
Engage

Dear Lord, teach us to worship You not only with our lips but with our lives. Fill us with Your Spirit, so that our hearts, thoughts, and actions flow in truth and love. Let every breath, every step, and every word bring glory to Your name. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





WELCOME

Welcome is the first “W” in a Cell Group (CG) session. Each person may be going through many daily situations leading up to a CG session. Hence, it is good to bring the CG with a practice of releasing the daily situations we each may be going through. CGs are encouraged to get creative about Icebreakers and/or activities that help its members to be present with one another. Here are some suggestions to shake things up a little and inject some fun and freshness into how we do this.

Suggested Icebreaker Activity/Questions

For CGs with new visitors

- What is your favourite scent or aroma? [Perhaps, it could come from your garden, or kitchen, or collection of candles and aromatherapy; etc.]

For CGs with existing members

- If Jesus walked into your room right now, how would you want to respond to Him?

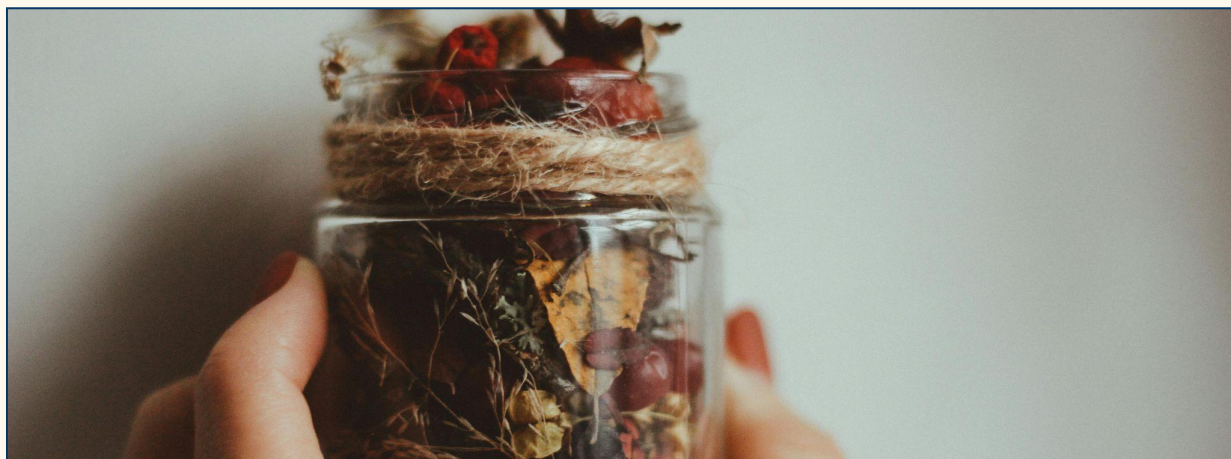


Photo by Katya on Pexels



SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

In Spirit & Truth #1: The Heart of Worship Begins with Surrender Pr Terry Yeow

John 12:1-8

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with Him. Then Mary took about half a litre of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray Him, objected, 'Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.' He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

'Leave her alone,' Jesus replied. 'It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.'

Introduction **Genesis 22:5**

Worship dates back to ancient Israel. We can recall the time when Abraham obediently put his son, Isaac, up on an altar as an act of sacrifice to God. That act of sacrifice was worship to God. Consistently, throughout the Old and New Testament,

sacrifice also alludes to the posture of hearts and devoted offerings to God. In Hebrew, the word for worship is שָׁחָה (shāchah) while in Greek, it is προσκυνέω (proskyneō). Shachah denotes bowing down and proskyneō is to exalt or to lift up.

BIG IDEA: There is no one else worthy of our worship but Him.

Here are 3 observations from the account of Mary's encounter with Jesus at Bethany:

1. Her sole attention was on Jesus. *John 12:3*

We must learn from Mary that our sole attention or focus in life ought to be on Jesus, nothing else, not even the 101 questions that we oftentimes ask Him in regards to the situations that we want to justify especially when something so absurd (such as having a sibling who has come back alive after being dead for 4 days) has happened.

Mary was neither caught up with the festivities nor anything else that was going on in the house that evening. The guests were chilling and feasting with her brother Lazarus while her sister Martha was helping around the house. Mary's focus was only on Jesus. She knew she was in the presence of the Son of God and so she chose to bless and anoint Him with perfume. Not just some ordinary perfume, but an expensive prized possession that would have cost her 300 denarii (equivalent to a year's wages). Not only that, she used her own beautiful hair to wipe the perfume onto Jesus' feet.

Do you remember the first time you felt God's presence in your life? What was your response towards Him then? Do you still respond to Him similarly today?

2. She had a different value system. *John 12:4-6*

For her simple act of devotion to Jesus, Mary was judged by Judas Iscariot (and probably by others in the room as well). Judas had been thinking about the money that he could have pocketed if Mary had sold the perfume. That's such a corrupted thought, isn't it? In a sense, the world hasn't changed much. It is still broken and corrupted. There is still the desire and pressing on for profits, ROIs, self-righteousness, self-glorification, etc. - all the things that are contrary to what worship is!

What we are attached to should instead be inclined towards a worship that expects nothing in return. We should worship God simply because He is worthy to be praised.

Consider what your value system is based on when you think about the work or ministry that you are serving in. Why are you serving in church, really?

3. Her offering wasn't just a blessing to Jesus but to the others as well. *Mark 14:6; John 12:3*

What Mary did was a beautiful thing to God. Her offering was pleasing to Him. We can allude to this from the way Jesus responded to another woman who did something similar in the account that is recorded in Mark 14. Both Mary and this woman blessed Jesus with fragrances that filled the whole home. Their sweet aroma would stick to every individual in the rooms so that when they leave, they will carry the scent with them wherever they may go. Everyone was blessed.

What is the aroma that you may have benefited from as you left church last weekend? What scent would you bring into your homes, workplaces, schools, neighbourhood and relationships?

Conclusion

The object of our worship must only be on Jesus.

Who is He to you today? Will you choose to do what Mary did and offer a sacrifice of worship because He is worthy? What is the response that you can give to Him?



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

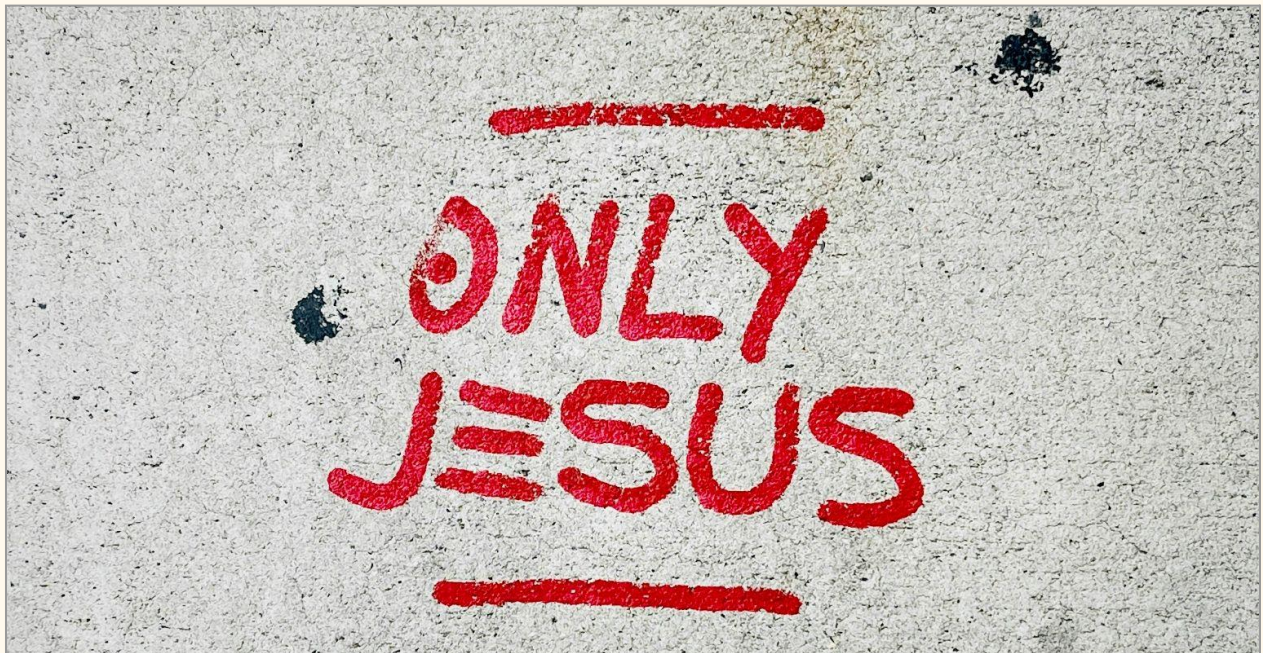


Photo by Jon Tyson on Unsplash

Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- What has your understanding of worship been up until now? Has it been more about actions or heart posture?

- In what areas of your life is it difficult to surrender to God? Why might that be?

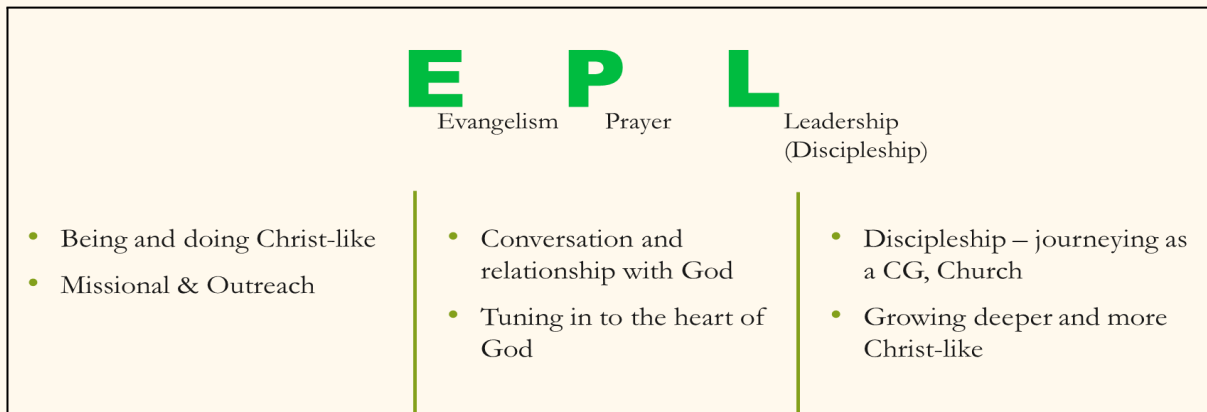
Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- Mary gave Jesus her full attention and best offering. What distractions are currently pulling your attention away from Jesus?
- When was the last time you felt like you were fully in the presence of God? What did that moment feel like, and how did you respond?
- “Would it be enough if your reward was that Jesus was glorified?” How would you honestly answer this question?
- John 12:3 says, “The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.” How have you seen someone else’s worship impact a group or atmosphere before?

EPL Emphasis:

A question or activity to help anchor our focus back on [E]vangelism/[P]rayer/[L]ead

- What kind of aroma does your worship leave behind — in your home, relationships, school or workplace? What would the aroma denote about your church and how do you think that it would be a pulling point in terms of being missional and evangelistic?





SERMON REFLECTION



Photo by Polina on Pexels

Twice this year, I was supposed to draw out my 'life graph' as part of a camp and a campus' care group activity. I could not do so. A flurry of thoughts would come to mind and I would find myself fixated on certain points in time that I wish I could erase and forget, particularly the conflicts and failed reconciliations in the past year or two. I just couldn't get past them and it hurt me so much that frequently when I am alone in my car or in my bedroom, I would tear up. Not many people knew about the extent of the pain that I was carrying in my mind and heart.

That is why when I received my diagnosis this recent Tuesday, and told my friends about it, many were in disbelief. *"How can it be? It's not noticeable and you are very sociable. Are you sure?"* Initially, I too, was in shock. I spent hours scrolling through Google and social media. Reading bite-size information about it, and people's comments on their experiences, I resonated with a lot of things associated with what the diagnosis meant. My surprise and shock began to turn into relief.

Since I was young, I had always wondered about many things; how I was different from other people, in the most generous sense. I find the smell of freshly cut grass and nutmeg oil nauseating. Spotlights, even the ones in our auditorium, irritated my eyes. I would cover my ears while sitting in the hospital's waiting area to drown out the noise around me and I would tense up at the sound of a harsh whirr of a drill or a roaring grass blower. I would embarrassingly yawn when the room temperature gets too cold. These are just a few of the sensory overloads that I have learned to navigate

around on a daily basis without knowing that they were actually coping mechanisms. To me, I attributed my sensitivity to smell to the long list of allergies that I do have. I wear a cap to block out light because I have high astigmatism. I will just go to another room or drive somewhere when the sounds and heat get to me. I sometimes carry an extra scarf or cardigan with me in case it gets a little chilly.

I wonder, if by now, some of you would have guessed what the diagnosis was.

It's barely been a week. From my recent days of personal reflection, I want to:

- ★ Thank God for His extraordinary love, grace and mercy throughout my life.
- ★ Thank God for His divine timing — He waited 49 years to reveal this diagnosis to me knowing that I will only be ready to fully embrace it now.
- ★ Thank God that He placed me in DUMC. I can confidently say that the large majority of friends here value me as a person. I have received so many words of encouragement and prayer with positive affirmations for my future.
- ★ Thank God that He spoke through Pastor Terry's sermon this weekend, with a message that rings loudly in my ears: *Focus on Christ Jesus*.
- ★ Thank God that He orchestrated the arrangements of activities between me and my Co-Lead so that I will end up being the main writer for Engage this weekend and purposefully share this piece of personal reflection with you.
- ★ Thank God for His wisdom through our Senior Pastor Chris Kam's preaching and teaching. I have learned that in the face of troubles, I will not ask God, "Why me?". In fact, I asked Him, "Now what? With this knowledge, what are Your plans and will for my life?"
- ★ Thank God for my brothers. My younger sibling gave me a few days to calm down before asking me, "How are you, jie? If you need me, any time, I am here." My older brother emphasized, "You are my sister. You're still you. Nothing has changed."

Without a doubt in my heart, I will cling to God in all circumstances of my life. Above all else, I am reminded of my identity in Christ. I am a precious child of God. I am special and wired differently but like you, like all of us, I am fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). Our God is greater and bigger than any label or diagnosis. And as I continue to journey on in life and walk with Jesus, I know that nothing can separate me from His love (Romans 8:38-39).

God is worthy. Only He deserves our worship.

Contributed by Wendy ML Tan



MISSIONAL

Note to CGL: Inspire and encourage the Cell Group members to participate in the activity suggested below (from our CrossFields, Missions department) together to cultivate a culture of being a missional church.

CrossFields

MISSIONS CANDIDATES' PREPARATION PROGRAMME 1

A practical introduction
to missions

DATE

25 - 26 Oct 2025

(2 days 1 night stay-in training)

REGISTER HERE

tinyurl.com/mcpp1oct2025

MCPPI

 Discover God's heart for the nations

Gain a deeper understanding of God's love for all peoples, and His desire for every nation, tribe, and tongue to come to know Him.

 Learn what missions is about

Explore the purpose of missions and its essential role in fulfilling God's global plan for humanity.

 Equip yourself with practical tools

Receive hands-on training to prepare you to be His witness, whether near or far, in your own community or across the globe.

Wherever God is calling you, this programme will help you step out in faith and be part of His greater story. Don't miss this opportunity to discover your place in His mission!

 Sign up here: tinyurl.com/mcpploct2025



PRAYER

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

3-Day FAST & PRAYER
Solemn Assembly
Join us as we come together as 1DUMC
26 - 28 Aug 2025 | 8.00pm - 10.00pm
Hall 1, Dream Centre, PJ
"Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD."
Joel 1:14

3-Day Fast & Pray

Let us come together for a 3-Day Fast and Prayer (Solemn Assembly) for 1DUMC, from 26 to 28 August 2025, as we seek the Lord for this new season of transition, visioning, and spiritual renewal.

"Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD." (Joel 1:14)

A Solemn Assembly is a biblical response in times of change or crisis. A call to humble ourselves, realign our hearts, and cry out to God in repentance for His mercy, presence, and direction over our church, city, and nation.

We are calling the whole church to fast and pray together from August 26th to 28th.

Daily Leads:

- 26 Aug (Tue) – CN
- 27 Aug (Wed) – BM
- 28 Aug (Thu) – EN

For this first step, we will begin with the Chinese (CN), Bahasa Malaysia (BM), and English (EN) congregations. Other congregations will be progressively included in the next phase of united prayer.

Pray, that we, as one church, will be marked by:

- A deep hunger for God – that we will seek His face above all else.
- A repentant heart – that we will turn from sin, return to the Lord, and walk in holiness.
- A spirit of humility – to acknowledge our need and depend fully on God.
- A desire for unity – that we may be one in heart, purpose, and love.
- An expectant spirit – believing that in this season of transition and renewal, God will bring a fresh spiritual revival among us.

Let us also pray that this Solemn Assembly marks a spiritual turning point for us as a church — the first united step in corporate prayer, setting the tone for what God wants to do in and through 1DUMC in the days ahead.

A Heart of Worship

"Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name; worship the Lord in the splendour of His holiness" (Psalm 29:2).

Pray:

- For a heart that desires to worship God in spirit and in truth.
- Our worship will please God and we will glorify God in all that we do.
- For personal and corporate renewal of our love and devotion to God as we behold His awesomeness and holiness.