

I. Introduction: The mission of Grace Bible Church.

A. Our mission is to build a community of gospel-centered people as we:

1. Worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:24; Acts 2:42).
2. Serve one another by exercising our spiritual gifts (I Co. 12:4-6; Eph. 4:11-16).
3. Proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world (Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).
4. Live out a biblical worldview in all spheres of life (Jer. 29:7; Mt. 5:13-16).

B. Worship.

1. What is worship? Ex. 20:5 Ps. 95:6 2:11 Rev. 4
2. Worship is most important. John 4:23
 - a. All people owe God worship. Ro. 1:20-21 Mt. 4:10 Mk. 12:28-30 Phil. 2:9-10
 - b. We have been saved that we might worship God! I Pet. 2:5,9
3. Worship takes place in different contexts.
 - a. All of life is to be worship. Rom. 12:1-2 I Cor. 10:31 Mt. 22:37
 - b. Individual believers worship God privately. Ps. 63:6-7 I Th. 5:17-18 Psalm 1
 - c. Families worship God together. Deut. 6:4f Josh. 24:15
 - d. God's people gather together in corporate worship. Ps. 111:1 95:6-7 Lev. 23:2
I Cor. 5:4 11:17,25 14:23,26 Acts 2:46 4:31 11:26 14:27 20:7-8 Heb. 10:24-25
4. Not all worship is acceptable to God. Is. 1:14 Ge. 4:4-5 I Sa. 13:1f I Ki. 18:26-28
 - a. Unspiritual (insincere and hypocritical) worship is not acceptable to God.
Mk. 11:17 7:6-8 Je. 7:9f Is. 1:11-16 29:13 Mt. 15:8-9 Mal. 1:6-14 3:13-14 4:1
 - b. Untrue worship is not acceptable to God. Job 31:24-28 John 4:20,22
Ex. 20:3 Mt. 4:10 Isa. 46:6f Ex. 20:4 32:5-6 I Jo. 5:21
 - c. The consequences of false worship can be fatal. Lev. 10:1-3 II Sam. 6:6-7
Acts 5:1-11 I Cor. 11:29-30
5. It is easy to slip into idolatry, syncretism, formalism, extra-biblical traditions, Old Covenant forms. Co. 2:23 Ex. 32 Ga. 4:9-11 Le. 18:1ff Mt. 15:3

II. Worship is God-centered. John 4:23

A. Our primary focus in corporate worship is exalting God. Ps. 96:8-9 66:5-7 100:2

I Chron. 16:29-30 Heb. 12:28-29 13:15 I Pet. 4:11 II Pet. 1:21 II Tim. 3:16-17 4:1f

B. Worship also has a horizontal element: the spiritual edification of believers.

I Cor. 14:12,26 Eph. 5:19 4:12

C. Many churches have lost sight of the primacy of God-centered worship.

1. Some meet for the purpose of having an emotional or intellectual experience.
2. Modern evangelicalism has become man-centered. Seeker-sensitive services often compromise worship content in order to appeal to unbelievers. II Tim. 4:3
3. What place does evangelism have in corporate worship? Mt. 28:18f Acts 1:8
I Cor. 14:24-25 Ps. 105:1f 67:3ff

III. Worship is Christ-centered. John 4:20-21,23 5:23

A. Old Covenant worship which looked ahead to Christ's work through types and shadows has been abolished. Gal. 4:9-11 Col. 2:23

B. Jesus has established a New Covenant with new worship.

1. Christ is temple, priest and sacrifice. Jo. 2:19 1:29 Mark 14:58 15:29 Heb. 9:11
2. We are the spiritual temple and priests who offer spiritual sacrifices through Him. Eph. 2:21 I Pet. 2:5,9-10 Heb. 13:15-16 Rom. 15:16 Phil. 2:27

IV. Worship is regulated by Scripture. John 4:24

- A. The New Testament reveals all we need to know in order to properly worship God. II Tim. 3:16-17 II Pet. 1:3 I Tim. 3:15
1. Because God takes worship so seriously, we should carefully strive to be biblical. Lev. 10:1-3 II Sam. 6:6-7 I Cor. 11:29-30 Mt. 15:3,6
 2. We are not free to add to, subtract from, or modify the *elements* of worship that God has revealed. Ex. 20:4-5 Lev. 10:1-3 Dt. 12:30-32 I Co. 4:6
 3. Non-essential aspects of worship are *circumstances* in which we have liberty.
- B. What elements does the Bible teach should be included in our worship? Acts 2:42
1. We read the Scriptures. I Tim. 4:13 Col. 4:16 Neh. 8:5-6 Luke 4:20
 2. We preach the Word. Acts 2:42 I Ti. 4:13-14 II Ti. 4:1f Acts 20:7,20,27 Neh. 8:6-8 I Pet. 4:11a 1:23 Eph. 2:17 Js. 1:22 Ex. 4:29-31 I Co. 1:21-24 Ro. 10:14,17
 3. We pray. Acts 2:42 1:14 13:3 4:24ff I Ti. 2:1f Ps. 103:1f Eph. 5:20 6:19 I Jo. 1:8ff Rev. 5:8
 4. We sing praise to God. Eph. 5:18-20 Co. 3:15f Ps. 98:1 Re. 5:9 Mt. 26:30 Acts 16:25
 5. We remember the Lord through communion. Acts 2:42 20:7 I Cor. 11:17-34 10:16
 6. Other elements in worship: offering, testimonies, baptism, discipline. I Cor. 16:2 Phil. 4:18 Heb. 13:16 II Cor. 8:9 Acts 14:27 I Cor. 5:4 Mt. 28:18ff
- C. We are not allowed to add to the elements of worship God has revealed.
1. What extra-biblical elements are being added by some churches?
 2. There are activities, which might be perfectly legitimate in another context, but are not appropriate in a worship service.
 3. What is the harm in adding to the biblical elements of worship? Lev. 10:1-3
- D. Worship should be orderly and intelligible. I Cor. 14:26,14-17

V. Worship is to be from the heart. John 4:24

- A. Worship God in spirit -- wholeheartedly. Ps. 103:1 I Tim. 1:17 I Cor. 12:3 I Pe. 1:8
- B. Approach God with reverence. Ps. 24:3-6 He. 12:28-29 Mic. 6:6-7
- C. How can we avoid vain repetition and mere formality in our worship?
- D. How expressive should we be in our worship? I Tim. 2:8 Ps. 63:4 134:2

VI. Conclusion:

- A. Worship is a joyous privilege. Ps. 98:4 100:1-5 63:1-5 Heb. 13:15 Rev. 1:5-6
- B. Future Worship: Worshiping Christ will be our blessed activity in heaven. Rev. 4:8-11 5:9-14 7:9f 11:15 15:2-4 19:1-10 Phil. 2:9-11

Questions for discussion

1. Why is worship important?
2. In what sense is worship God-centered?
3. How is worship to be Christ-centered?
4. What does it mean to worship God in spirit?
5. Is all worship acceptable to God so long as it is sincere? Why or why not?
6. What does it mean to worship God in truth?
7. How does New Covenant worship differ from Old Covenant worship?
8. What is an *element* of worship? Give examples.
9. What is a *circumstance* of worship? Give examples.
10. What extra-biblical elements are some churches including in their worship?
11. Why do we celebrate the Lord's Supper every week?
12. How is preaching worship?