

The Walk: Five Essential Practices for the Christian Life
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Session 1: Worship and Prayer, A Living Hallelujah

Table discussion following the video...

- What does it look like in your life when you are spiritually winded or struggling?

Psalm 95 (vss. 1-7)

- ¹ O come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
- ² Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
- ³ For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
- ⁴ In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
- ⁵ The sea is his, for he made it,
and the dry land, which his hands have formed.
- ⁶ O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
- ⁷ For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

Table discussion...

- Do you (always) come to worship with joy and thanksgiving?
- What are some other feelings you sometimes bring to corporate worship?
- Is there value of coming to worship when you are feeling cross, angry, worried, upset, or preoccupied?
- Look at Psalm 95:3-5 again. What does this passage say about God's relationship with all of creation?
- Look at Psalm 95:6-7 again. What do these verses say about our relationship with God?
- Why do you give thanks and praise to God?

Some Metaphors in Scripture for the Christian life (table discussion)

New Birth

¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.
John 1:12-13

³Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' (or 'born anew') John 3:3

- What does the metaphor of new birth teach us about what it means to be a Christian?
- What do you think Jesus means when he talks about being born from above, or born anew?

Repentance

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.' Mark 1:14-15

³⁸ Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38

- What does the metaphor of repentance teach us about what it means to be a Christian?

Trust (Faith)

⁹because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

- What does the metaphor of trust (faith) in Christ teach us about what it means to be a Christian?
- How does trusting God differ from believing in God?
- How does our decision to place our faith in Christ reorient the way we lead our lives?

What is Worship?

“Worship is the primary and appropriate response of the creature to the Creator.”

For table discussion:

- Why is it important to worship in community? What is lost when we fail to do so regularly?
- Can you think of a time when you either intentionally or unintentionally (as in being ill) missed worship for an extended time? What was that like?
- Why is it important to worship individually? What is lost when we fail to do so regularly?
- Describe your experience or current practice of daily prayer. How central is prayer to your life?

Gratitude (table discussion)

- What are you grateful for? What are you most grateful for?
- How do you incorporate thankfulness into your pattern of worship and prayer?

One Pattern for Prayer: Five Elements

- Praise
- Thanks
- Confession
- Petition (Intercession)
- Submission (placing oneself in God's hands for service)

For table discussion...

- How does this pattern compare to your current practice of prayer? What would you add to this list?
- What is hard for you in this list?
- What do you think about the discipline of praying five times a day?