

Discussion Guide: Part 1

The Word: Scripture in Worship

1. What does the word “worship” mean to you?
2. Were you surprised to learn how Christians in the early church loved to hear and read the Scriptures? Why or why not?
3. The film features many images of stained glass. Which one is your favorite and why?
4. Describe in your own words what the statement means that “scripture belongs to community”.
5. The film includes Psalm 95 sung as a chant. Think of other ways the Scriptures are incorporated into music and share your thoughts with the group.
6. The film describes Christian worship as the celebration of decisive events in God’s story. What are some of these events that stand out for you in your faith practice?
7. Christians today can access Scripture in several ways: they can read it, hear it, speak it, download it, broadcast it, blog it, etc. In what ways do you access Scripture and how does your method of accessing God’s Word help you personally engage with its message?
8. How does Scripture remain a vital and meaningful part of everyday life?

The Word: Creeds and Sermons

1. According to the film, what is a creed?
2. Do you use a creed in your worship practice? If so, which one or ones? If not, is this something you would consider doing in the future?
3. Many people have a favorite verse of Scripture that sums up what they believe. If you already have one, share it with the group. If not, think about what verse defines your faith journey and discuss.
4. The film illustrates the meaning of the word “orthodox” as “sound” or “proper” teaching. How do you define “orthodox” beliefs and how do they differ from heresies? Give examples.
5. Have you ever read a text of a sermon or homily from a famous preacher in history such as Augustine, Jonathan Edwards, Martin Luther King, Jr., etc? Does reading a sermon have the same impact as hearing it preached?
6. Tell the group about a memorable sermon or homily you have heard.
7. Do you use a lectionary in your worship practice? Why or why not?
8. Do you agree with the statement that some people approach worship more like consumers with needs to be met rather than worshippers focused on the God of the universe? Why or why not?

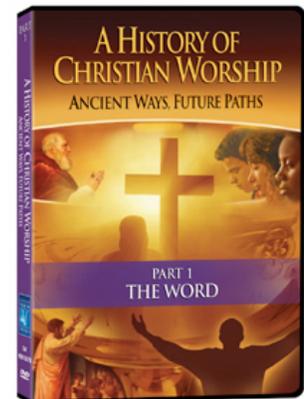
Final Thoughts on Episode One

1. What is at least one thing you have learned from this episode?
2. Is there any worship practice in the film that you would like to adopt in your public or private worship experience?

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Tips for Discussion Leaders

- Create a safe environment where people can share freely without criticism or judgment.
- Hold group members accountable to respect different opinions and to allow everyone an opportunity to speak.
- Ask open-ended questions that stimulate ongoing discussion.
- Prepare for the discussion by watching the film in advance.
- Be an active listener with your eyes, ears and body gestures.
- Observe the time limits set for the group discussion.
- Keep the discussion on topic.
- Look for ways to encourage all group members to participate.
- Encourage group members to share personal stories and illustrations as they apply to the subject matter.
- Limit your group to a manageable size so that everyone has time to share their thoughts.



A History of Christian Worship

This six-part series explores centuries of worship practices, as seen through the eyes of Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches and discussed by leading voices from a cross-section of the Christian community. From scripture, sermons and creeds to baptism and the Eucharist, from art and music to drama and media, from prayer and contemplation to service and ministry, viewers will discover the significant people and events that have shaped history and learn how modern worship practices are rooted in the earliest foundations of the Christian faith.