

Leading Kids in Worship Masterclass

Session 2: A Worshiper's Heart

Key Theme

Worship begins in the heart. A worshiper's heart is devoted to God, seeks God, and delights in God.

A Lesson from Blockbuster

At its peak in 2004, Blockbuster had over 9,000 stores. But when Netflix arrived with mail-order DVDs and streaming, everything changed.

Blockbuster's story is a warning: **When we forget our "why," we risk losing our ability to accomplish our purpose altogether.**

When was the last time you asked "why" about kids' worship?

Learning to lead kids in worship begins with a recentering on our purpose. We need to know what we're aiming for.

The "Why" of Worship

The why of worship is simple—because God is worthy.

The word worship comes from the Old English *worðscip*, meaning "worth-ship"—the condition of being worthy. **Our worship is the response God's worthiness deserves.**

John Piper describes worship as *"gladly reflecting back to God the radiance of his worth."*

God also has a purpose for us in worship: to form us into the image of His Son.

God's Purpose (Romans 8:28-29): "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose ... For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son."

God's good work in you is not to make you a great pastor, worship leader, or children's minister, but to make you more like Jesus.

Forming Worshipers

If God's goal is to shape hearts, then our approach to kids' worship should change.

- Instead of, “Do they like this song?” we ask, “What kind of worshipers is this song forming?”
- We lead worship with people, not just videos.
- We give kids opportunities to serve and lead.
- We partner with parents to create worship moments at home.

Music matters—God created music and the Bible is filled with commands to sing—but **worship is first a matter of the heart.**

A worshiper’s heart is *devoted to God, seeks God, and delights in God.*

A Heart Devoted to God

God is a covenant God. His covenant is not an empty promise but the faithful commitment of One whose word never fails.

The operative force in God’s covenant is his *hesed*—His steadfast love, faithfulness, lovingkindness.

The best human picture of *hesed* is the love of a devoted marriage: a heart completely devoted to another.

In worship, we remember God’s unfailing love and respond with love of our own. Just as smiling can make us feel more joyful, **expressing our love for God increases our love for Him.**

For kids, the first step on this journey is learning to say, “I love you, Lord.”

A Heart That Seeks God

A heart is devoted to God naturally begins to seek Him. It learns to say, “I need you, Lord.”

But too often we approach God like a Founding Father—someone we admire from a distance.

J. I. Packer once wrote, “*One can know a great deal about God without much knowledge of him.*” We don’t just want kids to know *about* God; **we want them to know Him.**

We teach children to seek God by helping them spend time in His presence—fixing their eyes on Him (Heb. 12:2).

God’s Promise (Jer. 29:13-14): “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you.”

When we seek God, we find Him—and He rewards us with Himself.

A Heart That Delights in God

A heart that seeks God will delight in Him.

Many Christians say, “God’s primary concern is not your happiness.” But Scripture reveals the opposite: **God deeply cares about our joy—He knows that true delight is only found in Him.**

John Piper wrote, *“God is not worshiped where He is not treasured and enjoyed.”*

King David modeled this joy:

- “You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” (Ps. 16:11)
- “Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight.” (Ps. 43:4)

A heart that delights in God learns to say, “I want you, Lord.”

Whatever form it takes, joy should be a prime objective of our worship gatherings.

The Heart God Longs to Awaken

God’s purpose is to form worshipers. He wants:

- Hearts **devoted to Him**—kids who say, I love you, Lord.
- Hearts that **seek Him**—kids who say, I need you, Lord.
- Hearts that **delight in Him**—kids who say, I want you, Lord.

This is the heart God longs to awaken in a new generation.

Discussion Questions

1. Think about your church's approach to children's worship. What is your "why"? How clear is it in your weekly practices?
2. How can you help children see that worship begins in the heart and flows from love for God rather than duty or habit?
3. In what ways can you cultivate a heart of devotion—to love God wholeheartedly—in your own life and in the lives of the children you lead?
4. How can your ministry help children and families learn to seek God together, not just know about Him?
5. What would it look like for your worship gatherings to express delight in God? How might joy reshape the way your kids experience His presence?