

Life in all its fullness



In response to God's generosity and immense love for us, we seek to be God's people in sharing the good news of Jesus, growing in faith, being with people in need, challenging injustice and respecting God's creation. John 10.10; Luke 4.18; Matt 25. 33-40, 28. 19-20

For the next three weeks we will be concentrating on "Encountering God."

This week we are exploring our call to encounter God through our worship

On Sunday we read part of Psalms 95. There is a lot of worship in the Psalms. Maybe you have a favourite passage and would like to share that in the group – read it out loud and share what is special about it as an act of worship.

In John 4, Jesus has a conversation with a Samaritan woman. Samaritans were despised by the Jews, but Jesus makes time to have a conversation with her. In that conversation Jesus speaks of true worshippers and says "a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks." (John 4.23)

- What does it mean to worship God in spirit and in truth?

Jesus was removing the concept of worship with a place (temple) implying that God could be worshipped anywhere. It is his Spirit that gives us access to the presence of God wherever we are. Today, we can make the same mistake by limiting worship to a church service or even worse to a form of music. Worship can take place anywhere, anytime. Furthermore, we worship in truth by recognising the object of our worship, God manifested in flesh. True worshippers are those who come to God through the merits of Jesus Christ. The Spirit leads us to the object of worship which is Christ.



Read Romans 12: 1-2 - This passage could be titled: Authentic worship is "full bodied."

- Comment in light of your reading.

True worship (could also be translated as proper or rational worship) is the offering of our bodies as a living sacrifice, set aside for a purpose (holy) and compliant with His will (pleasing).

It involves the whole of our being:

- Present your **bodies** (practical).
- Be transformed by the renewing of your **mind** (thinking).
- Discern what the **will** is (choices).

How is worship lived out in practical terms? Paul offers us an insight into what a life of worship looks like in the rest of Romans 12

First, that everybody is somebody is his Body (Read 12. 3-8)

Second, that love is an active verb and worship is a life offered in love for God and for his people (Read 12. 9-21)

- Share what you find easy, what you find difficult in those two readings.

What is worship? For Paul, worship is full-bodied. It is the offering of our lives in response to God's love manifested in Jesus. We are called to offer our bodies, to be transformed by the renewing of our minds and to use our will to play our part in the life of his church and act with genuine love. This is the hallmark of a true worshipper.