

Small Group Worship Leader's Guide – Psalm 34

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Getting Started

For many leading the small group worship gatherings, questions might arise such as, “What do I say?” “How do we transition from one aspect of our worship to another?” “Without an order of worship, how do we know what to do?” We would encourage those facilitating the gathering (who might be treading new territory) to simply *let the Word of God guide you* through the worship. Here are some important things to remember:

1. Worship is like a rhythm ... God revealing, his people responding.
2. In Christian worship, believers don't respond to songs, or music, or a leader – we respond *to God* as he reveals himself through his Word by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Word does not return void!
3. God gave us the gift of music to unite our voices as one voice to praise our glorious God. But music is limited in its power to unite us. What truly unites us is the Word of God through the Spirit of God, that's why the Scriptures are so important during the corporate gathering – even before the message!
4. Our access to God the Father in worship isn't made possible by any means other than the completed work of Jesus Christ through the power of the gospel. Jesus is our worship leader! (Heb. 2:12). Take heart! He will lead by the Spirit in your living room as you gather with others to worship.
5. Jesus is both the object and the means of our worship. We don't gain access to God through an amazing band, an energetic worship leader, a stellar choir and orchestra, or our favorite style of music! Self-actuated worship is no more possible than self-actuated salvation. We are saved by grace and we worship by grace!
6. We can do nothing apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct every aspect of your small group gathering.

Opening Call to Worship - A Responsive Reading (Psalm 34:1-3)

Leader: I will bless the LORD at all times;

People: His praise will always be on my lips.

Leader: I will boast in the LORD;

People: The humble will hear and be glad.

Leader: Proclaim the LORD'S greatness with me;

People: Let us exalt his name together!

Possible transition statement to hymn: “Let's do together what the Psalmist encourages! Let's exalt the name of Jesus together and sing, (hymn choice title here).”



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Hymn Suggestion: "All Creatures of Our God and King"

Scripture and Prayer (Psalm 34:4-7)

Possible transition from Hymn: "As Psalm 34 continues to guide our worship, listen to what the David writes in verses 4-7:"

I sought the Lord, and he answered me and rescued me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant with joy; their faces will never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him from all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and rescues them. (Psalm 34:4-7)

Possible prayer using the verses above as a guide:

Heavenly Father, we humble ourselves before you as we find ourselves in uncertain times. And yet, because of Christ, we can sing Hallelujah and praise you for who you are – our sovereign Creator and our gracious Redeemer. We ask, as did the Psalmist, that you would indeed deliver us from all our fears. We confess to you that we have potentially gazed at our problems and the hysteria of the world around us and only glanced at you. Forgive us for acting in ways that reflect our lack of trust in you. We pray that we would indeed look to you as our source of strength and peace, and that others might see that our trust is in you and you alone. More and more we realize how much we need you ... every moment, every hour, every day. And we thank you for providing for all our needs – from the moment of our salvation to the breath we breathe in this very moment. All of us are burdened by the state of the world and the virus that has caused such havoc, but we know, as you have promised in your Word, that the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and you deliver them. We thank you for your grace and the peace we have in Christ. We thank you for delivering us and cleansing us through the precious blood of Jesus. Amen

Hymn Suggestion: There Is a Fountain

Scripture and Group Prayer Time

Possible transition from hymn: "The Psalmist continues in Psalm 34 with these words:"

Taste and see that the Lord is good. How happy is the person who takes refuge in him! You who are his holy ones, fear the Lord for those who fear him lack nothing. Young lions lack food and go hungry, but those who seek the Lord will not lack any good thing. Come, children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is someone who desires life, loving a long life to enjoy what is good? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from deceitful speech. Turn away from evil and do what is good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry for help. (Psalm 34:8-15)

Group Prayer Time could focus on the following:

Thanksgiving:

- As believers we have the joy to taste and see the goodness of the Lord and that we can take refuge in him.
- He provides for all our needs.
- His Word gives us instruction and guidance. (vs. 8-11)

Petition:

- For believers to live lives in a manner worthy of the gospel in speech and action (vs. 12-14).
- For the Lord to heal those with the virus, protect those who do not yet have it, and to hear the cries for help of those who are suffering. (vs. 15)
- For the gospel to be proclaimed to a world wondering who and what to trust in.

After the prayer time, a potential transition to the next hymn: "We worship a God who has proven his faithfulness throughout all the ages. Let's praise him..."

Hymn Suggestion: "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" (stanzas 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6)

Closing Prayer