

Leading Kids in Worship Masterclass

Session 3: Revelation and Response

Key Theme

Worship is a sacred conversation between God and his people—our joyful, loving response to his revelation.

God's Revelation

Everything we see has a cause. Yet *something* must exist without one.

Thirteenth-century theologian Thomas Aquinas called God the “First Mover.” He wrote, “*Every movement either of the will or of nature, proceeds from God as the First Mover.*”

God's action requires no cause. **He is the Great Initiator**—the One who reveals himself out of his own greatness and goodness.

God reveals himself in countless ways: through prayer, sacraments, music, art, and creation itself.

But his primary and authoritative revelation is the Bible. If you want to know God, go to his Word.

The story of Scripture culminates in Jesus, the Word made flesh: “The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.” (Heb. 1:3)

Jesus is God's ultimate revelation—his *magnum opus*.

Our Response

Our hearts were designed to respond to God's revelation. **Worship is our joyful, loving response to God's revelation.**

Worship is both a lifestyle and a specific action.

Every element of gathered worship reflects this pattern of revelation and response:

- God **calls us** to worship; we enter his presence.
- God **reminds us** of what he has done; we praise him.
- God **speaks** through his Word; we obey.
- God **reveals himself** through communion; we give thanks.

- God **sends us out**; we go with purpose.

A Sacred Conversation

Worship is not a presentation—it's a conversation. And God is an active participant.

Rory Noland calls worship *"a dynamic dialogue between God and his people."*

This conversational model helps children experience worship more naturally:

- It removes barriers that make worship feel formal or inaccessible.
- It invites kids into something familiar—conversation.
- It gives them tangible ways to respond to God's presence, one moment at a time.
- It reminds them that they can speak with God at any time.

Corporate worship is simply the moment when the ongoing *individual* worship conversations of God's people intersect in a glorious cacophony of praise.

Because Jesus is God's ultimate revelation, **the gospel is the beginning point for the sacred conversation of worship.**

When we help children encounter the gospel, we fulfill Psalm 22: "Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!" (Ps. 22:30-31)

Ways We Respond

Praise

There are seven Hebrew words for praise, each describing a different expression of joy and thanksgiving.

Worship

While praise expresses triumph, worship expresses humble, reverential submission.

Thanksgiving

Gratitude is the appropriate way to enter God's presence:

- "Enter his gates with thanksgiving." (Ps. 100:4)
- "Let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe." (Heb. 12:28)

Prayer

Teaching kids to pray helps them know they can access the conversation of worship at any time.

Generosity

Whether through giving or serving, generosity is an act of worship.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others.” (1 Pet. 4:10)

Creativity

From Moses’ song at the Red Sea to David’s psalms and the craftsmanship of temple artisans, creativity has always been a worship response.

Conversation and Curiosity

Even a small group discussion can be worshipful when kids ask questions, express wonder, or wrestle with what they believe. Jesus modeled this by patiently inviting his disciples into deeper understanding.

Bring Your Best

When we respond to God, we bring our best—not because our worship must be perfect, **but because God is worth it.**

Our worship response doesn’t have to be *the* best; it just has to be *our* best.

Mary (sister of Lazarus) understood this when she anointed Jesus with costly perfume. Judas called it waste. Jesus called it worship: “She has done a beautiful thing to me.” (Mk. 14:6)

No sincere offering of worship is wasted. **Your costly offering is worth it because Jesus is worth it.**

Our kids live in a world that will constantly be rendering a verdict on their value based on their abilities. But God honors faithfulness, he is kind to the lowly, and he exalts the humble. **Be sure your kids know that their best is enough for God.**

When we bring our best, God receives it as a fragrant offering of worship.

Discussion Questions

1. How does thinking of worship as a “conversation” change the way you plan or lead your gatherings?
2. What practical steps can you take to help children understand that God’s revelation is the beginning point of our worship?
3. Which forms of response—praise, prayer, creativity, generosity, etc.—are strongest in your ministry right now? Which need to grow?
4. How can you make space for children to bring their best worship, even if it looks different from an adult expression?
5. What would it look like for you and your kids to find a daily rhythm of revelation and response beyond Sunday mornings?