



## A Philosophy and Practice of Worship

**What does life look like for a person who takes Worship seriously while seeking to live and love like Jesus as a part of Mountain View Community Church (MVCC)?**

1. **A thankful life** – To Worship in spirit and in truth leads us to a place of thankfulness. Thankful hearts are able to rise above circumstances.
2. **A life dedicated to God** – When we Worship whole-heartedly we are placing God first in our lives. Putting God first shows our commitment and dedication to Him. The Bible calls such dedication by another word, sanctification (to set apart or put first).
3. **A heart ready to change** – As we seek God out through Worship and we experience His presence and character, we realize that we need to change if we want to live and love more like Jesus. This change is called repentance. Repentance is turning from our ways of sin and following Jesus in His purity. Genuine Worship continually reveals God and our need to become more like Jesus.
4. **A life that pursues humility** – Worship reveals to us that God loves a humble heart (Isaiah 66:2). Humility, in part, is recognizing our relationship with God and seeing how much greater He is than we are.
5. **Willing obedience** – When we truly Worship, we fall in love with our God over and over. When we love and Worship Him, obedience is not only easy, it becomes a deep part of our desires because we don't want to hurt or grieve the one that we love (Ephesians 4:30).
6. **A passion for God's presence** – God responds to our Worship by revealing Himself to us in increasingly new and deep ways. Experiencing His presence ignites a desire on our part to know Him more intimately. That desire generates in us a passion for His continued presence in our lives.
7. **A growing faith** – Worship, and the experiences that come with it, bring us confidence to believe that God delivers on His promises. Our faith grows in response to God's revealed faithfulness when we practice Worship as an essential part of our daily lives.
8. **A life that shows Jesus to the world** – Worship transforms us as we experience God's presence and begin to understand how to live and love like Jesus. As we

develop and grow others notice that we are in the process of changing. Our transformation reflects the growing presence of God in our lives and shows others Jesus as we live and love like Him.

## PART 1

### THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP AT MVCC

What is Worship? While singing is what most of us think of when we hear the word Worship, it is more than that. One definition is that Worship is the response we have toward God when we realize how great He is.

The word "worship" comes from an old English word meaning "worthyship"; to declare the worth of someone or something. Central to our existence is the relationship and intimacy we have with God. We cannot separate Worship from relationship with God for there is no relationship with God that does not include Worship. Worship is the outward expression of God's glory living in us.

#### Why should Worship of God be a priority in our lives?

##### 1. It has priority in Scripture

God sees Worship as a priority for His people; He mentions it so many times in the Bible. In Revelation, all history culminates in an eternal worship service in the presence of our glorious Lord.

##### 2. Jesus Made It A Priority

- a. He called Worship the greatest commandment – Mark 12:30 "**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.**" This was not just a head knowledge, worshiping only with our minds or souls; it involves our total being; body, soul and spirit.
- b. Jesus taught us that Worship comes before asking as He modeled prayer for us in the Gospel of Luke. Luke 11:2 "**And He said to them, when you pray, say, Our Father, Who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name...**". Jesus' example shows us that giving God His due is more important than getting what we want.

Our relationship with God, like any relationship, requires time and constant effort. We do not just come to God when we want something. We cannot expect to build a deep relationship with God if we are not prepared to find the time to meet with Him regularly just as we would to keep our marriages healthy.

##### 3. Worship is a desire of our Father God

John 4:21 - 24 - "**But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.**"

- a. Worshipping in spirit – When we Worship in spirit it means we give our thinking, our feelings and our determination to God. Worshipping means we place ourselves under His influence.

- b. Worshipping in truth – We Worship best when we know what we are Worshipping. One of the best things we can do is learn about the God we live for. Worshipping in truth means we literally “take notice of the truth” about God. Our Worship of God must never be based on anything except the truth of God as He revealed it to us.

We, as followers of Jesus, approach the Father in relationship made possible through His Son, Jesus Christ.

## PART 2

### WE HOLD THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES OF WORSHIP CLOSE AT MVCC

#### **1. Worship is about drawing us closer to God through Jesus Christ**

- a. We can better know God through Jesus and as result, He can be better loved, praised, and obeyed (Ephesians 1:15-23).
- b. He is our Worship (Matthew 4:10). We give Worship only to those of supreme value. Therefore, we Worship God ...the only one worthy of Worship. (Revelation 5:9-14).

#### **2. Worship is about us bringing glory and pleasure to God**

The Bible teaches that we were created for Worship (Ephesians 1:4,12; Revelation 4:11)

- a. We bring glory to God in Worship by elevating His character and His goodness.
- b. We bring pleasure to God in Worship by making Him central in our spiritual practices such as; praise, obedience, prayer, meditation upon Scripture, and study (Psalm 34:1).

#### **3. Worship is both an attitude of our hearts and the actions that result from our attitudes**

- a. We seek an attitude of surrender – we offer our life in submission to Christ (Romans 12:1-2) and confess our sins (1 John 1:9).
- b. We pursue an “attitude of gratitude”- we agree on the incredible goodness that God has shown us and the infinite restraint we are given in His forgiveness (Psalm 139:17-18).
- c. We acknowledge the attitude of humility as being important - We know that we are sinners saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) and sustained only by God's hand (Psalm 144:3).
- d. We try to find ways to serve God that reflect our relationship and gratefulness toward Him (John 14:15).
- e. We realize that we Worship best when we are led by the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22-25).

**4. True Worship comes from seeking to become like Jesus; living and loving as He does**

- a. We have been made new in Christ or regenerated as the Bible says. Regeneration is the spiritual change brought about in our lives by God through the work of the Holy Spirit when we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior (1 John 3:9; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16).
- b. We have been saved through Jesus Christ's sacrifice; redeemed from sin – The work of Christ provides us with freedom from sin and freedom to serve God. The tremendous cost of redemption: "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:19; Ephesians 1:7), which is also called an atoning sacrifice. We remember the incredible "price" of our salvation as a motivation to become like Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Peter 1:13-19).
- c. We never forget that we are at peace with God; reconciled in our relationship with Him because of Jesus. We have a restored relationship with God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

**PART 3**

**HOW DO WORSHIP TOGETHER AT MVCC?**

**1. We stay God-Centered, Worship is not about us. (2 Kings 17:36; Matthew 22:37-38)**

- a. Because God is the only one worthy of Worship, the focus in our church is on the praise, devotion, and adoration of Him (2 Corinthians 10:5; Matthew 28:18-20)
- b. Our personal preferences, prejudices, current social trends, and personal expectations cannot be the determining factor of what Worship looks like in our church.

**2. Biblically- The Scriptures form the core of our Worship:**

- a. We hold that the Bible is true (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- b. We firmly believe that the Bible is our main source for knowing the person of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
- c. We believe that the Bible contains everything that is needed for living a life of Worship (2 Peter 1:3).

**3. Prayerfully- Our hearts come ready to Worship by being prayerfully prepared:**

- a. We offer our entire selves to God (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 18:10-14).
- b. We seek to continually practicing the presence of God (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).
- c. We are engaged in both listening and talking with God (Acts 1:14; Ephesians 6:18).
- d. We offer prayers of confession, thanks, requests, and for others (1 John 1:9; Philippians 4:4-7; 1 Timothy 2:1).

- 4. Evangelistically- The purpose of our church (“Growing a Community of Christ-followers who live and love like Jesus”) naturally leads us to include the sharing of our faith in our Worship:**
  - a. We teach the Gospel of Jesus according to the Bible (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).
  - b. We seek to help people discover a relationship with Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:21, 3:7-11).
- 5. Joyfully- The Psalms say “Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.” It is natural that Worship be joyful:**
  - a. Because joy is a part of the “Fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22).
  - b. Because in Jesus we are free from sin and free to live for God (1 Peter 1:8-9).
  - c. Because joy is a reflection of a reality; in Jesus there is joy (Romans 14:17, 15:13; Acts 2:28).
- 6. Relevantly- Relevance in Worship (especially all church Worship) is a way of saying that everything is presented in church is done in an understandable, meaningful, and enjoyable way to both those who are seeking Christ and those seeking to grow in Christ (Romans 10:14). Relevance is also about Worship being interactive so that many talents can be used and participation is encouraged (1Corinthians 12:12-26):**
  - a. Multiple Generations- Leaving out one generation in deference to another does not honor all (Psalm 145:3-7).
  - b. Multiple Cultures- Diverse cultural backgrounds (educational, ethnic, economic, etc.) should be considered. Corporate Worship should be diverse in its “Culture of Worship” (music, language, sign, dance) (Romans 2:11, 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:26).
  - c. Multiple levels of maturity - Incorporating elements that appeal to both the spiritually inexperienced and the mature so that people at all points in their spiritual journeys can grow and contribute to the Kingdom (Hebrews 5:11-14; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23).
- 7. Creatively- Creativity in Worship is an important element because:**
  - a. God is creative and when beautiful expressions for His honor and glory are created, it is acting in accordance with His image (Genesis 1-2; Colossians 3:10).
  - b. Creativity requires deep thought, extensive time spent in study and crafting which honors God (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 26:25-29; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23).
- 8. Effectively- (Colossians 3:16-17) Effectiveness in Worship does not mean perfection. It does not mean that everything must be scripted, sterile, and removed from the active presence of the Holy Spirit. It does not mean that the purpose is creating an entertaining show. What effectiveness in worship does mean is that it is always:**
  - a. Prayerfully Planned- When Services of Worship are a God-led endeavor, they will be humble, beautiful, meaningful, and spiritually rich.
  - b. Thoroughly Rehearsed- Rehearsal helps the leaders to focus on God and the message instead of technique and fundamentals. It prevents embarrassing distractions from poor execution.

- c. Skillfully Presented- When people's gifts are used artistically and skillfully to praise God, it is a pleasing offering to God (1 Peter 2:5; Matthew 22:37) and, the rest of the body will praise God as these offerings are made.

**Conclusion –** The Core Practice of Worship is an essential part of the process by which we pursue maturity at MVCC. The invitation to Worship should be attractive, clear, and relevant to everyone. Just as God is evident to all of us (Romans 1:20), the invitation to Worship must be equally evident in terms of its grace, authenticity, and simplicity (Colossians 4:5-6 and Philippians 4:4-5)!