXT, explain that this is most clearly expressed in the Book of Psalms. Explain that the psalms are full of examples of people like David singing and praising God through music. Tell them that in today's lesson you are going to be looking at a couple of these examples so that they can understand God's special gift of music and how it can strengthen their faith in Him.

THEN, ask students to turn in their Bibles to Psalm 96. As they turn, explain the context of this psalm in reference to David's return to Jerusalem with the Ark of the Covenant, as was mentioned in the setting at the beginning of the lesson. Explain the background and setting for the psalm and be sure they understand the situation in which David used it.

NEXT, read or have a student read Psalm 96:1-6. When students have finished reading, lead them in a short discussion. Refer back to verse 1. Ask something like:

- **In this first verse, what does the psalmist urge readers to do?**
 - *Answer:* Sing to the Lord
- **Who is the psalmist calling on to sing in this verse?**
 - *Answer:* All the earth

Show students that immediately in this psalm we see the importance for all people to sing to the Lord. In this verse when the psalmist says, "Oh sing to the Lord," the original meaning of the word for "sing" implies an absolute necessity. Say something like:

- **Not only does the psalmist call on all people of the earth to sing songs to the Lord, but it is as if he will explode if he cannot sing! Why is this the case?**

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THEN, tell students that the answer to why the psalmist is so desperate to sing is found in verses 2-4. Direct their attention to these verses and read them aloud once more. Ask the following questions:

- **What are some of the reasons the psalmist gives in these verses for why he MUST sing to the Lord?**
 - *Answer:* Because of his salvation day to day, because of His great glory, because of His works among the nations, because He is great and above all gods.
- **Why do you think that the psalmist must sing instead of simply speaking these things about God?**
 - *Answer:* Allow time for them to answer. Emphasize the joy that accompanies singing.

Explain that whether it's the glory of the Lord, the fact that He has saved us, the fact that He is great and powerful, or even the fact that God has done great things in history; the Psalmist can't help but sing. Say something like:

- **This is because in all of these things the psalmist finds great joy! Singing and music are expressions of emotion; they help us to articulate exactly how we feel. When we use music to emphasize the character and works of God, we can express the amazing joy that we have because he loves us and has saved us in Jesus! This is truly what it means to worship God!**

NEXT, turn your students' attention to verses 5-6. Ask the following questions:

- **Why do you think that the psalmist emphasizes that God is greater than the other gods of neighboring countries?**
 - *Answer:* This is a further expression of God's greatness and power. No other God deserves our worship, only the Creator God.

THEN, tell your students that this is not the only psalm that emphasizes music as a means of worshipping and praising God. In fact, other songs include instruments that add to the practice of worship. Ask your students to turn to Psalm 33:1-3. Read or ask one of them to read these verses aloud. Then ask the following questions:

- **What instruments are included in these verses as a part of worship?**
 - *Answer:* Lyre, harp, singing and shouts.
- **How do instruments add to the practice of worshipping God with music?**
 - *Answer:* Instruments allow those who are gifted to play and use their talents to lead others in worship and praising God.
- **What is the motivation for the call to worship found in verse 1?**
 - *Answer:* Joy in the Lord.

Remind students that the truth is that many of us today are so familiar with the praise and worship part of church that we miss the whole purpose of using music to worship God. Music is an expression of our joy in the Lord for what He has done for us. Say something like:

- **Our worship of God with music allows us to express thanksgiving for who He is and what He has done for us in a way that allows us to give Him great glory as a church family.**

FINALLY, explain that worship today has become more about us at times than about God. Though there is nothing inherently wrong with high production elements, music used in the church can at times become more of a concert than a time of worship. But this is not what God intended musical worship to be. Explain that music is an expression of our joy and love for the Lord and a way in which we can magnify His name through the gifts that he has given us as a church.

Ask if there are any questions, and if there are none, transition into *The Last Word*.

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The Last Word

- **Goal:** For students to consider how singing praise and worship impacts them in their faith.
- **Set-Up:** Dry-erase board, marker, paper, pencils, and three worship songs (words of the choruses).

FIRST, ask students to name several of their favorite worship songs. As they name a few, write down some of the songs that are most familiar to the group on the board. (You could also use a song from your worship time or a song that you listen to on your phone during your time)

NEXT, ask students to help you to write the choruses of two or three of the songs mentioned. Once you write these choruses on the board, split your students into 2-3 groups, one per song.

THEN, tell your students that you want each of them to read the choruses of these songs and write down all that these songs tell them about who God is, how He relates to us, and what He has done for us. Say something like:

- **Take a moment and look through these songs and try to determine what they teach you about God. What is so amazing about singing is that when we repeat important truths, we memorize them and even believe them on a deeper level. Take a moment and write down what these songs teach us about who God is, what He has done for us, and how He relates to us.**

Once your students have had 5-10 minutes to work, ask them to share their findings.

FINALLY, tell students that the use of music and singing in worship is so important because it allows us to express our joy to God and remember His truths for us more clearly and readily. Say something like:

- **Singing in worship is an important aspect of reminding ourselves about the truth of the Gospel and what God has done for us. When we repeat important choruses like ones on the board, we can internalize how great God truly is and express our thankfulness for what He has done for us. Music is more than just a way to make worship more interesting; it's a way that we can express our love and joy for God by recounting who He is, the way He loves us, and how He has saved us in Christ Jesus.**

Make sure there are no closing thoughts and then close in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're posting them on Instagram or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Use the *Social Media Guide* to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns at feedback@youthministry360.com.